

# Literature Review on Shifting Fatherhood

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## **Abstract**

This study aims to review what extent have the attitudes and practices on fatherhood changed in different countries and how these changes are explained. Firstly, a comprehensive review of fatherhood study is given. Following this, the dynamic changes of fatherhood and its causes in 4 countries, i.e., Sweden, America, Japan and China are elaborated. Lastly, this article is concluded with four main points: a) Both Sweden and America are Western welfare states with strong academics and public calling on gender equality and new fatherhood. However, Sweden is much more father-friendly than America; b) Although China and Japan share an East Asian 'Confucian' cultural heritage, they are on different paths in terms of shifting fatherhood; c) Even though these four countries all have experienced periods of industrialization, modernization, urbanization and postmodern globalization, gender equality and new fatherhood ideologies and values have a much more profound influence on fathering in Sweden and American than that in China and Japan; d) These four models reflect four different aspects: Swedish fatherhood - father-friendly model challenges mainstream thinking on Americanization, while American fatherhood - Second-mother model reveals the inherent traditional social expectation that men should give priority to the work; In contrast, Japanese fatherhood - struggling model testifies the fluctuation of transformational fatherhood path, whilst Chinese fatherhood - women-headed model shapes a new egalitarian gender order rather than discourse of conservatism in the family life.

**Key words:** Fatherhood, aile, İsveç, Amerika, Japonya, Çin

## Değişen Babalık Üzerine Literatür Taraması

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### Özet

Bu çalışma babalık rol ve davranışlarının farklı ülkelerde ne kapsamda değiştiğini ve bu değişimin nasıl açıklandığını analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. İlk olarak, babalık çalışmalarının kapsamlı bir taraması verilecektir. Bunu takiben, babalığa ilişkin dinamik değişimler ve bunların sonuçları dört farklı ülke, İsveç, Amerika, Japonya ve Çin, çerçevesinde değerlendirilecektir. Çalışma son bölümde dört farklı çıkarımla sonlanacaktır: (a) İsveç ve Amerika'nın her ikisi de akademinin ve kamunun toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğine ve yeni babalığa güçlü çağrılar yapan Batılı Refah devletleri olarak öne çıkarlar. Ancak, İsveç Amerika'ya görece daha baba dostu bir duruş sergilemektedir; (b) Çin ve Japonya Doğu Asyalı Konfüçyüsçü mirası paylaşan ülkeler olmalarına rağmen, değişen babalık çerçevesinde farklı yollar izlemektedirler; (c) Ülkelerin her biri endüstrileşme, modernleşme, şehirleşme ve post-modern globalleşme deneyimleri ve toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği ve yeni babalık ideolojilerini benimsemiş olmalarına rağmen, İsveç ve Amerika'da, Çin ve Japonya'ya görece babalığa ilişkin değerlerin önemi daha fazladır; (d) Bu dört model, dört farklı görüşü yansıtır – İsveçli babalık Amerikanlaşmanın ötesine geçerek baba dostu bir yaklaşım sergilerken Amerikalı babalık, gelenekselleşmiş sosyal beklentiyi açığa çıkararak erkeğin işteki rollerine öncelik vermesine vurgu yapar. Bunların aksine, Japon babalık dönüşen babalık ile mücadele eden tartışmacı bir model sunarken, Çinli babalık, aile içi muhafazakarlık söylemlerinin aksine annenin reisliğine dayanan yeni eşitlikçi bir toplumsal cinsiyet düzeni çerçevesinde şekillenir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Babalık, family, İsveç, Amerika, Japonya, Çin

## Introduction

Historically, gender division of labour, namely women taking main responsibility of unpaid domestic works while men undertaking breadwinner role, is prevalent in different communities and social classes to a greater or lesser extent (Trask, 2009:189). However, the social trends of individualization, urbanization and modernization combining with economic growth are shaping the postmodern family life (Cheal, 2008:34-44). Moreover, the globalization has unprecedentedly sped up the process of slightly fading patriarchal family models in the industrialized and developing countries by recreating new gender ideologies and transforming the global social order in the global market (Trask, 2009:185-191). In addition, the declining influence of traditional gender order and growing participation of women in the higher education and labour market are challenging the roles of men and women both in public sphere and private home (Connell, 1995:23-26). With more mothers undertaking the role of earning household income, an interesting question arises after 1960s, i.e., what are fathers' new roles?

