

Intergenerational Transmission of Fatherhood Norms

*Investigating the entanglements between fatherhood,
masculinity, and memory*

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, academic literature has indicated an expansion of understandings of masculinity and fathering in contemporary Western society, shifting from hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1980s) towards 'caring masculinity'¹ (inspired by the concept of universal caregiver, Fraser, 1977; developed by Elliott, 2016, amongst others). Despite the enthusiasm surrounding the latter's emergence, critics have both challenged the temptation to overly simplify these ideas into a 'new' vs 'traditional' father² (Dermott); and questioned whether 'involved fathering' (key characteristic of caring masculinity) is more cultural ideal than material reality, with such fathering potentially representing re-creations of patriarchal dominance in new guises (Hearn, Gatrell, Ranson amongst others)³.

This research seeks to introduce the study of memory to this intersection between fatherhood and masculinity studies, in order to test the academic hypothesis of a shift in fatherhood model by investigating the prevalence of fatherhood norms within the Netherlands - specifically the influence of childhood memory in their intergenerational transmission. In other words, researching how an individual's memory of the experience of being fathered shapes the parameters of their own engagement with, and/or adoption of, fatherhood norms, and how this ties in with their understanding, performance, and valuation of masculinity.

This research adopts an hermeneutic-phenomenological methodology, and a mixed-methods research design incorporating a survey (in Dutch) followed by semi-structured interviews (in English) to contextualise survey findings through personal stories, focusing more explicitly on childhood memories.

The goal of this research is to understand how fatherhood norms are remembered and to what extent these are transferred, in order to break negative fathering cycles in the advance towards gender equality.

¹ Hunter, S., Riggs, D. and Augoustinos, M. "Hegemonic Masculinity versus a Caring Masculinity: Implications for Understanding Primary Caregiving Fathers" p.1

² Ibid. p.4

³ Miller, T. "Gendered Discourses: Men, Masculinities and Fatherhood" p.43

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INTRODUCTION

Being a feminist, for me, means critically questioning societal norms and expectations - breaking down those imposed on us as individuals, deconstructing the broader hierarchies we are placed into, and understanding the implications of our position for those around us. In the western, neoliberal, heteronormative world, certain 'ideal' characteristics are expected from women (to be deferential, nurturing, and 'soft') in contrast to those expected from men (to be assertive, 'tough', and competitive). These gendered characteristics are aligned with traditional assigned gender roles: women as carers and men as providers - functions which are most visible, and exert the most pressure, within the family setting. The family, in all its varied compositions, develops and shapes future generations by being the first environment to which everyone is exposed, with parents (of all forms) serving as the first role models children learn from.

My interest in the notion of 'family' has deepened since becoming a mother to a daughter, prompting a renewed urgency to questions such as: how will growing up in a late-capitalist western society inform her approach to gender roles? How will her relationship with her father shape her understanding of masculinity? How will observing her parents' relationship influence her expectations of a partner? Whilst I have an (gendered) insight on these issues through my personal experience of motherhood, through conversations with fellow mothers, through accessing academic writings on motherhood, and through a new perspective on my own childhood memories, I realised I knew very little about men's perceptions of, and engagement with, parenting. As I began reading fatherhood studies, it quickly became apparent how deeply constructions and understandings of fatherhood and masculinity are intertwined⁴.

In contemporary western society, the 'breadwinner' fatherhood model⁵ - being rooted in a traditional gendered division of labour - is enmeshed with hegemonic masculinity, as the primary expectations for fathers reflect dominant masculine norms such as providing and a lack of emotional expression⁶. In recent years, the 'involved' father - widely used and understood to

⁴ Hunter, S., Riggs, D. and Augoustinos, M. "Hegemonic Masculinity versus a Caring Masculinity" p.2

⁵ The ideal of the husband as the sole earner, to which much social prestige was attached - Brannen, J. and Nilsen, A. "From Fatherhood to Fathering" p.336

⁶ Petts, R., Shafer, K. and Essig, L. "Does Adherence to Masculine Norms Shape Fathering Behaviour?" p.704

mean a more emotionally involved, caring, and “hands-on” father⁷ - has emerged, key to which is active father involvement. Whilst the ‘essential father’ hypothesis⁸ has faced significant criticism, the power and influence of father involvement is widely accepted. Active father involvement has been found to encourage less gender stereotyping among young adults and to develop independence in daughters and emotional sensitivity in sons⁹. Within the Netherlands, active father involvement is promoted through a growing emphasis on a father’s role as carer, not just provider, which is articulated in public discourse, law, and social policy¹⁰.

The ‘involved’ father model is associated with a new ‘caring’ masculinity (which proposes that men are able to adopt what are viewed as traditionally feminine characteristics without departing from or rejecting masculinity¹¹), which has stimulated much academic debate: does ‘caring’ masculinity mitigate gendered expectations? To what extent has ‘caring’ masculinity and the ‘involved father’ model supplanted the established notion of hegemonic masculinity and the traditional ‘breadwinner’ model? Is ‘caring’ masculinity better conceptualised as a broadening of hegemonic masculinity to include roles more traditionally undertaken by women?

In the Netherlands - as reflected in the changing discourses, practices, and laws concerning fatherhood - this pattern of re-emphasising and re-defining the role of fathers and the position of fatherhood¹² is evident. Using memory as an entry point, this research seeks to test this academic hypothesis of a shift from ‘breadwinner’ fathers exhibiting hegemonic masculinity to ‘involved’ fathers embracing ‘caring’ masculinity, by investigating the prevalence of fatherhood norms within the Dutch context, focusing on fathers in ‘traditional contexts’ (i.e. biological fathers residing with the children and their mothers¹³). In other words, examining how an individual’s memory of the experience of being fathered shapes the parameters of their own engagement with, and/or adoption of, fatherhood norms, and how this ties in with their understanding, performance, and valuation of masculinity. To this end, the research question of this study is: **how does the memory of the experience of being fathered shape Dutch fathers’ own adoption of fatherhood norms, and associated understandings of masculinity?**

⁷ Miller, T. “Gendered Discourses: Men, Masculinities and Fatherhood” p.50

⁸ The essential father hypothesis holds that fathers make an essential, unique, and, more specifically, uniquely male contribution to child development - Pleck, J. “Fatherhood and Masculinity” p.27

⁹ Coltrane, S. “Fathering: Paradoxes, Contradictions and Dilemmas” p.235

¹⁰ Knijn, T. and Selten, P. “Transformations of Fatherhood: the Netherlands” pp.168-173

¹¹ Hunter, S., Riggs, D. and Augoustinos, M. “Hegemonic Masculinity versus a Caring Masculinity” p.3

¹² Knijn, T. and Selten, P. “Transformations of Fatherhood: the Netherlands” p.169

¹³ Lamb, M. and Lewis, C. “Father-child relationships’ p.119

The goal is to understand how fatherhood norms are remembered and to what extent these are transferred, in order to break negative fatherhood cycles in the advance towards gender equality. Intergenerational transmission covers a variety of aspects, including values, status inheritance, social learning and parent-child relationships that are structured by the parents' socio-economic status and gender. Children's inheritance occurs as they model themselves or seek to identify with (or differentiate themselves from) their mothers and fathers in habitual, bodily and visual ways¹⁴. Research has shown that a father's relationship with his own father may be a factor in contributing to his own role identification, sense of commitment and self-efficacy¹⁵.

My thesis is structured as follows: in chapter one, I introduce the three academic fields which have provided the theoretical framework for my research, and explain my hermeneutic phenomenological methodology. I then outline the design, implementation, and analysis of my methods, including a reflexive discussion. Finally, I comment on the ethical considerations of this research. Chapters two and three present the analysis of my research findings, which are twofold: that Dutch fathers' conceptualisations (and self-reported enactments) of a 'good' father closely align with the academic definition of the 'involved' fatherhood model, intertwined with 'caring' masculinity and increased gender equality; and that Dutch fathers remember their fathers in sharp contrast to their own self-perception in their role as fathers, referring to their childhood experiences as driving their commitment to 'do better' by their own children.

¹⁴ Brannen, J. *Fathers and Sons* p.123

¹⁵ Doherty, W., Kouneski, E. and Erickson, M. "Responsible Fathering" p.288

CHAPTER ONE

Theoretical framework: fatherhood

In scholarly writing the term 'fatherhood' is used in two different ways: parental status (being a biological father or 'social father' to children who are not their biological offspring) and fathering (fathers' parenting of their children, of which the most widely used measuring tool is paternal involvement)¹⁶. As the former reflects a normative set of social expectations, and the latter is shaped by social forces¹⁷, both can be understood as social constructs. Therefore I use the terms interchangeably, according to context or quotation.

Emerging in the 1970s, research on fathering is now a well-established area of cross-disciplinary and international scholarship¹⁸, although most research is limited to fathers living in various western industrialised countries¹⁹. Different 'epochs' of fathering have been theorised, with each historical period being underpinned by distinct paradigms that provide cultural guidelines on what is expected in performing the role: initially, fathers were responsible for the moral and educational needs of their children ('moral teacher'); with the onset of the industrial revolution, a gendered division of labour between 'nurturing' and 'providing' roles was cemented ('breadwinner'); fathers were subsequently deemed crucial to showing young men how the male fitted into family life in a positive fashion ('sex role model'); most recently, fathers are judged on their involvement with their children²⁰ ('involved father'). Since the 1990s, this most recent purported shift has prompted a burgeoning scholarly and popular interest in fathering, rooted in rapidly changing gender roles and relationships at home and in the workplace²¹, particularly within the Global North. A confluence of factors have contributed to these changes²².

This new fatherhood ideal ('involved father') expects contemporary fathers to be highly involved in parenting, contribute significant time to housework, and be an engaged and equitable spouse,

¹⁶ Pleck, J. "Fatherhood and Masculinity" p.29

¹⁷ Coltrane, S. "Fathering: Paradoxes, Contradictions and Dilemmas" p.225

¹⁸ Doucet, A. *Do Men Mother?* p.8

¹⁹ Marsiglio, W. and Pleck, J. "Fatherhood and Masculinities" p.249

²⁰ Lamb, as referenced in Williams, S. "What Is Fatherhood?" pp.488-9

²¹ Doucet, A. "Gender Roles and Fathering" p.297

²² Factors including the growth of women's employment, the rise in feminist consciousness, the collapse of traditional sectors of male employment, and technological culture - Brannen, J. *Fathers and Sons* p.100

partner or co-parent²³. Brandth and Kvande have argued that despite the apparent gender-equal principles underpinning this ideal, 'involved' fathers have created their own platform in care work, which they term 'masculine care', characterised by becoming friends with the child and teaching them independence. 'Masculine care' is typically granted higher status than maternal practice (including by the mothers themselves) resulting in masculinity as the norm being reproduced²⁴.

The emerging discourse of the 'involved' father does not necessarily mean a move entirely away from expectations of being a financial provider, but, rather, increasing expectations for fathers to be *more* than just a financial provider²⁵. Consequently, critics have challenged the temptation to overly simplify these ideas into a 'new' versus 'traditional' (breadwinner) father, particularly due to the complexity of modern fathering in an age of rapid social change, which is contributing to a revision of the boundaries between femininity and masculinity (and, in turn, motherhood and fatherhood)²⁶. Critics also highlight the existence of a two-tier family system based to a large extent on social class²⁷, with the shift towards involved fathering associated primarily with white, middle-to-upper class fathers.

Understandings of fathering - a complex cultural and ideological construction which is continuously negotiated and reconstructed - are shaped by cultural, political, and economic contexts²⁸. Fatherhood cannot be understood separately from masculinity as fatherhood is a gendered experience, a gendered identity, and a gendered sense of self in relation to others²⁹.

Theoretical framework: masculinity

Masculinity refers to the behaviours, social roles, and relations of men within a given society as well as the meanings attributed to them - the term stresses *gender*, unlike 'male', which stresses *biological sex*³⁰.

²³ Petts, R., Shafer, K. and Essig, L. "Does Adherence to Masculine Norms Shape Fathering Behaviour?" p.705

²⁴ Brandth, B. and Kvande, E. "Masculinity and Child Care" pp.305-10

²⁵ Hunter, S., Riggs, D. and Augoustinos, M. "Hegemonic Masculinity versus a Caring Masculinity" p.5

²⁶ Williams, S. "What Is Fatherhood?" p.489

²⁷ Parke, R. and Cookston, J. "Commentary: Many Types of Fathers, Many Types of Contexts" p.133

²⁸ Hunter, S., Riggs, D. and Augoustinos, M. "Hegemonic Masculinity versus a Caring Masculinity" p.2

²⁹ Townsend, N. "Fathers of Fathers: Kinship and Gender" p.192

³⁰ Kimmel, M. and Bridges, T. "Masculinity"

Gottzén, Mellström, and Shefer³¹ describe the emergence of the field in the 1980s as being driven by white, western, pro-feminist men (mainly sociologists), following earlier feminist and gay researchers' theorisations on the role of men and masculinity in society, which precipitated an explicit inquiry into men *as men*. Originally called men's studies, the field grew considerably over the following decades. Masculinity studies today is a well-established part of interdisciplinary gender research, integrating theoretical insights from 'third wave' feminism and its poststructuralist and postcolonial influences, as well as queer and sexuality studies, and intersectional theory³².