How do paternal new roles act? The "second-wave" feminist movements (Rose, 2010:5) and masculinity movements in 1960s and 1970s call on fathers to take active involvement in childcare, housework and unpaid domestic chores (Becker, 2013). This leads to changes in attitudes towards fatherhood. Specifically, Sweden becomes the first country in the world to put the maternal leave into parental leave to support gender equality in the domestic sphere in 1974. Following this, Norway becomes the pioneer country to implement non-convertible daddy month to encourage more involvement in 1993. Subsequently, a series of father-friendly family welfare policies and laws have been broadly introduced worldwide. In addition, an increasing number of empirical studies (Ishii-Kuntz & Maryanski, 2003:352-380; Futoshi, 2007:13-14) illustrate that young men are getting more interested in taking care of children and doing housework than their fathers. To

conclude, fatherhood are reconstructed in the global contexts, although the level of fathers' involvement in childcare and housework is still small compared with mothers' active participation in labour market (Cheal, 2008:43).

Although the attitude and practice on fatherhood have been changing in both Western and Eastern countries, they have not always been shifting at the same pace and in the same direction. Developing countries consider the West as a template of industrialization and modernization, does it mean the West is also a moral template for them in socio-cultural sphere? More and more empirical studies disagree with this to some extent. Jayakody and Thornton (2008) argue that family transformation in Iran eschews the Western family model. Jayakody and Huy (2008:199-222) also claim that Vietnam adopts Western economic model but rejects their family attitudes and practices. In addition Cheal (2008:40) says that the industrialization and modernization matches well with socio-cultural sphere in Western societies, but this does not fit every region. Furthermore, Pringle, Hearn and Šmídová (2013:17) highlight that there are even huge gaps in shifting fatherhood across all European countries.

The above findings show that the fatherhood in different communities has undergoing changes in different ways, and thus a literature review on cross-cultural shifting fatherhood is of importance. Literature on fatherhood has increased significantly since the mid-1960s, but there is few paper related to comparison amongst different societies. Therefore, this article aims to illustrate diversified patterns of shifting fatherhood in different regions from comparative perspective to propose fatherhood models focusing on differences amongst different societies.

Another important issue, namely the causes of shifting fatherhood also requires further research. A load of scholars have tried to explain the underlying factors of changes, the agreements are not consistent on this complicated issue. From social constructionist perspective, Daly (1993) explains that fatherhood identity is constructed by observing,

communicating, and negotiating. He claims that paternal roles can be changed by setting up new role models (Daly, 1993:23). Parke (1995) further proves that fathers enact fathering by learning from father role models from social learning theory. But how these father role models are shaped? Fox and Bruce (2001) are the first scholars who attempt to use identity theory and parental investment theory to evaluate the impact of individual-level factors (i.e., age, race, education level, income, experience of fathering) on father role. Following this, Fuwa (2004) uses empirical data on gender division of labour in 22 counties and verifies that those individual-level factors have much less influence on housework distribution than macro-level factors (i.e., economic growth, the rate of female labour-force, culture context, and welfare systems). In addition, Ishii-Kuntz (2003) highlights women's ideology hinders fathers to take more responsibility on housework and childcare.

Clearly, fatherhood is changing. However, the factors underlying the changes are indeterminate. Therefore, further discussion on the causes of shifting fatherhood is needed. This paper also reviews how researchers explain the factors.

All in all, this paper attempts to resolve two main problems: what extent have the attitudes and practices on fatherhood changed in different countries and how these changes are explained. Thus, this paper begins by reviewing fatherhood studies and then analysing the dynamic changes of fatherhood and its causes in the case of Sweden, America, Japan and China.

## **Fatherhood Studies**

Fathers' irreplaceable prominent position and their own role in the family upbringing began to be paid greater attention by researchers from the mid-1960s. Since then, substantial research has been conducted on fatherhood: Educationists and psychologists study father's influence on child development; anthropologists and historians illustrate the changes on father's role; sociologists explore

social father's involvement and social policy and so on. This study addresses the historically shifting fatherhood and its socio-cultural causes.

What are attitudes on fatherhood? "Fatherhood is in vogue" (Furstenberg, 1988:193). A complete conceptualization of paternal roles and father's types is needed. Historically, father's breadwinner, protector, moral teacher and sex-role model are viewed as common attitudes in the patriarchal societies. With the socio-cultural changes, especially with the feminist movements, father's new role--nurturant dad is emphasized in the late 1970s (Lamb, 2013). Besides, father's direct care is more emphasized than indirect care (Miller, 2010). Among four different typical father's types, namely absent father, deadbeat father, removed father and involved father, involved fathers are increasingly encouraged in gender egalitarian countries, such as Sweden, Norway and so on. Involved fathers "open up a space for the expressions and enactment of emotions and care" (Beşpınar, 2015:96). This study examines what extent traditional attitudes on fatherhood have been changing in different countries.