Scholars often refer to masculinities, in the plural, to highlight the diversity of meanings, roles, and behaviours consumed in the term, with masculinity varying historically, cross-culturally, intrapsychically, and contextually³³. Hegemonic masculinity, at the pinnacle of the relational gender order, works to legitimise and maintain patriarchal relations - it is the masculinity that is most dominant and culturally exalted at any given time (although its ascendancy is not fixed, responding to societal changes and challenges, mutating accordingly)³⁴. In contemporary Western society, hegemonic masculinity is strongly associated with income-generating work, and income-generating work is considered a central source of masculine identity³⁵. Connell later (2000) developed the concept to assert that even those men who do not live up to this cultural ideal still acknowledge its existence and are complicit in sustaining it, as they are able to enjoy the advantages from the general subordination of women and men positioned outside of the ideal³⁶, thanks to their relative superiority in the gender hierarchy.

Families are the initial site where masculinities are constructed and fathers are the first models shaping their sons' masculinities³⁷, therefore the development of fatherhood research is closely tied to the expanding area of gender studies, specifically masculinity studies³⁸. In recent years, academic literature has indicated an expansion of understandings of masculinity and fathering in contemporary Western society, with increased father involvement resulting in a purported shift from hegemonic masculinity towards 'caring' masculinity³⁹. This has been conceptualised by

³¹ In their introduction to the Routledge International Handbook of Masculinity Studies

³² Gottzén, L., Mellström, U., and Shefer, T. "Introduction" pp.1-4

³³ Kimmel, M. and Bridges, T. "Masculinity"

³⁴ Elliott, K. "Caring Masculinities" p.245

³⁵ Brandth, B. and Kvande, E. p.296

³⁶ Hunter, S., Riggs, D. and Augoustinos, M. p.2

³⁷ Brannen, J. *Fathers and Sons* p.101

³⁸ Johnansson, T. and Andreasson, J. "Theoretical Explorations of Fatherhood" p.17

³⁹ Hunter, S., Riggs, D. and Augoustinos, M. p.1

Elliott as masculine identities that reject domination and its associated traits, instead embracing values of care such as positive emotion, interdependence, and relationality⁴⁰. Critics have questioned whether ‘involved fathering’, the fatherhood model most closely associated with ‘caring’ masculinity, is more cultural ideal than material reality, and argued that such fathering potentially signals ‘recreations of patriarchal dominance’ in new guises amidst ‘male fears about the erosion of masculine authority’⁴¹. Rather than an evolution of masculinity, with ‘caring’ masculinities superseding hegemonic masculinity, those who meet current norms and expectations of hegemonic masculinity are afforded the luxury to be involved in caregiving - ideas surrounding ‘caring’ masculinity are therefore argued to be better understood as a broadening of hegemonic masculinity to include roles more traditionally undertaken by women⁴².

This research grapples with these models within the Dutch context, through talking with fathers about both their conceptualisations of their own fatherhood identity and their memories of their fathers’ engagement with them as children.

Theoretical framework: memory

For modern psychological-neurological science, memory is understood as the processes by which information is encoded, stored, and retrieved, or, in other words, a property and capacity of the human brain⁴³. Memory functions at both the individual level (as attributions that we make about our mental experiences based on their subjective qualities, our prior knowledge and beliefs, our motives and goals, and the social context⁴⁴, typically associated with psychoanalysis); and the collective (identities forged through shared experiences of living through specific historical events, typically associated with the social sciences, also known as cultural memory).

For the purpose of this research, memory is conceptualised as a direct, non-inferential feeling of reacquaintance with one’s past - memory is not the content of experience, but the manner in

⁴⁰ Elliott, K. “Caring Masculinities” p.240

⁴¹ Miller, T. “Gendered Discourses: Men, Masculinities and Fatherhood” p.43

⁴² Hunter, S., Riggs, D. and Augoustinos, M. p.6

⁴³ Ruin, H. “Anamnemic Subjectivity” p.199

⁴⁴ Johnson, M. “Memory and reality” p.760

which that content is experienced⁴⁵. This more circumscribed view is informed by my phenomenological methodology. Although the nature, location, and significance of memory was always ambiguous in philosophical hermeneutical writings, the phenomenon of memory, as the very condition for self-knowledge and self-awareness of subjectivity, is in fact at the heart of the hermeneutic experience⁴⁶. Therefore memory is used in this research as a methodological tool to engage with the core themes of fatherhood and masculinity.

Methodology

This research takes a hermeneutic-phenomenological approach with a feminist foundation. Phenomenological research attempts to return to embodied, experiential meanings, aiming for fresh, complex, rich descriptions of a phenomenon as it is concretely lived⁴⁷. Phenomenology - a philosophy, approach, and method - is associated with Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), and can be understood as a radical and anti-traditional style of philosophising which attempts to get to the truth of matters, to describe *phenomena*, in the broadest sense, as whatever appears in the manner in which it appears⁴⁸. In research, Husserlian phenomenology⁴⁹ is primarily descriptive, seeking to illuminate issues in a radical, unprejudiced manner, paying close attention to the evidence that presents itself to our grasp or intuition⁵⁰.

The validity of this approach has been queried, resulting in the emergence of new orientations. Heidegger (1889-1976) radically reinterpreted phenomenology as hermeneutic (interpretive), by arguing that presuppositions are not to be suspended, as they are what constitute the possibility of intelligibility or meaning⁵¹. Researchers instead need to come to an awareness of their pre-existing beliefs, which then makes it possible to examine and question them in light of new

⁴⁵ Klein, S. "What Memory Is" p.1

⁴⁶ Ruin, H. "Anamnestic Subjectivity" pp.202-205

⁴⁷ Finlay, L. "Debating Phenomenological Research Methods" p.6

⁴⁸ Moran, D. *Introduction to Phenomenology* p.4

⁴⁹ Husserl's phenomenology (transcendental) emphasises a return to reflective intuition to describe and clarify experience as it is lived and constituted in consciousness (Ray, M. "The Richness of Phenomenology" p.118). Husserl argued that the origins of phenomena are typically lost in the haste of our everyday thought, and as such *phenomenological reduction* is key to his approach (Cohen, M. and Omery, A. "Schools of Phenomenology" p.138). Also referred to as *epoché* or *bracketing*, this is a reflective process whereby we put aside our understanding, opinion, and prejudice of a phenomenon and go back directly to the experience of the phenomenon, finding the meaning of the thing itself (Dibley, L. et. al. *Doing Hermeneutic Phenomenological Research* p.8)

⁵⁰ Moran, quoted in Dibley, L. et. al. *Doing Hermeneutic Phenomenological Research* p.6

⁵¹ Ray, M. "The Richness of Phenomenology" p.120

evidence - researchers' subjectivity should therefore be placed in the foreground⁵². In this way, and thanks also to a common focus on lived experience as a key place from which to build knowledge⁵³, hermeneutic phenomenology can be aligned with a feminist approach - a conceptualisation of objectivity as situated knowledges, with only partial perspective promising objective vision⁵⁴. As such, feminist scholars⁵⁵ have engaged with the phenomenological tradition⁵⁶.

Heidegger moved away from Husserl's epistemological focus towards an ontological thesis that lived experience is itself essentially an interpretive process⁵⁷. For Heidegger, hermeneutics was the interpretive method by which one goes beyond mere description of what is manifest and tries to uncover hidden meanings by anticipatory devices⁵⁸. In research, Heideggerian hermeneutic-phenomenology is both descriptive and interpretive, with meaning residing within the context of the experience⁵⁹.

Gadamer (1900-2002), a student and stalwart supporter of Heidegger, expanded on the latter's thinking by reminding readers that understanding is achieved only through language and openness to the perspectives of other beings⁶⁰. Gadamer advanced two key concepts in hermeneutics: *universality* (persons who express themselves and persons who understand are connected by a common human consciousness, which makes understanding possible) and *prejudices* (preconceptions that are part of our linguistic experience and that make understanding possible)⁶¹. As self-interpreting beings, we have our own horizon of understanding that comes from our past experiences, our social, historical and disciplinary perspectives⁶² - when another (person or text) provokes our prejudices, of which we may have been unaware, the two vantage points question each other, resulting in the co-creation of a new position, a *fusion of horizons*. As horizons are open, the fusion is ongoing between one party and another, but also between past, present, and future understandings and potentially between

⁵² Finlay, L. "Debating Phenomenological Research Methods" p.12

⁵³ Hesse-Biber, S. "Feminist Research" p.2

⁵⁴ Haraway, D. "Situated Knowledges" pp.581-3

⁵⁵ Feminist philosophers of the body, including Bartky, Young, and Diprose; feminist queer scholars, including Fryer; and feminist antiracist scholars, including Fanon and Alcoff

⁵⁶ Ahmed, S. *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* p.4

⁵⁷ Cohen, M. and Omery, A. "Schools of Phenomenology" p.148

⁵⁸ Cohen, M. and Omery, A. "Schools of Phenomenology" p.146

⁵⁹ Palmer, 1969 - quoted in Dibley, L. et. al. *Doing Hermeneutic Phenomenological Research* p.19

⁶⁰ Vandermause, R. and Fleming, S. "Philosophical Hermeneutic Interviewing" p.369

⁶¹ Ray, M. "The Richness of Phenomenology" p.124

⁶² Dibley, L. et. al. *Doing Hermeneutic Phenomenological Research* p.115

what is said and not said⁶³. This circular process occurs throughout a hermeneutic-phenomenological study, and is known as the *hermeneutic circle*.

In order to embrace the phenomenological attitude I sought to identify my prejudices surrounding fatherhood and memory through the use of a journal⁶⁴. I considered how I became interested in the topic, reflected on my (lack of) personal experience of the phenomenon, and interrogated my beliefs as to what makes a 'good' father. Through this process, I came to the realisation that:

- I held an expectation of 'progress' down family lines - assuming a universal understanding, and goal, of gender equality, with a singular view of the desired direction of 'progress'
- I rejected traditionally gendered characteristics and/or roles - assuming a common, agreed dismissal of such characteristics' gendered nature and overlooking their adoption driven by other factors; inhibiting alternative frameworks of understanding
- I held a heteronormative view of family, approaching this topic through the limited prism of two-parent, opposite-sex households - assuming this represented the 'standard' family in which the phenomenon of inherited fatherhood norms would be most visible
- I expected active reflection from participants in trying to get to the root of their views and/or actions - assuming that, because they had volunteered, participants would have already engaged with this topic, and that the source of their fatherhood performance could be neatly connected to a single influence

I continued to apply hermeneutic-phenomenological methodology throughout the research journey by adopting meditative thinking - characterised as being iterative, ongoing, focused and congruent with an open hermeneutic stance⁶⁵ - channelled through my use of a reflexive diary, which brought together my prejudices journal and interview field notes, alongside daily musings and critical observations on participants' stories and the impact of my own politics of location. This enabled hermeneutic reflection, or the dialectic of interpreting the meaning of the research

⁶³ Spence, D. "Supervising for Robust Hermeneutic Phenomenology" p.838

⁶⁴ From a Gadamerian perspective, prejudices "*enable us to make sense of the situations in which we find ourselves yet, paradoxically, they may also constrain understanding and limit the capacity to come to new ways of being*" (Spence, D. "Supervising for Robust Hermeneutic Phenomenology" p.837). This exercise facilitated an understanding of my prejudices and a critical eye on the ways in which these influence the research process - resulting in an improved awareness of my starting point.

⁶⁵ Dibley, L. et. al. *Doing Hermeneutic Phenomenological Research* p.116

data by reflecting on the parts/themes and moving to the meaning of the whole in relation to the respective theory⁶⁶ - a continuous hermeneutic circle.

Methods

Qualitative research in fatherhood research tends to elicit rich descriptions from individuals about how fatherhood has affected them, yet faces questions of robustness and generalisability of the findings, due to a typically small, selective sample with little variance across contexts. On the other hand, quantitative research, although identifying broad patterns in the effects of fatherhood across different contexts thanks to a typically larger and more varied sample, tends to be limited in detail⁶⁷. Combining the two is synergistic, in that one method enables the other to be more effective, and together both provide a fuller understanding of the research problem - bringing depth and texture to feminist research⁶⁸. Therefore, I chose to adopt a mixed-methods research design in the form of a survey supplemented with hermeneutic interviews.

Quantitative: survey

This research project began during my internship with Emancipator as part of my MA, during which I designed and launched a survey which investigated the influence of childhood memory in the transmission of fatherhood norms. The study focused on men's performance of fatherhood (through self-perception, engagement with children, and involvement with household tasks) within the framework of their memory of their own father's parenting approach, and how both are influenced by cultural masculinity norms.

The survey was inspired by the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES)⁶⁹, which offers the most comprehensive studies to date on men's practices and attitudes as they relate to gender norms, attitudes toward gender equality policies, household dynamics including

⁶⁶ Ray, M. "The Richness of Phenomenology" p.125

⁶⁷ Eggebeen, D., Knoester, C. and McDaniel, B. "The Implications of Fatherhood for Men" p.342

⁶⁸ Hesse-Biber, S. *Feminist Research Practice* pp.363-79

⁶⁹ IMAGES was created and is coordinated by Promundo and the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW). Its goal is to add to our understanding of men's behaviours and attitudes - and changes in those attitudes and behaviours - to inform, drive, and monitor policy development to promote gender equality by engaging men and women in such policies (Sleggh, H. and Kimonyo, A. *Masculinity and Gender Based Violence in Rwanda* p.7)

caregiving and men's involvement as fathers, and more⁷⁰. My survey was an abridged and adapted version, retaining relevant questions regarding fatherhood, childcare, and relationships but adapted to the Dutch context, supplemented by additional questions drawn from academic literature, specifically fatherhood and masculinity studies.

I developed the survey in English before it was translated into Dutch by a native speaker, reviewed by a second Dutch native, then programmed in Dutch on the Qualtrics platform (online). It was live 23 February - 13 March. The survey was open to all fathers living across the Netherlands who met the eligibility criteria:

- Father of one or more (biological and/or adopted) children
- Lives with their children and the mother of their children
- Lived with their father in the same household when they were growing up

Eligibility criteria were used due to the limited timeframe and resources of this study, to ensure that sound comparisons could be drawn (a) between participants' households and that of their parents, and (b) between participants. The dataset is therefore drawn from a nonprobability sample⁷¹. The survey consisted of 38 base questions which were shown to all respondents, with a total of 58 questions possible⁷², dependent on answers given. Questions were close-ended, which, although it can limit richness and variety, is beneficial for participation as they are quicker and easier to answer, making individuals more likely to respond⁷³. Engagement was further encouraged through the use of a multiple choice format throughout the survey, with the exception of four matrices and one free text question.

The survey was distributed to relevant Emancipator partners for them to share with members of the target group present in their network, as well as being promoted more broadly on social media. Convenience sampling⁷⁴ was central to the distribution of the survey: 23 responses were initiated via the anonymous link which was distributed via email, and 68 via social media. Upon

⁷⁰ Promundo, "International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES)"

⁷¹ Nonprobability sample: not representative of the population, therefore findings can only be applied to the particular group of individuals who participated (Miner, K. and Jayaratne, T. "Feminist Survey Research" p.316)

⁷² Questions were divided into four categories: you and your household; you and your child(ren); support for fathers; your upbringing; followed by a short section on socio-demographic characteristics and employment

⁷³ Miner, K. and Jayaratne, T. "Feminist Survey Research" p.314

⁷⁴ Convenience sampling: recruiting participants from places where they are easily accessible (Miner, K. and Jayaratne, T. "Feminist Survey Research" p.316)

closing, 91 responses had been started, with 65 passing the screening, of which the 40 most complete responses form the dataset referred to in this study. The dataset was determined by completion of the four matrices⁷⁵, as:

- These are duplicate questions and as such serve to draw direct comparisons between participant and parents of participant households
- These are the longest questions and as such are a strong indicator for completion of the survey as a whole

Some of these 40 respondents skipped some questions therefore this dataset represents the most, but not always fully, complete data. I created widgets to visualise this dataset's response to each question⁷⁶, individually editing these to present the data in the most user-friendly way and to align with Emancipator branding. The findings of the survey, along with detailed data analysis and a contextual introduction on the academic framing, were written up into an internal report for Emancipator, including recommendations for immediate and longer-term actions. I also wrote a blog, published on Emancipator's website and promoted via their monthly newsletter, reflecting on my experience as an intern and sharing the headline findings of the survey.

Introducing the survey sample

Survey participants are middle-class, middle-aged, highly educated, secular, white men in nuclear families:

- Class: all participants are employed or self-employed, with the largest grouping (41%) earning €3-4,000/month post-tax, followed by (31%) those earning €2-3,000/month post-tax. The majority are breadwinners (71% earn the main source of income), with the substantial majority (63%) working 30-38hrs/week
- Age: 43% are aged 36-45, with the second largest grouping (33%) aged 46-59

⁷⁵ Matrix question: group of multiple-choice questions displayed in a grid of rows and columns. The rows present the questions to the respondents, and the columns offer a set of predefined answer choices that apply to each question in the row. Very often the answer choices are on a scale. Matrix questions are well-known to be disliked by survey participants, increasing disengagement, however they were the best format for gaining direct comparison data across a range of options and so were used in the survey on four occasions

⁷⁶ Final dataset visualisation can be found in the appendix

- Education: 43% completed WO, with the second largest grouping (38%) completing HBO
- Religion: participants are almost entirely (93%) non-religious, with those who self-identify as religious following Christian denominations (Protestant and Roman Catholic)
- Race: ethnically homogenous sample with 88% considering themselves white Dutch
- Sexual orientation: as per the criteria for the survey, all participants are in co-habiting heterosexual relationships

Qualitative: interviews

Five survey participants expressed interest in taking part in an interview, I ultimately interviewed three of these fathers⁷⁷ with a fourth interviewee reaching out to me having read my blog. The interviews took place across two weeks in May at varying locations across the Netherlands as determined by participants, and were conducted in English. This qualitative research explored the effects of lived childhood experiences (specifically, the relation with one's father) on how masculinity and fatherhood are understood and performed. Interviews, by generating new ways of seeing the existing data⁷⁸ provided by the survey, allowed me to focus more explicitly on the role of memory in the intergenerational transmission of fatherhood norms.

Vandermause and Fleming describe the philosophical hermeneutic interview as a distinctive form of questioning that requires fidelity to the philosophical assumptions consistent with Heideggerian and Gadamerian thought. The method seeks to understand (come to know) meaning and to make sense of experience, for which the researcher must remain open to unexpected or unfamiliar responses, making space for an interactive exchange to manifest. The goal of the investigator is to co-create the findings with the participant through an engaged conversational process enabling a dialogic intersection (*fusion of horizons*) and the emergence of a narrative text - as the stories are elicited, the interpretation begins⁷⁹.

In keeping with this method, interviewees were aware of the phenomenon under investigation in advance, granting them time to think about their respective experiences more deeply. I used a

⁷⁷ Those interested in an interview voluntarily provided their contact details upon completing the survey. Of the original five, one withdrew citing burnout and the other ceased contact

⁷⁸ Morse, J. and Richards, L. *Readme First for a User's Guide to Qualitative Methods* p.28

⁷⁹ Vandermause, R. and Fleming, S. "Philosophical Hermeneutic Interviewing" pp.369-70

broad opening question⁸⁰ to engage the participant in their experience and draw out what they consider most important, rather than directing and leading to an expected answer⁸¹. By inviting participants to talk about 'what stands out' when thinking about their experience so far as a father, and then again when thinking about their childhood memories of their own father, a participant-driven dynamic is established - this is distinctively different from other forms of interviews where representation of events in a journalistic fashion is sought⁸². I used follow-up clarifying questions and engaged in active listening to reassure participants that I was hearing their story, further encouraging them to talk at length, inviting them to explore and expand on their thoughts and feelings, revealing the experience itself⁸³.

As well as setting the tone, hermeneutic interviews are characterised by the researcher's use of incomplete sentences (to draw the participant into the conversation without signalling a presupposed response) and search for assent (to secure the participant's affirmation that the growing understanding is correct)⁸⁴. I attempted to deliver this, although I was conscious of the added layer of difficulty this could entail for participants considering they were being interviewed in English, their second (or possibly even third) language. The final distinguishing feature of the hermeneutic interview is returning the participant to the story of the phenomena being explored should they get distracted⁸⁵ - this was the most testing aspect as I sometimes lacked confidence in striking an appropriate balance between steering the conversation and giving the participant space to reveal their own experiences.

Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, featuring notes on non-audible communication which may facilitate deeper consideration of meaning. I solicited demographic information from participants and wrote field notes⁸⁶ following each interaction, outlining my initial impressions and reflecting on my feelings about the exchange. These multiple sources of data were analysed via the hermeneutic circle: I moved back and forth between my pre-understanding, taken-for granted knowledge, and new evidence; going from the parts to the whole and back again in a rigorous, circular process of questioning, writing and thinking, in which data is instrumental to accessing understanding⁸⁷.

⁸⁰ Interview guide can be found in the appendix

⁸¹ Dibley, L. et. al. *Doing Hermeneutic Phenomenological Research* p.100

⁸² Vandermause, R. and Fleming, S. "Philosophical Hermeneutic Interviewing" p.372

⁸³ Dibley, L. et. al. *Doing Hermeneutic Phenomenological Research* p.101

⁸⁴ Vandermause, R. and Fleming, S. "Philosophical Hermeneutic Interviewing" p.373

⁸⁵ Vandermause, R. and Fleming, S. "Philosophical Hermeneutic Interviewing" p.374

⁸⁶ Field notes can be found in the appendix

⁸⁷ Dibley, L. et. al. *Doing Hermeneutic Phenomenological Research* p.118

In practical terms, this ongoing, non-linear and iterative process took the form of multiple readings of the interview transcripts⁸⁸ before I 'dwelt with the data', allowing thoughts and ideas to 'bubble up', whilst reading along with the literature to dialogue with the data. This hermeneutic circle culminated in a fusion of horizons between myself and the four participants which is presented here. With this thesis, I do not attempt to provide a definitive answer of what the experience of fatherhood norms in connection to childhood memory 'is' for everyone, but rather present a plausible, contextualised, and credible account of what this experience means for this particular set of participants - readers of this thesis will make their own meaning, when the knowledge and experience they bring fuses with the text⁸⁹.

Introducing the interviewees

- Thijs (34) lives in Weesp with his wife (12+ year relationship) and two young children, Edith (5) and Otis (4)
- Martin (74) lives in Utrecht with his wife (50+ year relationship) with whom he has one grown up daughter, Marijke
- Jouwert (52) lives in an agricultural university town not far from Utrecht, with his wife (30+ year relationship) with whom he has three children (aged 18-21)
- Marcel (55) lives in the Hague with his wife (25+ year relationship) with whom he has two sons, Luca (24) and Max (19)

Reflexive methodological discussion

In conducting interviews, as well as adhering to the hermeneutic interviewing style, consistent with my broader hermeneutic-phenomenological methodology, I also had to remain aware of the complex role that gender and other psycho-social, environmental and biographical factors can play in shaping interpersonal dynamics and thus the character of the data produced⁹⁰. Debates about the effects of differences between the interviewer and research participant in qualitative

⁸⁸ Multiple readings: first to gain a general overall impression; then for initial coding and identifying a rudimentary list of emerging themes; then to enable an interpretive summary to be written including identifying relevant supportive verbatim quotes

⁸⁹ Dibley, L. et. al. *Doing Hermeneutic Phenomenological Research* p.128

⁹⁰ Broom, A., Hand, K. and Tovey, P. "The role of gender, environment and Individual biography in shaping qualitative interview data" p.61

interviews have been led by feminist researchers since the 1980s, with gender as the primary focus⁹¹. There is extensive existing literature addressing women-women qualitative interviews with an emerging literature on women interviewing men⁹².

Some questions I considered when approaching these interviews include: how will the gendered power dynamics recalibrate my privileged position as researcher? How will gender be performed in these interviews considering both (a) the topic under investigation being a traditionally 'feminine' responsibility, and (b) the social expectation for women to be passive listeners in the presence of a male narrative? Will pressure to enact a certain gender performance limit topics of discussion and/or particular means of expression? Equally, in the opposite direction, how will *my* gender performance affect the interviewee by encouraging or inhibiting them from saying certain things? How might my responses legitimate, or not, interviewee's gender performance, and how will this influence the direction of the conversation?

These considerations were heightened for this research as it specifically addresses understandings and enactments of masculinity in connection to fatherhood. Whilst the research topic focuses on the extent to which fathers inherit, and how they engage with, norms through their memories of formative experiences, the ways they present said selected memories and the ways they present themselves within a gender-incongruent interview, are revealing. An implication of the psychosocial understanding of masculinity - as a 'gender performance', something that is 'accomplished' in social interactions as the product of intersubjective relations and internal defences - is that men will be motivated by a desire to prove their masculinity in the context of being interviewed about issues that touch on masculine identity, such as fatherhood⁹³.

From the researcher's perspective, gender performance could itself be an interview strategy: leaning into dominant feminine norms of compassion, nurturance and passivity may grant some men permission to participate in traditionally feminised activities like talking or expressing emotions⁹⁴. Some⁹⁵ have argued that this threatens the boundaries of the masculine self, and as

⁹¹ Gunaratnam, Y. *Researching 'Race' and Ethnicity* Chapter 4

⁹² Including Arendell; Hutchinson, Marsiglio, & Cohan - Broom, A., Hand, K. and Tovey, P. "The role of gender, environment and Individual biography in shaping qualitative interview data" p.53

⁹³ Robb, M. "Exploring Fatherhood: Masculinity and Intersubjectivity in the Research Process" p.402

⁹⁴ Lefkowich, M. "When Women Study Men: Gendered Implications for Qualitative Research" p.4

⁹⁵ For example, Lohan suggested that men taking part in her research perceived women to be 'naturally' more interested in the personal and emotional which made it easier and more acceptable to discuss personal matters with a female interviewer - this is particularly prevalent in research areas that are seen

such men are more likely to be open emotionally with a female researcher⁹⁶. Yet there is the risk that intentionally embodying such 'feminine' characteristics as a research strategy perpetuates harmful stereotypes about women and discredits their expertise as researchers⁹⁷.