What are practices on fatherhood? Time-use methodologies have been used to evaluate how much time fathers spend on engagement, accessibility and responsibility of paternal involvement (Lamb, 2000) or father's indirect care. Although the concept of positive father-involvement was proposed in USA in 1970s, Swedes bring this into practice - father friendly societies (Rush, 2015a). Note that the attitude and practice of fatherhood is asynchrony, i.e., the attitude towards father's role has changed significantly while the practice on fathering is not (LaRossa, 1988 :451). This study examines the factors promoting or hindering the change of practice.

In terms of fatherhood model, there exist two main opinions: One is Castles *et al.* (2010), who proposes established welfare models and emerging welfare models based on the welfare societies; the other is Rush (2015a), who highlights Swedish model (state-supported agency) and American model (state-enforced agency) from four basic models

(i.e., the Nordic model, Anglo-Saxon model, European Social model, East Asia model) according to the differences on social policy and gender studies. In addition, Rush (2015a) also emphasizes the influence of the Sweden model on European Union and Japan, and the impact of the American model on UK and Ireland. However, one paradox appears. Although Sweden, Germany and USA are established welfare countries, they have various paths on shifting fatherhood. Likewise, both China and Japan are East Asian countries, but they have undergone different changes on attitude and practice on fatherhood. Besides, except for the above welfare systems, as well as social policy and gender issue, there are other factors, e.g., cultural context, economic growth, and local dynamics and so on, which also play an important role on transforming the attitude and practice on fatherhood. Synthesizing Castles's models, Rush's models and other important factors, this study analyses the dynamic changes of fatherhood and its causes in two Western countries and two Eastern countries: Sweden, America, Japan and China.

### **Sweden Fatherhood: Father-friendly Model**

**W**hy Swedish fatherhood is of great interest? There are two main reasons: a) Sweden is one of the most generous father-friendly welfare states and the most "comprehensive egalitarian" parental leave police countries (Wells & Sarkadi, 2012:25); b) in 1995, Sweden was acknowledged as the most gender-equal country in the world by the United Nations (Evertsson, 2006:415). This study considers Swedish shifting fatherhood as the typical representative of these Nordic countries, e.g., Norway, which shift from a traditional fatherhood country successfully to a father-friendly society.

It is of more interest to show how breath-taking Sweden modern fathers are compared with explaining Swedish traditional fatherhood model. Head to any Swedish street any day, you will easily run into Swedish notorious "Latte Papas" who are enjoying a coffee break or "Fica Papas" who are having coffee with pastries or sandwiches, before or after heading to the park with children. Moreover, according to

Nordenmark, Björk, Eydal & Rostgaard's research (2014), 70% of Swedish men do 25% of the total housework, ranking No.1 among the Nordic five gender-equality countries - Sweden, Finland, Iceland, Denmark and Norway (Nordenmark, Björk, Eydal & Rostgaard, 2014:172), where there is a remarkably high gender equality and moderate decrease in fertility than other western welfare countries (Datta Gupta, Smith & Verner, 2006:65). Most Swedish young adults desire to become a father (Kaufman & Bernhardt, 2012) and enjoy paternal leave. Recently, "child-oriented father", e.g., spending more time on playing and talking with children rather than sharing housework and feeding, is more endorsed and preferred by Swedish parents (Forsberg, 2007:109). Swedes make their own arrangements on family life and work. "Family comes firstly when the conflicts took place" and "it is shameful to be a career-oriented father" can always be heard from Swedish fathers in a Swedish middle-class network. Some Swedish fathers even prefer to be a primary caretaker, upholding the role of communicator.

In general, Sweden has experienced two gender revolutions and two different dual policies, five steps of parental leave revolutions, individual tax system and informal supports to transform into a father-friendly country, as follows:

The first half of gender revolution (1960-1990s) is when men support women to participate in the labour market, although women still consider taking care of children as their primary responsibility (Bernhardt, Goldscheider & Turunen, 2016:271). The second half of gender revolution (after 1990s-) is when men share the responsibility of housework and childcare, and parents have equal opportunities to work and take care of children (Baştuğ, 2002; Oláh & Bernhardt, 2008:1106; Goldscheider et al, 2014).

The dual-earner policy (from 1970 to 2005) helps the majority of Swedish mothers enter the labour market and thus Swedish female employment rate has been ranked the highest among the Western countries since the 1970s (Oláh & Bernhardt, 2008:1127). It also

promotes Sweden to become the country with the highest proportion of women as cabinet ministers (50%) and parliamentarians (43%) in the world. However, under the dual-earner policy, mothers continue to be primarily in charge of care and housework at home (Johansson, 2011:169). Therefore, the dual-carer policy (from 2005 -) induce men to be more involved in the housework and childcare and stressed parents have the same right and duty to work and take care of children (Johansson, 2011:169).

In terms of Swedish governmental proud phenomenon, i.e., *Swedish fathers* enjoying parental leave, it experiences five revolutions (Seward, Yeatts & Zottarelli, 2002: 387): a) unpaid 3 months maternity leave in 1937; b) paid 6 months parental leave in 1974; c) 15 months parental leave in 1990; d) father's one month non-convertible parental leave, namely "daddy month" in 1995; e) father's two months non-convertible parental leave, namely "the second daddy month", and paid 16 months parental leave in 2002. These five steps of parental leave revolutions promote Swedish men to enjoy the 21% of parental leave days in 2007 which is much higher than the international standards (Statistics Sweden (SCB) 2008).

Gender equality has also been addressed in the tax systems. Individual income taxation in 1971 had a great impact on economic equality between men and women (Hearn, Nordberg, Andersson, et al., 2012:12). The Swedish individual taxation and the progressive tax systems made the lower dual-earners more economically advantageous than a single higher income after the early 1990s (Ferrarini and Duv, 2009:3).

Meanwhile, there are numerous informal supports to Swedish fathers from both practical help and emotional support. Swedish workplace is providing many resources for dual income family with fathers sharing happiness and difficulties of fatherhood with their colleagues. (Wissö and Plantin, 2015:267). On top of that, Swedish women support Swedish men to be a more involved father, just as one of the interviewees from Johansson's research (2011) said, "When I'm out

walking with my son in the baby carriage, women smile and help me open doors and so on. They treat me like a king, whereas when my wife is out walking this never happens. So, being a guy with a pram is a lucky situation. You always get help, and often by women.” (Johansson, 2011:175). Besides, nurses also tend to positively offer professional tips for fathers and gays family to achieve a super gender-neutral ideology and emotional father society after 2006.

### **American Fatherhood: Second-Mother Model**

**W**hy American fatherhood is of great interest? There are two main reasons: a) USA are the main research place where many American scholars have devoted decades to study fatherhood (Eggebeen & Knoester, 2001:381); b) American research on Fatherhood are much more systematic and comprehensive than other developed countries and the fatherhood data is dominated by USA (Rush, 2015a:39). While family men are widely noticed by American public and researchers for the first time, absent fathers and uncaring fathers are widely criticized by American psychologists and educationists. Furthermore, it is American researchers who firstly propose the concept of father involvement. This study regards American shifting fatherhood as a typical representative of these Western countries, e.g., UK, which shift from a patriarchal fatherhood country to a second-mother society.

What are traditional American fathers? Four famous scholars (i.e., Rotundo, 1985:12; Pleck, 1998; LaRossa, 1988:451; Lamb, 2013:267-278) summarize the changing paths of typical traditional American fathers into 3 periods: the 1<sup>st</sup> period-- moral overseer (from 18C and early 19C), a moral model of children and to punish, educate and offer religious instructions to their children; the 2<sup>nd</sup> period-- distant breadwinner role (from early 19C to mid-20C), responsible for the financial support of his family but spend little time on childcare and housework; the 3<sup>rd</sup> period-- sex role model (from 1940 to 1965), strong masculine role model for his sons than daughters.

Rotundo (1985:7) points out that American society shifts from patriarchal fatherhood to modern fatherhood starting from 1800. However, more and more researchers (e.g., Wahlstrom, 2010; LaRossa, 1988) argue that the 21 century is considered as the turning point of American modern new nurturing fatherhood.

What are modern American fathers? New nurturing fathers (from the mid-1960s to present) should actively involve in the parenting of his children and share housework with mothers. Besides, they should encourage daughters like sons in many ways, and also should not sex-type their children. Furthermore, 'good fathers' should play two roles very well, namely breadwinner and new nurturant (Furstenberg, 1988). Family expectations on being an American dad today are "pushing" fathers to be the 'second-mother', who embrace the similar values and techniques with mothers (Samuel, 2016).