To counter this risk (and in keeping with my hermeneutic-phenomenological methodology), I decided to neutralise my gender performance as far as possible by keeping my (verbal and non-verbal) validation of the interviewee and affirmation of what they were saying to a minimum; asking few questions, but when I did keeping them broad and open; and controlling my face work. In this sense I leaned slightly more towards the scientific ethic of detachment and role differentiation than the feminist ethic of commitment and egalitarianism in interviewing⁹⁸. I had to achieve this whilst also meeting the hermeneutic (and feminist) interview requirement of being present and engaged, through active listening and revealing oneself to the interviewee. To balance these considerations, I declined to deploy my gender performance as a strategy, whilst remaining open about my identity.

A further aspect of gender incongruence in research (women-men interviews) which has been written about extensively is the looming threat of harm - women are unanimously assumed to be at greater risk of male-perpetrated violence in fieldwork than male researchers⁹⁹. Although I did not feel uncomfortable or threatened during any of the interviews, I was conscious of the fact that three of the four were secured through the survey and thus I had no knowledge of the individuals other than their name and email address, both of which they themselves had provided. I travelled to (public - two cafes and one office) locations of their choosing and attended alone. The fourth interview I conducted was at the participant's house, representing a much higher risk, however I was reassured by his online presence (personal website) and the fact that his more advanced years made me perceive him as less potentially dangerous (a fact that is revealing of my own biases).

Whilst this gendered perspective on potential violence did not stop me undertaking my fieldwork, or even particularly shape what I was willing to do, it was a concern that I considered and took preventative actions against (by sharing my live location throughout and checking in

as more 'feminine' contexts (Lohan [2000], quoted in Broom, A., Hand, K. and Tovey, P. "The role of gender, environment and Individual biography in shaping qualitative interview data" p.54)

⁹⁶ Robb, M. "Exploring Fatherhood: Masculinity and Intersubjectivity in the Research Process" p.40

⁹⁷ Lefkowich, M. "When Women Study Men: Gendered Implications for Qualitative Research" p.4

⁹⁸ Reinharz, S. "Feminist Interview Research" p.27

⁹⁹ Lefkowich, M. "When Women Study Men: Gendered Implications for Qualitative Research" p.2

with my partner at the end of each interview). These were not unusual actions prompted by the new situation of conducting research, but rather established precautionary measures required by the normalisation of gender-based violence in our society. This situation feeds into the respective positioning of, and relationship between, researcher - researched.

While gender was the primary focus within early feminist methodological literature on interviewing, Black feminist writing emphasises the need to pay particular attention to the way racialised¹⁰⁰ and class-related differences are generated. My politics of location as a young, foreign, mixed-race woman placed me at quite a distance from the older, white, Dutch men I interviewed, with all the associated power dynamics that 'studying up'¹⁰¹ entails. Best argues that fieldwork is an interactional context through which racial identities (as with gender) are actively managed, negotiated, and solidified - in doing this research, I was also actively engaged in doing race¹⁰². Whilst this perspective rejects fixed categorical designations of race, the visual difference between us cannot be ignored. My designation as 'different' could inhibit what some individuals chose to reveal, but this same distance could also encourage disclosures¹⁰³: as a 'knowledgeable stranger' - someone with research-based understanding and personal (although secondhand) experience of the phenomenon in question - I could build rapport with interviewees¹⁰⁴.

Gender and race were the two most salient identity markers which separated me from my interviewees, however age, sex, religion, and, possibly, class, further widened the gap. However, simply making these positions transparent does not make them unproblematic¹⁰⁵. Fine has discussed the struggle for connection across difference as 'working the hyphen' of the self-Other boundary:

¹⁰⁰ For example, Edwards argues that 'race' is a fundamental part of social structures, social relations, and consciousness that affects how the interviewer and the interviewee "place each other within the social structure" (Gunaratnam, Y. *Researching 'Race' and Ethnicity: Methods, Knowledge and Power* Chapter 4)

¹⁰¹ Studying up: studying people of greater social status or power than the interviewer (Reinharz, S. "Feminist Interview Research" p.42)

¹⁰² Best, A. "Doing Race in the Context of Feminist Interviewing" p.895

¹⁰³ Song's research, as discussed in Gunaratnam, Y. *Researching 'Race' and Ethnicity: Methods, Knowledge and Power* Chapter 4

¹⁰⁴ Reinharz, S. "Feminist Interview Research" p.27

¹⁰⁵ Pillow, W. "Confession, Catharsis, or Cure?" p.183

“By working the hyphen, I mean to suggest that researchers probe how we are in relation with the contexts we study and with our informants, understanding that we are all multiple in those relations¹⁰⁶.”

During the interviews (and beyond, during analysis) I sought to work the hyphen by reflecting on myself as other and the other as self, to problematize rather than to assume¹⁰⁷ the researcher-researched relationship. I dedicated time to recognising points of disconnection between us, interrogating my prejudices which brought me to those positions, and attempting to inhabit the gap. This process is key to understanding and embracing the intersubjective relationship between myself and interviewees. From this perspective, data is understood to be co-created in the embodied dialogical encounter¹⁰⁸.

Through this reflexivity I hoped to tackle what Gunaratnam terms the ‘messy work’ of recognising how social differences are produced and their effects¹⁰⁹. This appreciation of the politics of location and belief in the co-construction of identities within the interview setting are two of many ways in which hermeneutic interviewing aligns with feminist approaches - other common markers include: an open-ended, interviewee-guided exchange in which affectations (nonverbal communication, vocal intonations, expressions of understanding) as well as speech are analysed with all information considered meaningful, and the researcher reveals themselves to the interviewee to build rapport¹¹⁰.

Ethics

Working ethically is central to both hermeneutic-phenomenological and feminist methodologies - through the investigation of lived experience, participant’s private and personal worlds are presented to an academic audience, bringing into public gaze lives that have been hitherto hidden¹¹¹. During research design and data collection, I strove to be an ethical researcher through the use of my prejudices journal and the creation of information sheets.

¹⁰⁶ Fine, M. “Working the Hyphens: Reinventing Self and Other in Qualitative Research” p.132

¹⁰⁷ Preissle, J. and Han, Y. “Feminist Research Ethics” p.597

¹⁰⁸ Finlay, L. “Debating Phenomenological Research Methods” p.13

¹⁰⁹ Gunaratnam, Y. *Researching 'Race' and Ethnicity: Methods, Knowledge and Power* Chapter 4

¹¹⁰ As part of a module on Feminist Research Practice I co-delivered a presentation on interviewing as a method, in which I built upon the work of Reinharz and Best

¹¹¹ Dibley, L. et. al. *Doing Hermeneutic Phenomenological Research* p.83

For the survey, the introductory screen notified prospective participants of the study focus and purpose, who was behind the survey¹¹², what their participation entailed, that participation was voluntary and could be ended at any time without consequence, and that the survey included questions that could be considered sensitive¹¹³. To counter these risks and encourage participation, the survey was fully anonymous and confidential. The information sheet provided accurate, clear information, written in a concise and accessible way, to ensure prospective participants fully understood what they were committing to. The ethical benefits of online research include: the participant may feel more comfortable due to lack of direct contact with the researcher; no personal identifying information is collected helping to bolster confidentiality; and participation is fully voluntary¹¹⁴. These are in addition to the general benefits of increased ease of use for participants, reduced human error, the ability to download responses directly into a database¹¹⁵ and the ability to reach more participants, more easily. However, it being online prohibited the use of my senses and intuitions during the research process¹¹⁶, which was not the case with the interviews.

For the interviews, participants signed a consent form prior to the recording starting. In addition to the information provided in the survey introduction, these forms outlined GDPR regulations concerning the use of their data; specified that their words may be referenced indirectly and quoted directly in the thesis; gave my supervisor's contact details should they have any concerns about my approach as a researcher; and offered use of a pseudonym. I did not encounter any ethical considerations when selecting participants as they self-selected, volunteering their time and being open with sharing their experience.

During analysis, I consistently questioned the veracity of my research findings as I was aware that my interpretation may be a good conveyor of meaning or it may be 'off' in a way that hampers meaning¹¹⁷. My interviewees, and to a lesser extent my survey participants, graciously (and voluntarily) shared with me their life stories and self-perceptions of identity, thus I felt a

¹¹² Including my contact details in case they wanted further information or had any questions

¹¹³ Defined as questions which respondents may perceive as intrusive, questions which trigger social desirability concerns, or questions which raise fears about the potential repercussions of disclosing the information (Kreuter, F., Presser, S. and Tourangeau, R. "Social Desirability Bias in CATI, IVR and Web Surveys" p.848)

¹¹⁴ Miner, K. and Jayaratne, T. "Feminist Survey Research" p.319

¹¹⁵ Miner, K. and Jayaratne, T. "Feminist Survey Research" p.311

¹¹⁶ Preissle, J. and Han, Y. "Feminist Research Ethics" p.596

¹¹⁷ Dibley, L. et. al. *Doing Hermeneutic Phenomenological Research* p.71

strong sense of responsibility to present their thoughts and memories in a way which was as consistent as possible to their authentic beliefs. I attempted to counter the risk of misinterpretation by including direct quotes to illustrate my writing, letting the reader come to their own conclusions regarding this specific group of fathers.

CHAPTER TWO: WHAT MAKES A 'GOOD' FATHER?

In order to answer my research question - **how does the memory of the experience of being fathered shape Dutch fathers' own adoption of fatherhood norms, and associated understandings of masculinity?** - I first investigated Dutch fathers' understandings of ideal fatherhood (which they profess to embody).

In this chapter I present the first finding of my research: that Dutch fathers' conceptualisations of a 'good' father closely align with the academic definition of the 'involved' fatherhood model, intertwined with 'caring' masculinity. Thanks to its inherent prioritisation of care, this adoption of 'caring' masculinities can be viewed as one of the next, positive steps toward engaging men in gender equality¹¹⁸. However, discrepancies between professed views and the reality of circumstances described in this research reveal the persistence of hegemonic masculinity, raising the question of whether the 'involved' father is more a recognisable cultural representation and ideal than a material reality¹¹⁹ (whether that be due to structural barriers, a superficial commitment to stated values, or a mixture of both).

Conceptualisations of a 'good' father

What is considered 'good' or normative fathering can change over time and place, as well as across families, including in response to cultural and institutional change¹²⁰. In recent decades, processes of individualisation and democratisation have influenced the relationship between the sexes and the generations, which has put new demands on fathers¹²¹. Traditional models of fatherhood (clear demarcation between father as provider and mother as carer) are progressively called into question by (father's) partners and by a range of social institutions, including the media and government¹²².

¹¹⁸ Elliott, K. "Caring Masculinities" p.244

¹¹⁹ Miller, T. "Gendered Discourses: Men, Masculinities and Fatherhood" p.43

¹²⁰ Hunter, S., Riggs, D. and Augoustinos, M. "Hegemonic Masculinity versus a Caring Masculinity" p.2

¹²¹ Knijn, T. and Selten, P. "Transformations of Fatherhood: the Netherlands" p.170

¹²² Williams, S. "What Is Fatherhood?" p.488

As a result of these shifts, many scholars have argued that today's fathers are more involved in their children's lives than fathers of previous generations¹²³. Contemporary fathers in the Global North are increasingly finding affinities with the emerging discourse of the 'involved' father model, characterised by the expectation that men should be highly involved in parenting, contribute significant time to housework, and be an engaged and equitable spouse, partner or co-parent¹²⁴. In the Netherlands specifically, the interplay and influence of feminist (stating that men should be as responsible for caring as women are), fathers' movement (stating that men are as capable as women of caring for children), and Christian Democrats' (stating the importance of father-child bonding) ideologies has resulted in the promotion of involved fatherhood¹²⁵.

The flourishing popularity and uptake of the 'involved' fatherhood model, as lived experience for some and aspiration for others, alters the current societal definition of a 'good' father. The fathers I interviewed conceptualised a 'good' father as one who makes his child(ren) the priority - or, in Martin's words, "*not looking at what I need, looking at what she [Martin's daughter] needs*". This can have far-reaching implications - for example, both Thijs¹²⁶ and Jouwert chose to return to the Netherlands specifically for the benefit of their children.

Children also come first for the fathers in the survey: a clear majority (59%) prioritise fatherhood as the most important aspect of their lives, with a substantial gap between fatherhood and the next most popular option of 'relationship with your partner', at 21%. These two options are significantly more popular than other, public-sphere focused possibilities, including paid work, which is prioritised by just 15%.

Across the interviews, four themes emerged as to how 'making your children the priority' is demonstrated in day-to-day actions:

The importance of 'being there'

Being present and actively involved in your child(ren)'s care surfaced as the most important characteristic of a 'good' father, starting from the very beginning: all survey participants were

¹²³ Such as O'Brien & Shemilt, 2003; E.H. Pleck & Pleck, 1997; Pleck & Masciadrelli, 2004 (Doucet, A. *Do Men Mother?* p.6)

¹²⁴ Petts, R., Shafer, K. and Essig, L. "Does Adherence to Masculine Norms Shape Fathering Behaviour?" p.705

¹²⁵ Knijn, T. and Selten, P. "Transformations of Fatherhood: the Netherlands" p.170

¹²⁶ Thijs: "*we moved because we got Edith, which was our first child, and we didn't want to raise her in a big city like London*"

present at the birth of their child(ren), with 90% taking some amount of leave following the birth to care for their baby, overwhelmingly driven by their desire to bond with their baby¹²⁷. 'Being there' goes beyond physical presence, variously described as being emotionally engaged, supportive, patient and positive - in other words, present in the moment. Marcel highlights the rapid and non-stop pace of life, often including a (in his opinion) misjudged focus on aspects other than fatherhood, which leaves scant time for reflection on our relationship with our children and inhibits our appreciation of the little moments:

"You get into a relationship - this is the woman of my life. I want to share my whole life with her, so you start a family. Then you're into this...working, working, house..."

This attempt to secure fatherhood, marriage, employment, and home ownership (what Townsend has coined the 'package deal') is an achievement not only as a parent and as an adult, but as a father, which is to say, as a man¹²⁸, reaffirming the interlocking nature of fatherhood and masculinity. As an older father, rather than attempt to obtain the package deal, he instead advocates slowing down to focus on enjoying your children whilst you can.

Equipping your child with key skills

The understanding of 'key skills' varies, but the importance of nurturing independence so that children are able to successfully venture out into the world is clear. In Jouwert's words:

"Encourage whatever direction that they're taking, and of course challenging them a little but usually more, you know, encouraging them to explore the world, their talents, fears, dealing with challenges that they meet on the way, and just try to be there, take time for it"

Martin underlines the importance of communication and emotional expression in raising children, teaching these skills by example. Marcel references functional skills (such as using the bathroom and riding a bike) as well as softer skills, such as socialising as part of a group. Thijs and his wife have consciously chosen to emphasise empathy (teaching it, and showing it towards their children) and the development of their children's voice (the ability to be critical and to challenge authority). For Jouwert, educating his children about social injustice and inequality provides them with the tools needed to challenge and hopefully improve their world. Continuous education flows both ways, with his children also teaching him new things about the intersectional nature of injustice (*"I've radicalised because of them"*).

¹²⁷ Rather than necessity (so that their partner could return to work) or pressure (societal expectation)

¹²⁸ Townsend, N. "Fathers of Fathers: Kinship and Gender" p.178

Sharing experiences to create memories

All four fathers value time spent together with their children, sharing hobbies or on a special trip, with the explicit hope of creating memories. In Thijs' words:

“Doing fun things together, yeah just having a good time together I suppose. To create nice memories”.

Jouwert expresses satisfaction that he has achieved this (understood as a lively home environment of discussion and debate) also when his children were young, and continues to do so now - revealing a similar concern to Marcel regarding the fleeting nature of time. Marcel speaks fondly of a trip to Australia which, although he didn't realise it at the time, provided cherished family memories. Martin recalls his outdoor trips with his daughter Marijke:

“I also climbed with her, [when she was] ten years old, a mountain in Switzerland. We had a tent for the two of us, but one time there was only [gestures an incline]...she laid in my arms. I didn't sleep, she slept fantastic! I was really amazed how to be a father for her.”

This concern with creating positive memories speaks to a desire to establish a legacy within a particular image. Smaller-scale but more regular shared activities also contribute to this: 46% of the survey sample read together, and play with toys and games together, *everyday*. All 18 activities surveyed are completed *several times a week*, with many activities being selected at healthy rates (25-40% of fathers).

Fathers as a source of support

At the heart of this sought-after legacy is the positioning of oneself as a pillar of support for one's children: to be considered reliable, trustworthy, consistent, emotionally available, and present. As Thijs explains:

“I've got this image that once they're 18, I want them to see me as at least someone who is involved with them and with the family, and at least someone who they can go to when they need help. That's kind of the most important thing for me.”

As well as children turning to their fathers for advice and guidance, this aspect of a 'good' father also has practical significance, with fathers offering support with functional tasks. Marcel recounts helping his sons with moving out of the familial home and decorating their apartment, expressing his longing of activating a sense of pride in his children about him as a father:

*“I hope that he remembers that [the help given] in ten years’ time when he still lives there -
that’s what my father did!”*

Heartwarmingly, all four fathers were confident that they had been, and continue to be (by their own definitions), ‘good’ fathers. All survey participants also agreed that they had the necessary skills and/or attributes for successful childcare, although only 53% feel that they always did. The majority (63%) of those who did *not* always possess these skills and attributes gained and/or developed these after the baby arrived and they began to care for them, reiterating the privileged nature of this sample, as fathers benefitting from having the resources and time at their disposal to become actively involved in their child’s care.

Fathers’ parenting skills and confidence have been found to be important predictors of father involvement: when fathers feel more competent and believe they can parent well, they spend more time with their children, take on more caretaking responsibilities, and engage more positively with their children¹²⁹. This causal relationship fortifies the association between the ‘involved’ father model and white, middle-to-upper class fathers.

This explanation of *how* a ‘good’ father prioritises his children is enmeshed with certain personal characteristics, with a ‘good’ father being described by interviewees as warm, communicative, emotionally open, and able to show physical affection. As Jouwert says: *“I try to, you know, show my feelings, and tell them if I’m stressed.”* Survey participants concur, selecting affection, patience, and silliness/fun as the three most important qualities to demonstrate as a father; with discipline and intelligence receiving the fewest votes.

This broad conceptualisation of a ‘good’ father, and interviewees’ and survey participants’ stated efforts to embody this understanding, clearly aligns with the academic definition of the ‘involved’ father model, proving its prevalence in the Netherlands. As Martin says:

“Now there are many more fathers who are dedicated fathers that take care of their children. So that’s good, and compared with 50 years ago, it’s a big development.”

¹²⁹ Child and Family Research Partnership “The Evidence Base: Predictors of Father Involvement”

Connections with 'caring' masculinity and gender equality

Petts, Shafer, and Essig have found that embracing the new fatherhood ideal ('involved' father model) may require fathers to reject traditional masculinity in favour of a caring masculinity¹³⁰, which proposes that men are able to adopt what is viewed as traditionally feminine characteristics (i.e. emotional expression, sensitivity, domestication, interdependence, caring etc.) without departing from or rejecting masculinity¹³¹. Elliott has developed the concept to revolve around an incorporation of positive, relational, interdependent emotions and a rejection of domination and its associated traits - there is no place for those positive emotions in dominating hegemonic masculinity¹³².

Of the four interviewees, Jouwert most explicitly rejects hegemonic masculinity, asserting that he did not project himself as a father figure:

"Thinking about the stereotypical [...] father figure [...] it's usually projecting some stereotypical masculine thought - and I never really projected those kinds of things in myself, and I never saw that as an important thing"

When asked to expand upon what he understood by this, he explained:

"I guess it's like being tough, you know...learning [teaching] your children to be competitive, to be, you know, to be the best. To fall and stand up again, and don't [not] cry. To go for economic gains [...] More like the negative things that I associate with male dominance, honestly."

This description bears a strong resemblance to Connell's characterisation, with the hegemonic male ideal traditionally embodying qualities such as being strong, successful, capable, unemotional, and in control¹³³. For Jouwert, 'father' (which he views as a social construct¹³⁴) and hegemonic masculinity are so deeply intertwined that, despite identifying as a man who has children, he rejects both, opting for the gender-neutral 'parent' instead¹³⁵. He explains that this

¹³⁰ Petts, R., Shafer, K. and Essig, L. "Does Adherence to Masculine Norms Shape Fathering Behaviour?" p.716

¹³¹ Hunter, S., Riggs, D. and Augoustinos, M. "Hegemonic Masculinity versus a Caring Masculinity" p.3

¹³² Elliott, K. "Caring Masculinities" p.253

¹³³ Connell, 2003 - quoted in Hunter, S., Riggs, D. and Augoustinos, M. "Hegemonic Masculinity versus a Caring Masculinity" p.2

¹³⁴ Sociological and historical work presents fathering as a social construction, with each generation moulding its cultural ideal of fathers according to its own time and conditions - Doherty, W., Kouneski, E. and Erickson, M. "Responsible Fathering" p.278

¹³⁵ Jouwert states: "I don't think it [the word 'father'] really helps you to become a family - to have a mother and a father. Because it sort of says that there's a real distinction." This illustrates the power of language -

was a deliberate choice, informed by his “strong feelings” about feminism and gender stereotypes, demonstrating his conscious awareness of gender issues and active commitment to challenge norms: “*You need to fight those negative constructs that oppress people*”. He goes on to say:

“I haven’t seen very many productive masculine traits for society, like, you know, things that are regenerative, that care for the earth, that care for families, that care for neighbourhoods. [...] That’s what I like, I like to care for my community [...] that’s also what I tell my children, you know, become active in your neighbourhood, do things with people.”

Care as a notion attracts different connotations and meanings over time and has often been associated with the antithesis of masculinity¹³⁶. Here, Jouwert positions care and kinship as positive values, in contrast to his perception of hegemonic masculinity within the Netherlands.

This positive reframing of care, in contrast to the traditional understanding of the avoidance of care as a feature of ‘being a man’¹³⁷, shows the potential of ‘caring’ masculinities as a positive step toward engaging men in gender equality. At the same time, research suggests that men with egalitarian beliefs about gender roles are more involved with their children because they are more willing to take part in caregiving and nurturing¹³⁸. The ‘involved’ father model and ‘caring’ masculinity are therefore often understood as contributing towards advancing gender equality, thanks to their associated increased involvement of men in the types of activities - feeding, cleaning, nurturing, soothing - and behaviours that were previously seen as the exclusive province of women and mothers¹³⁹. Within the context of the family household, fifty-fifty parenting or an equal division of labour is considered the ideal or most successful pattern¹⁴⁰ in terms of gender equality. There is evidence of a shift in attitudes to family and domestic roles by some men¹⁴¹, and an academic consensus that men’s participation in housework and childcare have increased gradually¹⁴².

does the very action of focusing on gender only continue to highlight and reinforce differences between men and women? Particularly as in many contexts parenting is conflated with mothering - Miller, T.

“Gendered Discourses: Men, Masculinities and Fatherhood” p.45

¹³⁶ Brannen, J. and Nilsen, A. “From Fatherhood to Fathering” p.349

¹³⁷ Hearn, 2001 - quoted in Elliott, K. “Caring Masculinities” p.244

¹³⁸ Child and Family Research Partnership “The Evidence Base: Predictors of Father Involvement”

¹³⁹ Lamb, M. and Lewis, C. “Father-child relationships” p.127

¹⁴⁰ Doucet, A. *Do Men Mother?* p.24

¹⁴¹ Whitehead, S. *Men and Masculinities* p.154

¹⁴² Doucet, A. “Gender Roles and Fathering” p.302

Survey participants illustrate this shift towards a more gender-equal division of familial responsibilities by reporting that the clear majority of childcare-related tasks are split equally¹⁴³: more than 80% say that they feed, dress, and put their child(ren) to bed, as well as care for them when they are sick, an equal amount to (or together with) their partner¹⁴⁴. Furthermore, a higher percentage of tasks are categorised as *always* being completed by the participant compared to tasks that are *always* completed by their partner¹⁴⁵. It is therefore unsurprising that only 15% of participants state that there is a clear primary carer within their household (even then, in 17% of these cases, the primary carer is the participant).

Most interviewees also expressed a commitment to achieving gender equality within their households through a more equal and gender-neutral sharing of responsibilities. Martin describes his long history of activism, starting in the 1960s, which informed his interest in gender issues, resulting in a desire for both parents to work part-time and share childcare equally. Jouwert attributes the division of roles within his household to ability and personal interest rather than being driven by gender norms (*“There isn’t really a big division of tasks in like: okay this is really masculine or feminine, you know, motherly or fatherly”*). Thijs most clearly demonstrates the interconnections between the ‘involved’ father model, ‘caring’ masculinity, and gender equality when he states:

“To me, how a good father should look is being present in the moment and helping out in the house, and just, you know, sharing fifty-fifty wherever possible. I’d say I consider us pretty modern parents as well. So we actively [...] try to break the patriarchy.”

This goes beyond domestic chores - Thijs has supported his wife in setting up her own business, which he acknowledges has consequently placed a lot of pressure on him, yet he is happy to be able to do so. He credits his wife with fostering an environment which is conducive to making these conscious efforts to achieve gender equality:

“My partner...she’s very strong-minded, strong-willed, and she’s been very clear that when we have a family she wants to be very fifty-fifty, right? And I learned a lot from that as well, yeah. And I want that too.”