What is the modern practice of American fatherhood? The new modern nurturing fathers are present at the birth and participate in the daily child care since their children are infants. Also they are involved with their daughters as much as with their sons (Palkovitz, 2002: 40-41). Half of American men reduce work time to accompany their children, do laundry, sweat over homework, comfort kids, and drive the car. Moreover,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of American fathers want to do more like mothers (Reed, 2005:2). Apart from that, the housework hours done by American men in 1990s is twice as much as that in 1960s (Bianchi *et al*, 2000). However, more and more researchers (Rush, 2015a; Shwalb *et al*, 2013; Lamb, 2004) criticize that this 'second-mother' does not do much childcare and housework as mothers.

What leads to these changes? Rotundo (1985:13) summarizes four main reasons: the rise of industrialism, the emergence of bureaucracy, the arrival of urban and middle-class ideas, and the decline of traditional authority with increasing immigrant fathers. Fuwa (2004:3) supplements that with more and more American women undertaking the responsibility of household income, their economic power is used as a powerful capital to negotiate with their husbands

about the housework and childcare distribution. Besides, the current situation of high rate of divorce and decline of marriage pushes the increasing single fathers and males to do much more in the family like mothers and females. Cheal (2008) further points out new technologies, such as iphone, imac, and ipad, are the crucial source of broad America social change. It broadens the way of father-children's communication with low cost and helps fathers do more and more timely and effective indirect care.

However, how to explain why American 'Second-mother' are not so positively involved in childcare and housework like mothers? Rush (2015a) gives the reasons: a) although welfare reforms and penal policy reforms promote fathers' involvement, the family welfare systems, such as the beginning of job-protected Family and Medical Leave Act in 1993, the advance version- California of the Paid Family Leave Programme only have 'minor effects' on most families. American fathers continue to be the main breadwinner after having children and do not take full use of unpaid parental leave; b) "18 States did nothing beyond the federal minimum of offering 'protections for nursing mothers at work, time away from work to care for a new child, or time off to tend to a child's or a spouse's medical needs'" (Rush, 2015a:43).

### **Japan Fatherhood: Struggling Model**

In terms of the importance of studying Japan fatherhood, Rush (2015b:403) provides three main reasons: a) Japanese researchers run the forefront of studies on fatherhood alongside the USA; b) Japan is regarded as the core state in the worldwide gender equality; c) Japan is on the way to abandon traditional/Confucian welfare systems and adopt Nordic father-friendly family policies. Tatsumi (2016) confirms Rush's explanations and argues Japanese government promulgate policies and NGOs conduct activities to encourage Japanese modern father – "*Ikuman*" rather than Japanese hegemonic father-Salaryman. This study considers Japanese shifting fatherhood to be a

typical representative of these Eastern countries, e.g., South Korea, which shift from a male chauvinism county to a struggling father society.

The traditional Japanese fathers' image was somewhat unpredictable and fearful, as represented by "earthquake, thunder, fire and father" in the 1950s, and mothers were expected to be a "good wife and wise mother." Traditional Japanese father is "*Daikokubashira*", meaning men should support and take full responsibility of the family.

What is the modern Japanese fatherhood? The Japanese government wants to go towards modern "*Ikuman*" directly, which means the traditional concept of "men working outside while women taking care of children" should be changed and fathers should do more in looking after children. However, during the transformation, Japanese fathers are in the struggling states: a) how to fit better into the high tax welfare society, to choose traditional family patterns or modern dual care and dual earner; b) how to balance work and life; c) how to deal with the conflict between the attitude of supportive father and the practice of breadwinner father and so on. According to the data from Public Opinion Survey on Female by Cabinet Office every two years from 1987 to 2014, gender equality consciousness popularized but Japanese are still struggling with the belief on traditional family patterns and new style life (dual income family and supportive father-friendly family) after 2009. Although the NHK data (Senkine, Watanabe & Hayashida, 2016: 13) indicates that it is those males who worked less than 8 hours per day, spend more time on housework and thus 78% of their children think them to be very kind and openhearted (Takahashi & Aramaki, 2016). Ishii-Kuntz (2013) claims that Japanese paternal involvement in household duties and childcare has increased at a slower pace over the last 15 years. Women's house duty time declines during 1985 to 1990, while the changes after 1990s are very slight. Furthermore, taking paternity leave is a key step towards building a good relationship with child and wife. However, only 2% of Japanese fathers take paternal leave in 2015.

What kinds of factors result in the struggling of modern Japanese fatherhood? There are three primary factors, which accelerate the pace of Japanese involved father: family-friendly social policies, transformational de-patriarchy family and increasing individualistic oriented socio-culture. There are also three main barriers towards a Japanese father-friendly oriented society: hierarchical Japanese corporate culture, “male vested interests of power-bloc” in public area and powerful/dominant Japanese “housewife keeping” in private area, as follows:

Young generations are facing a dilemma. On one hand, they tend to pursue individual happiness and disagree that they should devote all their lives to the company. On the one other hand, their predecessors stay longer at work. The hierarchy company corporate culture leads to young generation’s dilemma., although there is flow of “*IkuBoss*” Award and the “*IkuBoss*” Corporate Alliance, which is a network of companies recognizing the need for “*IkuBoss*” and is striving to reform the awareness of their own managers and nurture an ideal type of manager for an era in which workforces are increasingly diverse amid the promotion of female staff and men’s greater involvement in family life.

As Yasumoto said that “Japanese paternal modifications influenced by expectations from close associates are due not to their embracing American fatherhood, but rather to their ‘situational adjustment’... And Japan adopted many aspects of Western lifestyles, but it seems that the Japanese kept their own family values for a long time rather than assimilating Western values” (Yasumoto, 2006:2; 53). Traditional men-headed culture is still dominant in Japanese society although Japanese females’ power within the public sphere is increasing.

Meanwhile, mother’s power within the domestic sphere keeps fathers away from the family. For instance, the popular slogan among mothers “A husband is most appreciated when they are healthy and out of the home” suggests the fathers’ role should be the healthy breadwinner, but also implies that wives gain the power to say that they are happier if they do not have to take care of their husbands. It is quite a

contrast to the previous image of “good wife and wise mother.” When it refers to why mother is not satisfied with father’s childcare, 27% of mothers believe that fathers usually are too kind to the children (Takahashi & Aramaki, 2016). Makoto (2001) reports that many of the characters in television dramas in 1970s are home oriented. In addition, producers reinforce the theme that women can be happy as long as they are at home by depicting women struggling in the workplace.

### **China Fatherhood: Women-headed Model**

As for the significance of China fatherhood, Li and Lamb (2012:16) summarize three reasons: a) the number of Chinese fathers accounts for  $\frac{1}{5}$  of that in the world; b) Chinese fathers’ attitude and practice are influenced by the diverse cultures, which mix Han culture with Confucian culture, Taoist culture, Buddhist culture and 56 ethnic minorities culture; c) China has changed from a feudal-isolated country to a major country with significant influence over the world, and more and more Chinese people live overseas and are influenced by the global contexts. Except for that, China has been undergoing considerable social changes. It has transformed from “Red” socialist country to a “Capitalist” society with Chinese characteristics. This study regards Chinese shifting fatherhood as a typical representative of these Eastern “Red” countries, e.g., Vietnam, which shift from a men-headed country gradually to a women-headed society.

What is traditional Chinese father role? As the outcome of mixing Han culture with Confucian culture, Taoist culture, Buddhist culture and 56 ethnic minorities culture, the ideal father would be a “responsible but affectively distant disciplinarian and role model” (Li & Lamb, 2012:25) and “more likely to be the educator, the knowledgeable parent to whom the child would turn for help in doing homework, answering questions and solving problems.” (Lamb 1988: 234).

What is the modern Chinese father role? New good men (“*Pa er’duo*”) who believe in one very popular dictum: good men listen to

their wives and always follow the Chinese Communist Party (“*ting lao pao de hua, yongyuan gen dang zou*”). Traditional male chauvinism seems to be gone forever in certain Chinese communities. In contemporary China, a variety of social changes have implied shifts in the roles of men and women inside and outside the home. One example is the change of appellation towards the wife from her husband. In the past, the husband tends to call their wife “*tang ke*” or “*nei ren*”, which means that women should stay at home. In contrast, nowadays they prefer to call “*ling dao*” or “*lao ban*”, which means that women is the leader or the boss of the family. Furthermore, the notion of “strict father, kind mother” is facing challenges from the symptomatic of the social changes taking place in China. Plenty of evidence shows that father is more lenient than mother (Hinsch 2013 :151-156).

What bring these changes? There are four main reasons:

Firstly, modernization and urbanization significantly influence Chinese family patterns and attitudes on parenting. China becomes a really fairly well-off world after the Four Modernization (the modernization of economy agriculture, industry, science and technology, and defence) from 1954 and the Reform and Opening-up Policy from 1979. The Chinese modernization and urbanization result in two main changes of family pattern, i.e., both the number of nuclear families and left-behind children are sharply increasing (Li & Lamb, 2012:23). In terms of the transformed family patterns, there are different effects on fathers’ attitude and practice. Li and Lamb argues that the nuclear families, which account for over half Chinese households will improve total amount of time for father-child intimacy ((Li & Lamb, 2012:24). However, many other researchers (i.e., Tsai 2010: 423-439) criticize that the heavier childcare and housework burden without grandparents’ help usually fall down to mothers rather than fathers. Although fathers realize that the mothers make significant contributions to the family finances, they still believe fathers’ main role is breadwinner.