¹⁴³ These results are self-reported by the participants and therefore only reflect one side of the story

¹⁴⁴ And more than 50% say that they bathe their child(ren) and take them to appointments (e.g. doctors) as well as to nursery/school an equal amount to (or together with) their partner

¹⁴⁵ Notably 14% of participants always do the food shop, and 11% of participants always prepare and cook food; compared to 3% of partners who always do the laundry

This research concurs with the academic claim that many men are reflecting on their gender roles and family responsibilities and engaging in parenting and domestic work in real, practical ways¹⁴⁶.

Uncovering persistent hegemonic masculinity

Although there is an evident shift in attitudes to family and domestic roles by some men, certain tenets of the breadwinner model and gendered parenting persist, highlighting the pervasive and longstanding power of hegemonic masculinity. This raises the question of whether discourses of fatherhood suggest that fathers are more involved than they are in practice - does the 'involved' father actually exist?¹⁴⁷

Some scholars have argued that 'involved' fathering is more a recognisable cultural representation and ideal than a material reality¹⁴⁸, pointing to continued gender gaps in time spent on childcare and household tasks (women spend around 33hrs/week whereas men average only 16hrs/week)¹⁴⁹, contending that there remains an outstanding stability in mothers' responsibility for children and for domestic and community life (even where women have equal participation in paid employment)¹⁵⁰. In the Netherlands specifically, 68% of all men agree that men and women should share care work equally, yet only 8% of fathers with children under 18 want to reduce their working hours¹⁵¹ to facilitate this conviction.

Data from the survey reflects this theorised contradiction: participants assert that they identify with their fatherhood roles over their paid employment roles, yet they continue to work long hours (with 25% working 39hrs/week+), and 71% earn the main source of income in their household - despite both partners being employed and having gained similar levels of education, resulting in a structural equality between the spouses¹⁵². This persistence of the

¹⁴⁶ Whitehead, S. *Men and Masculinities* p.153

¹⁴⁷ Hunter, S., Riggs, D. and Augoustinos, M. "Hegemonic Masculinity versus a Caring Masculinity" p.6

¹⁴⁸ Miller, T. "Gendered Discourses: Men, Masculinities and Fatherhood" p.43

¹⁴⁹ Parker & Livingston, 2017 - referenced in Petts, R., Shafer, K. and Essig, L. "Does Adherence to Masculine Norms Shape Fathering Behaviour?" p.705

¹⁵⁰ Doucet, A. *Do Men Mother?* p.6

¹⁵¹ Knijn, T. and Selten, P. "Transformations of Fatherhood: the Netherlands" p.173

¹⁵² Brandth, B. and Kvande, E. "Masculinity and Child Care: The Reconstruction of Fathering" p.299

breadwinner model unsurprisingly results in casting the woman as carer by default, with 71% of participants stating their partner took a longer amount of leave.

This discrepancy between economic reality and self-identification highlights how fathers are required to negotiate with norms and expectations of a traditional provider model of fathering *and* a new and 'involved' model of fathering¹⁵³. Martin, as mentioned above, wanted for him and his wife to both work part-time and share childcare equally, yet "*in reality it was four days for me and three days for her because money, house, and so on. So our ideas were not completely easy to realise.*" Here Martin implies that economic pressures necessitated that he, as the higher earner, work more hours than his wife, who consequently took on more domestic responsibility ("*We did everything together - she [wife] did a little more, but I took my part*") - reverting to traditional gender roles in contradiction of his professed beliefs.

This turns our attention to structural barriers: there is no governmental support for self-employed fathers in the Netherlands¹⁵⁴, and employed fathers enjoy just five days of paid paternity leave¹⁵⁵, which pales in comparison to paternal leave entitlements across Europe¹⁵⁶. Whilst some individual employers may choose to voluntarily extend this minimal governmental provision, such an inconsistent offer of paternal leave policies only further entrenches inequalities between fathers along the lines of (work) sector, class and race - thereby contributing to the association of 'involved' fathering and economically and educationally advantaged families¹⁵⁷. As a result, uncritical uptake of notions of the 'involved' father may result in unrealistic expectations: Hunter and Augoustinos argue that we cannot redefine fatherhood based on ideals, as there are structural and economic factors that work against the new ('involved') father image¹⁵⁸.

These persistent structural barriers¹⁵⁹ reinforce gendered parenting, encouraging the emergence of 'masculine care', which modifies and reasserts (rather than transcends) hegemonic masculinity. The outlook is therefore not as progressive as the survey data might initially suggest: a broader range of tasks are *usually* undertaken by participants' partners, with

¹⁵³ Whitehead, S. *Men and Masculinities* p.154

¹⁵⁴ DutchReview, "Becoming a Father?"

¹⁵⁵ Mercer, "Dutch Government Increases Paid Paternity, Adoption Leave"

¹⁵⁶ Nikkelen, S. and de Blécourt, K. *Images of Fatherhood* p.2

¹⁵⁷ Parke, R. and Cookston, J. "Commentary: Many Types of Fathers, Many Types of Contexts" p.133

¹⁵⁸ Hunter, S., Riggs, D. and Augoustinos, M. "Hegemonic Masculinity versus a Caring Masculinity" p.6

¹⁵⁹ Including government policies and a performative work culture which promote and validate men's relative absence from the private sphere - Whitehead, S. *Men and Masculinities* p.154

participants *usually* completing tasks centred around food and transport¹⁶⁰. Such activities are more public-facing than feeding or bathing your child(ren), which ranked more highly as *usually* being completed by the participants' partners. Much of what parents and children do together today takes place outside (away from the home and in the public arena) - by primarily focusing on these public activities, fathers have found their own platform in care work¹⁶¹.

Traditional fathering contexts, which this sample represents (married, biological parent), have been found to increase the likelihood of following traditional gendered norms compared to less traditional fathering contexts (e.g. nonresident, stepparent, cohabiting), whilst also being associated with greater father involvement¹⁶². Survey results support this finding, with childcare tasks being shared more equally between the mother and father than housework¹⁶³. This is reiterated by other time use data which shows that women continue to take on most routine housework (e.g. cleaning and laundry), while men have increased their contribution to non-routine housework (e.g. shopping, household repairs)¹⁶⁴.

Essentialist¹⁶⁵ views - conceptualising women as 'natural nurturers', born with innate childcare abilities - enable and encourage gendered parenting by locating women first and foremost in the private sphere of the family. Whilst all survey participants believed both they and their partner had the necessary skills and attributes for successful childcare, only 53% of participants felt they always did compared to 80% who felt their partners always did. Similarly, Martin stated:

“And I must say I felt a little bit left-handed. This is a little baby in my arms, there was nothing - no single education of men how to change nappies or whatever, I had to find out. I did. But I didn't feel at ease. And my wife was much more at ease with a child. So I had to find out how to get my own role in that, without being too clumsy.”

¹⁶⁰ 34% of participants usually buy food, 31% usually cook, 26% usually take their child[ren] to nursery/school

¹⁶¹ Brandth and Kvande term this 'masculine care' - Brandth, B. and Kvande, E. p.302

¹⁶² Petts, R., Shafer, K. and Essig, L. "Does Adherence to Masculine Norms Shape Fathering Behaviour?" p.707

¹⁶³ Notably, 15% of participants consider certain tasks to be 'female / mothering' activities, with laundry ranking highest - even among the full sample, laundry is *usually* completed by participants' partners 44% of the time

¹⁶⁴ Doucet, A. "Gender Roles and Fathering" p.301

¹⁶⁵ Essentialism: term used to describe and explain inequalities between men and women as naturally occurring 'essential' differences - Miller, T. "Gendered Discourses: Men, Masculinities and Fatherhood" p.36

Martin laments the lack of *male-specific* education and support for childcare, framing his involvement as something he had to learn against the odds, compared to his wife's immediate comfort and innate knowledge. His phrasing also implies that he views childcare as women's natural domain in which he sought to carve out a role for himself. Elsewhere in our interview, he affirms this interpretation when he says:

"I think men can do a very big contribution to the raising of children, but it takes them to be open to themselves."

By praising and supporting father involvement in childcare whilst limiting it as a 'contribution' rather than an equal responsibility, Martin touches upon the 'essential father' hypothesis which holds that fathers make an essential, unique, and, more specifically, uniquely male contribution to child development¹⁶⁶. He explicitly grapples with this theory when he states:

"In the nowadays gender discussions it's interesting to see what's the own contribution of fathers to children? Not necessarily different than women. But is there a different trait in it...in what I try to offer?"

Martin believes that boys and men have an overpowering energy which they often struggle to control and/or direct in a productive manner, and this served as his entrypoint to gender issues (*"this was the idea in my head where I entered the discussion of feminism, masculinism and so on"*). He explained his guiding focus throughout his career as:

"[...] directing your own energy, how to make it productive, how to make it not destructive. And that's the way I look also at raising young men and being a father."

The understanding of a uniquely male contribution to parenting, intertwined with the notion of a uniquely male energy, is couched in gender essentialism¹⁶⁷, with Martin repeatedly emphasising the differences he perceived between men and women¹⁶⁸ throughout our conversation. Although he presented such differences as developmental, he discussed their influence on adult interaction and expression, thereby anchoring them as essential (as well as desired: *"everything*

¹⁶⁶ Pleck, J. "Fatherhood and Masculinity" p.27

¹⁶⁷ In feminist theory, essentialism refers to the attribution of a fixed essence to women - assumed to be given and universal, usually identified with biology. Essentialism thus refers to the existence of fixed characteristics, given attributes, and ahistorical functions that limit the possibilities of change and thus of social reorganisation - Grosz, E. *Space, Time, and Perversion* pp.47-8

¹⁶⁸ Broadly summarised as girls being more verbal and boys more physical; boys at a disadvantage as verbal expression is used and valued more; boys are less responsive to this verbal engagement which hinders their emotional expression

the same is not nice for a kid. It's good if father and mother are a little bit different"). Despite Martin's professed commitment to feminism and emancipation, these differences are not understood as equal:

"I saw that the heroines of the female movement, they became, in my words, a little bit bossy about men [...] And I saw men around me who obeyed this...and I saw they were not very powerful and they were not a good example [for] young boys growing up."

Such men, who accept women asserting themselves, are understood as weak as they relinquish power and therefore are not good role models.

An essentialist understanding was not consistent across the interviews: Jouwert, as explored above, does not find the label of 'father' useful (*"Why talk about mothers and fathers? I think that actually [...] perpetuates stereotypes. Because I don't think there are so many differences"*) and has a low masculinity orientation¹⁶⁹. Thijs emphasises the equal positioning of himself and his wife within their relationship in the context of their familial responsibilities, and stresses their united front on childcare (*"It's really important to me to help the kids see that both mum and dad are evenly important in their relationship, and they can both receive the same type of love and attention from us"*). At the same time, Thijs' comments reveal the influence of changing societal norms in forming his self-professed commitment to gender equality¹⁷⁰:

"I would love to just sit down and let [wife] do everything. But that's just not an option anymore, you know?"

Brannen's conceptualisation of ambivalence as the tension between continuity and change¹⁷¹ captures this seeming contradiction between the reproduction of hegemonic masculinity (notably the perseverance of the breadwinner model and its consequent reinforcement of gendered parenting, driven by some combination of structural barriers and personal views informed by gender essentialism) and its innovation (notably the proud embrace of 'caring' masculinity and the evident shift towards gender equality within the household in terms of the division of familial responsibilities surrounding childcare and housework). Macht argues that

¹⁶⁹ Hofstede's conceptualisation of masculine / feminine orientations: masculinity is seen to be the trait which emphasises ambition, acquisition of wealth, and differentiated gender roles. Femininity is seen to be the trait which stresses caring and nurturing behaviours, sexuality equality, environmental awareness, and more fluid gender roles - Andrews University, "Hofstede: Masculinity / Femininity"

¹⁷⁰ Alongside the influence of his wife's strong views and expressed expectations, discussed above

¹⁷¹ Brannen, J. "Towards a Typology of Intergenerational Relations" paragraph 3.2

conflicts between reproduction and innovation are inherent to crafting the fathering role in relation to masculine emotionality, as these roles arise from within the nexus of power, relating, sexuality, and emotions that construct family lives¹⁷².

Rather than 'caring' masculinity (and the associated 'involved' father model and move towards gender equality) superseding hegemonic masculinity (and the associated breadwinner model and more traditional gender views), the two appear to sit alongside one another¹⁷³. Fathers therefore face multiple, seemingly contradictory pressures and expectations - or, framed differently, fathers can express support for equal parenting while also maintaining more traditional patterns of gender divisions of labour, what Doucet has termed a complicit relationship¹⁷⁴. It's men's ability to pick and choose a suitable parental role for themselves, to operationalise a preference, that is the most significant expression of their power position¹⁷⁵.

Summary

This chapter reveals the prevalence and widespread adoption of the theorised 'involved' father model in the Netherlands, with survey participants and interviewees self-identifying as emotionally-open fathers who equally participate in parenting. A 'good' father is conceptualised as one who is present and actively involved in their child's care, who teaches their child key life skills, who commits to spending time with their child sharing an activity, and who serves as a pillar of support for their child throughout their lifetime. Despite the professed embrace of 'caring' masculinity and a conscious move towards the gender equality that is bound up with the adoption of this conceptualisation, this research uncovered evidence of enduring hegemonic masculinity with certain tenets of the breadwinner model (dominance of male paid employment) and gendered parenting ('masculine care') persisting.

¹⁷² Macht, A. "Memories of Love" p.82

¹⁷³ Hunter, S., Riggs, D. and Augoustinos, M. "Hegemonic Masculinity versus a Caring Masculinity" p.4

¹⁷⁴ Doucet, A. "Gender Roles and Fathering" p.310

¹⁷⁵ Miller, T. "Gendered Discourses: Men, Masculinities and Fatherhood" p.44

CHAPTER THREE: CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON ONE'S OWN CHILDHOOD

In this chapter I present the second finding of my research: fathers are remembered in sharp contrast to participants' self-perception of themselves as fathers, creating two stark images (a more distant, strict, traditional father against a more emotionally-open, affectionate participant). This perceived lack of emotional engagement on the part of their fathers drives participants towards 'caring' masculinity and the 'involved' father model (as discussed in chapter two) in order to 'do better' with their own children. Childhood memories are a key means of developing one's understanding of a 'good' father, with participants building their conceptualisation in reference to their own experience of being fathered, and the lack they felt in their relationship with their father. This research identifies four models of intergenerational transmission, with one's father consistently serving as the blueprint for better or worse.

How fathers are remembered

The primary experience that men bring to fatherhood is their own experience of being fathered¹⁷⁶, therefore men's memories of their fathers (their character, approach to fatherhood, and their relationship with them) serve as a starting point for men's own understandings of what it means to be a father, and how best to perform that role. However these memories are unreliable - as a partial, subjective view of a complex phenomenon - and increasingly hazy as time passes. It is important to recognise that the experience of remembering happens in the present, not in the past - thus the present moment, with all its feelings, sensations, perceptions, thoughts, and contextual cues, is key to what is evoked from memory and how it is assembled¹⁷⁷.

The 'present moment' for this research sample is becoming a father yourself, which prompts men to reconsider and reevaluate their own fathers - through their memories, but also through

¹⁷⁶ Townsend, N. "Fathers of Fathers" p.178

¹⁷⁷ Stern, D. *The Motherhood Constellation* p.181

direct comparison, and observations of the relationship between their fathers and their own children¹⁷⁸. As Thijs explains:

It's because I've become a dad myself [...] there's certain things that I want to be able to provide to my kids. And then once I started comparing that to how my dad treats and has treated me, that's all of a sudden become really contrasting to how I want to treat my kids."

Both Thijs and Martin looked up to their fathers - with Martin describing him as “*kind of [a] God for me*”; and Thijs seeing his father as “*strong, kind of heroic*” - however since having children Thijs has willfully reevaluated his father (as “*old-fashioned and stuck in his own ways. Not very open to different opinions*”) which he has found ‘difficult’ and ‘shocking’, proving that intimate relationships between men, in particular fathers and sons, are infused with emotion and feeling¹⁷⁹. Uncomfortable though this process may be, it is integral in shaping men’s approach to their new fatherhood role.

The majority of interviewees’ and survey participants’ memories and descriptions of their fathers diverge from their descriptions of their own fathering style, with their fathers thus serving as a foil in developing their own approach. The qualities that survey participants most strongly remember in connection with their fathers differ significantly from those which participants believe to be the most important to demonstrate as a father¹⁸⁰. The top three qualities associated with participants’ fathers (discipline, 14%; consistency, 14%; respect, 13%) align with traditional understandings of fathers informed by hegemonic forms of masculinity¹⁸¹ and in sharp contrast to participants’ self-reports of their own approach.

Historically, western middle-class masculinity has tended to suppress men’s emotion and lead them to deny their vulnerability, and to assert toughness, power, and authority¹⁸². Martin demonstrates this when he says:

“My father was very nice but also very strict. He didn’t talk about his feelings [...] To us children he was distant, forbidding.”

¹⁷⁸ Townsend, N. “Fathers of Fathers” pp.173-6

¹⁷⁹ Brannen, J. *Fathers and Sons* p.116

¹⁸⁰ Most notably affection (25% of participants believe this to be important vs. 12% of participants remember this quality in their father), patience (23% vs 12%) and discipline (<1% vs 14%)

¹⁸¹ Hunter, S., Riggs, D. and Augoustinos, M. p.3

¹⁸² Brannen, J. *Fathers and Sons* p.101

Martin's father did not want to talk about his feelings even when seeking treatment for depression - when the doctor asked him about his experience in the Second World War he reacted very badly ("*I never saw him angry like that! So we immediately knew that there was a problem. But he didn't want to talk about it*"). Macht has found that fathers form their current intimate father's role in connection and contrast to previously received parenting models through an assessment of how emotionally close or distant they were to their father¹⁸³. There is a generational shift in the relational aspects of fatherhood - in remembering their fathers as emotionally distant, participants and interviewees consciously choose to be more emotionally expressive with their children than they remember their fathers being with them¹⁸⁴.

Embodiments of hegemonic masculinity are typically associated with the breadwinner model, in the fatherhood context, and here the difference between survey participants and their fathers is also evident. Participants give less emphasis to paid employment than they perceive their fathers to have done, despite generally continuing to be the main breadwinners. Fathers are perceived to have *prioritised* paid employment by far the most (63%), and, despite a substantial drop, also to have *valued* paid employment (30%) more than participants do (15% and 10% respectively). Interestingly, although participants' fathers are perceived to have *prioritised* fatherhood and their relationship with their partners at low rates (18% and 10% respectively), they are perceived to have *valued* these aspects of their lives substantially more (30% and 13% respectively). Fathers also *valued* community commitments¹⁸⁵ and personal hobbies (10% each), neither of which featured at all for participants.

Paid work stands out as a clear distinguishing feature - although both are engaged in paid employment, the participant's fathers prioritised and valued their jobs more. This arguably represents a shift in identity-making location, from paid employment to fathering. Paid work has ontological connections, by providing an important arena through which the discursive subject can achieve a sense of identity; it is therefore more than merely a provider of some material or social comfort, or an opportunity to exercise power, but a primary vehicle for the otherwise contingent and unstable subject to become grounded and located in the social world¹⁸⁶.

¹⁸³ Macht, A. "Memories of Love" p.73

¹⁸⁴ This finding aligns with other research which argues that contemporary fatherhood is changing as men become more demonstrative towards their children - Brannen, J. *Fathers and Sons* p.132

¹⁸⁵ This finding raises the question of whether the collapse in value for 'community commitments' represents the victory of the atomised, neoliberal individual? If it can be understood as such, then is the 'involved' fatherhood model also neoliberal, privileging the individual and their immediate family over the demands of the community?

¹⁸⁶ Whitehead, S. *Men and Masculinities* p.124

Focusing on paid work to the detriment of other aspects of one's life results in the compartmentalisation of the public and the private, which serves to reinforce a particular (traditional) understanding of masculinity¹⁸⁷.

This clear separation between public and private spheres reinforces gendered parenting, with 95% of survey participants mainly cared for by their mother, and childcare tasks mainly being completed by mothers¹⁸⁸. The only activity selected by any participants as *always* being done by the father was food shopping, a public-facing activity (i.e. a masculine way of using childcare time, by taking the child 'out into the world'¹⁸⁹), and even that was at a very low rate (5%). Fathers *usually* completed a handful of tasks at very low rates, the highest being bathing the child(ren) at 10%. This is typically an evening activity, reiterating the image of a father focused on paid employment. All tasks were selected as being completed by both parents (together or in equal amounts) but at much lower rates than in the participants' households.

Traditional gender roles whilst growing up were also evident for some interviewees¹⁹⁰, with Martin stating:

"...he was also very old-fashioned. So my father was a really traditional 'the men outside, the women inside'"

Thijs was also raised in a similar household, which he identifies as patriarchal:

"Patriarchy suggests a certain power dynamic within the family, where the woman often has to do the whole house [...] that also includes the care for the children; and the man will go to work full-time and when they came home, they sit down on a chair and they expect food and they go to bed. And they wake up early again. So this is how it went at my house."

Thijs explains this setup as inherited from his grandparents, with his grandmother the carer of the whole family and his grandfather away at work, resulting in his father expecting the same from his own relationship. Accordingly, survey participants mostly describe their fathers'

¹⁸⁷ Whitehead, S. *Men and Masculinities* p.128

¹⁸⁸ For many of the participants, their mothers *always* did laundry (58%), prepared food (43%), looked after them when they were ill (38%); and *usually* got them dressed (55%) and took them to appointments (50%), amongst other tasks

¹⁸⁹ Brandth, B. and Kvande, E. p.307

¹⁹⁰ This finding aligns with other research in which men describe their parents as having highly gendered work practices in their families of origin with mothers (and sometimes grandmothers, sisters, or other females) as primary carers - Hanlon, N. *Masculinities, Care and Equality* p.167

approach as 'main breadwinner but also present in the home, some involvement in childcare' (55%, compared to 40% of participants identifying with this category), followed by 'focused primarily on paid work to support the family, low involvement in childcare' (40%, compared to 0% of participants identifying with this category).

Restrictive gender norms are embedded in this gender hierarchy - as Martin states: *"I think he [Martin's father] had an idea in his mind about how a father should be, how a boy should be. He was more tender to my sisters"*. As discussed previously, in contrast to the breadwinner fatherhood model and hegemonic masculinity, 'caring' masculinity and the 'involved' fatherhood model (preferred by interviewees and survey participants) are associated with increased gender equality. Indeed, participants and their wives appear to have more equal relationships in which roles are not so distinct and rigidly defined¹⁹¹, and interviewees actively work towards gender equality, with Thijs stating:

"The change is completely different [compared to his parents]. I feel like [wife] and I are much more of a team [...] constantly talking about what's possible and what isn't"

Survey participants in particular, and interviewees, are moving towards gender equality by re-working hegemonic notions of masculinity by being more private-sphere facing, focusing primarily on their role as fathers followed by their role as partners. This change is likely to continue with their own children, as studies have shown that having a gender-equal family of origin increases the likelihood of being positively disposed to gender equality in one's life¹⁹². This is not necessarily to say that participants' fathers did not equally support, value, and engage with their child(ren) and partners, but that the norms regarding the best ways to do this have changed over time. The criteria against which participants judge themselves is not favourable to their fathers' style of engagement, and therefore the data creates two images: that of a more distant, strict, traditional father contrasted against a more emotionally-open, affectionate participant / interviewee.

¹⁹¹ In contrast to their parents' relationship, survey participants' relationships are characterised as a dual-earner, similarly educated (38% of participants' fathers were more highly educated than their mothers, compared to 13% of participants being more highly educated than their wives) partnership, which perhaps explains why 69% feel that the allocation of childcare-related tasks are more open to discussion than it seemed to be between their parents

¹⁹² Hanlon, N. *Masculinities, Care and Equality* p.175

Jouwert represents an important exception to this finding, remembering his father as rejecting hegemonic masculinity:

“He’s never been like the male, you know, ‘father’, like masculine [...] he was a soft guy, liked to read, liked talking, didn’t like sports [...] but very analytical as well [...] lovable man, I think [...] they were always very caring to us boys”

Interestingly, Jouwert’s father still ascribed to the breadwinner model (working full-time whilst his mother worked part-time and then mostly cared for the children) reminding us that ‘caring’ masculinity and the ‘involved’ father model are not necessarily always related. Rather than his status as a father and a commitment to gender equality turning him away from hegemonic masculinity, Jouwert introduces the possibility of his father’s sexual orientation¹⁹³ driving this identification:

“Maybe it’s interesting also, because he turned out to be gay [...] maybe that also coloured his way of being a father”

Despite Jouwert’s description of his father’s character broadly differing from the other interviewees’ and survey participants’, Jouwert did not explicitly mention his father being any more involved in childcare or any more engaged as a father (stating that they were not that close) - in this way, his father is similar to the fathers of the other survey participants and interviewees, who reported less interaction driven by their fathers compared to how they are with their children, both in the variety of activities undertaken together and frequency¹⁹⁴. The survey data shows that participants undertake a wider range of activities with their children,

¹⁹³ The intersection of sexuality and masculinity is a rich topic which unfortunately cannot be covered within the scope of this thesis

¹⁹⁴ Only a handful of the 18 activities surveyed did survey participants remember their fathers doing with them *everyday*, and these at lower rates than they reported doing with their own children. There was a moderately higher rate (20-30%) across all activities undertaken *several times a week*, including a spike for ‘watching TV’ (63% compared to 38% in participants’ households at the same frequency), a mostly passive activity. Rates continue to rise at the *now and then* frequency, including a spike for visiting family and/or friends (60%). Rates then mostly decrease at the *occasionally* frequency across all activities, most markedly for ‘cooking’ which drops to 6%. Certain activities remain popular across both generations (particularly visiting family and friends, cultural outings, and eating together as a family), although participants do these activities more with their children than they report their fathers did with them (both in terms of frequency and rates). This aligns with other research which finds that what fathers do with children has been subject to little change, with the greater part of father-child time still spent in play, companionship and activities outside the home (Brannen, J. and Nilsen, A. “From Fatherhood to Fathering” p.336). Other activities are practically non-existent in participants’ memory of their childhood relationship with their father (such as creative pursuits, highest frequency *rarely* 37%; and ‘make believe’ / imagination play, highest frequency *never* 34%) yet have been taken up by participants with their own children (several times a week at 32% and 30% respectively).

more frequently and at higher rates, than they report their fathers did with them. This reduced father engagement could be due to a wide variety of factors (including cultural gender norms at the time, availability in connection with work demands, individual personalities, the presence of other family members and/or homemaker to take the lead in such activities, etc.) which cannot be determined by this limited survey, especially as the fathers of the participants did not give their views.