Secondly, a series of Chinese effective policies promote China to become the country with the highest female employment rate and

greatest gender equality among East Asian states (Hausmann et al., 2009). The most important policy is Chinese family planning policy from one child policy to two child policy. One child policy was executed on Sep.1st, 1979. Although there are criticisms on little emperor and Little Princess, it is good for all children's growing up because parents can intensively offer the whole family limited and available resources to this singleton child regardless of it is a boy or a girl. It further helps girls to obtain equal resources as boys, which was impossible in the past (Li & Lamb, 2012: 21). In 1982, The Further Guidance on Family Planning Policy (*"guan yu jin yi bu zuo hao ji hua sheng yu gong zuo de zhi shi"*) stipulates that the father can enjoy 15 days Nursing Leave (*"hu li jia"*) and mother can enjoy over 30 days maternity leave (*"chan jia"*) if the household have only one child and the mother gives late childbirth. On Jan.1st, 2016, another very important two-child policy was executed. Its' effect on family requires further research. The second important policy is marriage law and employment law. New marriage law was executed on Aug.12. 2011, claiming that Chinese women have the freedom to choose not to give birth. This is unimaginable in the traditional role of women. On Jan.8, 2015, Chinese Employment Promotion Law further protects women to enjoy the same right with men in the labour market. The third importance policy is family law. Chinese Family Education Draft Law is drawn up on Mar.12, 2016. On Jun.6, 2016, the first family education regulation- Promote Chongqing family education regulations was executed to strengthen parents' awareness of family education. Furthermore, Family Education Day will be celebrated on May 15 every year in Chongqing.

Lastly, the mass media further pushes the spread and prevalence of good father consciousness. In 2013, a Chinese hit reality TV show, namely *Where are we going, dad?* (*"ba ba qu na er?"*) features young generation of Chinese fathers, who are one of burgeoning middle class, discarding the traditional stern father role and taking a modern role of active childcare and being much gentler on children. This show raises a very critical question for modern Chinese - what is fathers' role in China today? On top of that, a series of father and children TV shows have

enraptured China, such as *The first time in life* (“*ren sheng di yi ci*”), *Father comes back home* (“*baba hui lai le*”), *Look at me, daddy and mom* (“*lao ba lao ma kan wo de*”) and so on. All these TV shows present a big difference of attitude and practice on childcare and housework between the older generation and young generation of Chinese fathers. Furthermore, in 2014, Chinese government starts a series of official Wechat accounts, e.g., “Chinese family” and new official websites, like Chinese family education website to propagate the new way of parenting.

## Discussion and Conclusion

Gender roles of Breadwinning fathers and caregiving mothers are characterized to be production of early stages of individualization (Doucet, 2013:298). The modernization, urbanization, globalization, and feminist movements continually challenge worldwide family patterns and gender roles. However, from the cross-cultural studies, it can be seen that fatherhood, its dynamics and changing on the attitude and practice vary a lot in different countries. This study illustrates four patterns of fatherhood in two Western countries (Sweden and America) and two Eastern countries (Japan and China), and presents their similarities as well as differences on shifting fatherhood.

Comparing Sweden with America, both are Western welfare states with strong academics and public calling on gender equality and new fatherhood. However, Sweden and America display significant differences in the welfare systems. Because of Swedish state-supported dual-earner and dual carer policy and strong powerful family welfare systems, Swedes puts the American concept of father involvement into father-friendly practices (Rush: 2015a). In contrast, American father is still in embarrassing stage- be a ‘second mother’. Obviously, America is in Neo-patriarchal trends and Sweden is in de-patriarchal trends (Rush, 2011: 37).

On the other hand, China and Japan, the giants of East Asia, share a 'Confucian' cultural heritage to which many social attitudes prevalent today are often attributed. This is true not limited to 'family values', with Confucian ethics seen as underpinning the popular image of 'strict father, kind mother' (Shwalb et al, 2010). It is supposed that Americanization, postmodern globalization and education and official propaganda have huge but similar effect on views of parenting in general and on fathering in particular in East Asia. Since the 1960s and 1970s, feminist ideas have been challenging the traditional Confucian, e.g., men should work outside and women remain inside the home. While in reality, two countries are in totally different shifting fatherhood paths. In contemporary China, a variety of social changes, especially mass media have implied shifts in Chinese fatherhood- women-headed societies – with Mao Zedong famously declaring that 'women hold up half the sky'. In contrast, due to three main barriers, namely hierarchical Japanese corporate culture, "male vested interests of power-bloc" in public area and powerful/dominant Japanese "housewife keeping" in private area, Japanese fathers are in the struggling situation: On one hand, keeping a harmonious balance between cash and care is being attached an increasing value among young fathers; on the other hand, the new paternal attitudes do not necessarily lead to changes in their own paternal practice. Furthermore, in terms of women's role on shifting fatherhood, Chinese women are more independent than Japanese, whereas Japanese mothers' 'gatekeeping' roles have much more negative impacts on fathering than their counterpart.

In terms of these four countries, they all are on the way to de-patriarchy trends: more and more women enter the labour market; family members have to share the housework, and work together to ensure their children get a good education. More exactly, Swedish and American gender equality and new fatherhood ideologies and values have much more profound influence on fathering than that of China and Japan. Apart from that, younger generation of Swedish and American men are becoming more interested in engaging actively in the upbringing of their children and sharing housework than their

counterparts. On the other hand, although these four countries all have experienced periods of industrialization, modernization, urbanization and postmodern globalization, Chinese and Japanese supporting family welfare systems and social policies related on childcare are just starting. When Western values and Eastern traditional family cultures conflict, East countries need to take time to create their own way on shifting fatherhood, such as Japanese fatherhood. Japan prefer to be a Nordic dual-earner and dual-career welfare states, its traditional cultures and local contexts hinder housewife re-entering the labour force and young salarymen enjoying the paternal leave (Rush, 2015b; Ishii-Kuntz, 2003). Note that the growing trends of modern Chinese fatherhood should not be underestimated.

All in all, the shifting fatherhood is a controversial and complicated topic. Swedish fatherhood: father-friendly model challenges mainstream thinking on Americanization, while American fatherhood: second-mother model reveals the inherent traditional social expectation, i.e., men should give priority to the work. In addition, Japanese fatherhood: struggling model further testifies “the image of fatherhood has fluctuated ... and cannot be said to have evolved in a gradual, linear fashion from more distant and authoritarian to more involved and nurturing” (Wall & Arnold, 2007:511), whereas Chinese fatherhood: women-headed model shapes a new egalitarian gender order rather than discourse of conservatism in the family life (Lazar, 2000).

This study aims to conduct a systematic and comprehensive review on shifting fatherhood, but much more work still needs to be done. Although both the shifting fatherhood path and its causes in different countries are complicated, it is worthy continuing further research on these issues, as follows:

Firstly, a more systematic and empirical study, comparing the attitudes and practices of fathers in different communities is needed. The culture of fatherhood in community is very diverse and dynamic even in the same country (Marsiglio et al., 2000; Li & Lamb, 2012:25). Fathers' attitude and practice may be more complicated in real-life situation.

What the previous researches have done, can only reflect some parts of local fathers' situations. Besides, the further research on how migrant fathers' attitude and practice change in the globalization is also essential, just as Abbott, Ming and Meredith (1992:45) said "Even in countries that have been isolated and insulated from Western cultural influence are now being affected by the economic and social forces in the wider world."

Secondly, how much of fatherhood has really changed still requires further analysis, just as Takabashi argues that there is no strong correlation between father's actual attitude and practice. (Takabashi,1986:104). Do the expectations of "new" fathers are just "old" wine in a "new" bottle (Beşpınar, 2015:98)? It should be noted that even mothers have a full-time job, they still do the majority of childcare and housework in most of the countries (Doucet, 2013:299). Moreover, multidisciplinary study and oral history methodologies on fatherhood are required. In order to know more about whether mothers' role and father's role can be equal, an effective way is to use oral history methods to let fathers tell their own stories about their division role in family education and the real benefit they receive from the public system and social welfare.

Thirdly, more cross-cultural studies on shifting fatherhood in developing countries and some matriarchal society are essential. Although there are an increasing number of studies focusing on fathers' involvement, educational research and theories on fathering have tended to be dominated by Western viewpoints or assumptions (Lamb, 1988; Wei Dong, 2013). Relatively little systematic comparative research has been conducted regarding contemporary East Asian fathers and their patterns of interaction with their children. In addition, when we consider the mainstream social formation today, we also should pay attention to these "living fossils" of studying matriarchal society where fathers stay at home for childcare and doing housework: Chinese Mosou who lived near the Lugu Lake in Yunan Province and the Minority of Baiku Yao in Guangxi Province, the Iroquois tribes in North America, and The Amis Tribes in Taiwan.

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