Key memories

From a father's current vantage point, certain moments in childhood stand out as meaningful, and encapsulate the overarching memory of the father's own father. I asked interviewees to share salient memories in connection with their fathers to grasp the emotional impact of their relationship, and better understand how they had come to form their conceptualisations of what makes a 'good' father. Interestingly, the positive memories shared were mainly external to the home environment, in which the normal day-to-day rules and style of engagement did not apply. Marcel spoke fondly of a week-long camping trip with just him and his father, where they went fishing. Martin recounted the once or twice a year outing of his entire family (of 9) to a restaurant for dinner, when his father would "*lift the lid on his own sorrows*" by letting the children pick whatever they wanted from the menu despite their limited financial resources. Thijs remembered the great fun he had with his dad on holidays, and also attending motocross in the fields.

On these described occasions, either external pressures and expectations were briefly suspended (holidays), thus equalising the parental relationship and foregrounding the childcaring role; or fathers carved out an allotted time to let their fatherhood role take the lead (family outings) over that of their provider role. In both cases, fathers dedicated time to actively engage with their children, as Thijs explains:

"That's usually the moments where he was very present in the moment."

In research on friendships between men it has been claimed that men's forms of intimacy have a side-by-side nature, such as participating in joint activities - we see this element in the father's way of providing care, where friendship with the child (expressed by doing things together) is

important¹⁹⁵. This engagement style more closely approximates the 'involved' father model preferred by interviewees hence rendering such memories as positive¹⁹⁶.

Negative memories are also valuable in that they demonstrate to interviewees which characteristics they wish to emulate or make up for. Martin shared that on one occasion his father hit him, and he was shocked by this:

“And he would never do that. But there must have been a cock up of things. And he was kind of God for me [...] That evening, my father, this God, came to my room and he offered me his excuse [apology]: ‘I should not have done that’. That for me was a revealing moment.”

By displaying vulnerability and emotional awareness, Martin's father's response to the situation represented a break with hegemonic masculinity which he had demonstrated until that point, as a 'traditional patriarch'. As Martin concedes, this was an influential memory as it highlighted the possibility and beneficial impact of emotional engagement and communication, two traits which Martin values highly in his role as father, as well as for men more broadly.

In contrast, Thijs shared a memory of his struggle to get his father to help him fix his bike, which served as an example of how he did *not* want to approach fatherhood:

“I used to cycle everywhere on my bike - I remember a few times when my bike would be broken. I'd say: ‘Hey, dad, can you help me with this?’, which was already kind of difficult for me to ask him because he never really used to...react in a really nice way, if I asked him for help. And then if I would ask him, he would go: ‘Ahhh, I've already shown you that, you can just do that yourself’ Right? And then, I remember just, just trying to change my tyre, for example, just wrestling with my tyre for like an hour, and then him coming in and saying: ‘Ahhh, just go away, I'll just do it.’ That's very typical of how he used to do...kind of fatherhood, just, either he does it for you, or he expects you to already be able to do it. But he would never really sit down and take the time to do it again with you or to really teach you things.”

Thijs laments the distance between them, his father's lack of patience with him, and lack of interest in spending time together teaching him skills¹⁹⁷. As a result of this experience, Thijs

¹⁹⁵ Brandth, B. and Kvande, E. "Masculinity and Child Care: The Reconstruction of Fathering" p.301

¹⁹⁶ See the sections 'the importance of being there' and 'sharing experiences to create memories' in chapter two in particular

¹⁹⁷ See the section 'equipping your child with key skills' in chapter two for why this is important

strives to provide the opposite type of care, prioritising a warm, gentle, and supportive approach as demonstrated by his adoption of the 'involved' father model. As Thijs himself recognises:

"It's kind of good that my dad was like that because I've got something...like a bad example. I don't want to be like that. So I want to be like something else."

These memories highlight for interviewees how their fathers fall short of their conceptualisations of a 'good' father, resulting in a renewed commitment to their chosen approach to fatherhood, in order to do better when raising their own children. This aligns with Macht's research which finds that when the quality of memories of love (the love received from their own parents or its absence) is reflected upon negatively, fathers assessed their involvement as being better than their own fathers¹⁹⁸.

Types of intergenerational transmission

Intergenerational transmission down the gendered male line is not the only influencing factor in shaping men's approach to fatherhood - their partner's influence¹⁹⁹, their environment (past and present), and the impact of their mothers, amongst other influences, must also be acknowledged. For example, Jouwert credits his middle-class upbringing in a safe and friendly neighbourhood as central to creating the open and welcoming home atmosphere of discussion and debate that he strives to emulate with his own children. In contrast, Marcel's negative memories of his childhood environment (*"It wasn't a very happy, loving house I grew up in"*) motivated him to provide alternative surroundings for his own children (*"With the childhood of my children now it's completely different"*).

Marcel also elaborated extensively on his fraught relationship with his deceased mother, sharing how her personal struggles affected him. Martin also spoke of his mother's impact, characterising her as 'dominant'²⁰⁰, and him having to consequently 'defend' himself, provoking a desire to 'escape' from that 'tension' (*I had to find my own way*). These are just some examples of the many influencing factors which interplay to shape men's approach to

¹⁹⁸ Macht, A. "Memories of Love" p.84

¹⁹⁹ Anderson, 1996; Brannen and Nilsen, 2006; Brannen, 2015 - cited in Macht, A. "Memories of Love" p.71

²⁰⁰ Although he later modified his critical position on her, by emailing a postscript to our conversation to admit that he learnt a lot from her *despite* her dominance

fatherhood - the scope of this research, however, is limited to the influence of fathers. Across both the survey and the interviews, this research has identified four models of intergenerational transmission:

Inspired model

This grouping of fathers (who take inspiration from their fathers' ways of parenting and model their approach on theirs) is by far the smallest - both in my research, with none of the 40 survey participants identifying with this description, and that of others²⁰¹. This model applies to those with positive memories of love, resulting in a replication of previous good parenting models from their own family rather than embodying 'new' roles²⁰².

Jouwert speaks highly of his father and believes they have a good, albeit not so close, relationship. They still spend time together, including going on holidays, indicating his continued presence and impact in Jouwert's life and that of his own family. The key aspects of his father's approach which Jouwert chose to highlight - a rejection of hegemonic masculinity (*"He's also not - never been like the male, you know, 'father', like masculine"*) and an emphasis on healthy discussion and building community (*"In our house we usually had a lot of - often friends and family over, dinner parties, a lot of drinking, a lot of talking"*) - coincide with Jouwert's own professed parenting style of continuous education, engagement with social justice issues, and a repudiation of the gendered societal construction of 'father'. Jouwert describes how his parents made a conscious change in approach:

"They really wanted to do things differently, anti-authoritarian upbringing for the children, like those were really deliberate choices they made, like we want to give our children a completely different upbringing than ourselves"

He attributes his parents' commitment to 'shaping society through being a good example' as the origin of his 'subconscious drive for justice'. It appears that Jouwert, although placing increased emphasis on emotional expression (adopting the 'involved' father model), is inspired by his father's approach which he sought to continue with his own children.

²⁰¹ For example, Brannen and Nilsen argue that there are more cases of discontinuity than continuity within families - Brannen, J. and Nilsen, A. "From Fatherhood to Fathering" p.340

²⁰² Macht, A. "Memories of Love" p.79

Improved model

Several studies have suggested that contemporary fathers want to do a better job compared with their own fathers²⁰³, and this finding certainly applies to the majority of fathers in this research, to varying degrees. This 'improved model' grouping of fathers (who build upon their fathers' approach, taking the best elements and improving elsewhere) is the largest of the survey, at 38%.

Marcel recounts a negative childhood home environment, difficult relations with both his parents, and reflects upon the emotional burden of his parents' intramarital conflict, leading him to deliberately create a very different space for his children in contrast to his own upbringing. Yet he has consciously retained key elements of his parents' approach: the 'three R's' as a framework for childrearing, roughly translated as peace within the household, a clear routine, and cleanliness (*"Up to today it's still functioning [...] that's my feeling, that they [his children] still benefit from it"*); and positioning himself as a pillar of support²⁰⁴:

"Now you're grown up, your own decision, but you can always talk to me [...] that's also what my father said to me, I think that's a good one. Don't go to anyone else but talk to me, I can help you [...] the only difference is that my father always criticised. And that's not what I do. That's the difference. It's a big difference."

This quote suggests that Marcel has taken what he considers to be the best elements of his father's approach, tweaking them to make it his own - revealing the subtlety of intergenerational transmission, so that a resource passed on by one generation may be used in a different way by the next²⁰⁵.

Adapted model

Ambivalence - defined as contradictory feelings, behaviours, and attitudes which are held simultaneously²⁰⁶ - is at the heart of this model, characterised in the survey as adopting certain broad aspects of one's father's approach but adapting these to the modern day (selected by 30% of the dataset).

²⁰³ Dermott, 2008 - cited in Brannen, J. "Fathers and Sons: Relationships and Ambivalences" p.118

²⁰⁴ See the section 'fathers as a source of support' in chapter two for further info

²⁰⁵ Brannen, J. and Nilsen, A. "From Fatherhood to Fathering" p.341

²⁰⁶ Brannen, J. "Fathers and Sons: Relationships and Ambivalences" p.100

Martin renounces his father's 'stubbornness', 'tendency of hiding things', and lack of communication, going so far as to assert that in his adolescence he 'was definitely trying not to be like them', which catalysed introspection:

"[...] I'm not like him - who am I? [...] it was really a struggle to find out who I was, later, I have learned a lot from them"

Here Martin reveals ambivalence, rejecting his father's (described as a separate-spheres, religious patriarch burdened by constrictive notions of masculinity) 'traditional' approach to fatherhood, whilst at the same time selecting characteristics of his (integrity, ability to be emotionally open) that he wished to emulate. Although Martin denies having any real role models, he spoke fondly of other men in his childhood who taught him important lessons. It appears that he selectively adopted characteristics of each of these men, and of his father, in his approach to fathering his daughter, adapting these to the modern day in order to "*correct things that went wrong in our [Martin and his wife's] own youth*".

Rejected model

The second largest grouping in the survey (33%) were those who rejected their father's approach, attempting to engage with their children in the ways they felt they did not get from their father. These men are attempting to fill a lack, whether material or emotional, which emerged from their memories of having been parented²⁰⁷.

Thijs, although recognising some positive aspects (the structure of his childhood that created a feeling of safety, which he admits is somewhat lacking for his own children), wholesale rejects his father's approach. He credits our modern world with enabling him to formulate an alternative understanding of fatherhood, which was not accessible to his own father:

"The world is just kind of changing. So there's more influences for me to pick up on. And there's more sources of information for me to read up on. And there's just more good examples."

By looking to this wider variety of sources, Thijs feels that he is able to break out of the restrictive mould of fatherhood which his father offers him, aligning instead with the 'involved' father model - yet his father remains a key influence by serving as a foil to Thijs' own performance in that role.

²⁰⁷ Macht, A. "Memories of Love" p.74

Some level of change is evident across these four models of intergenerational transmission, and indeed in three of the four, a conscious and deliberate repudiation of aspects of the father's approach is apparent, to varying degrees. However, regardless of the model of intergenerational transmission, this research has found that fathers serve as the blueprint for men in their own fatherhood journey, be that for the positive or negative. Across the interviews in particular, it was clear that these men had a deep desire to 'do better' than they remembered their own fathers doing with them - using the example offered to them by their fathers to build their own understanding of what makes a 'good' father.

Summary

This chapter reveals the chasm between Dutch fathers' perceptions of their father's approach, illustrated through childhood memories, and Dutch fathers' self-perception of their own approach as fathers; with the former shaping the latter by prompting participants to resolve the lack they felt as children. Four models of intergenerational transmission are identified: inspired, improved, adapted, and rejected - across all of these models, fathers are the reference starting point.

CONCLUSION

This research sought to test the academic hypothesis, widely theorised in fatherhood and masculinity studies, of a shift from 'breadwinner' fathers exhibiting hegemonic masculinity to 'involved' fathers embracing 'caring' masculinity. The sample was limited to fathers in 'traditional contexts' (i.e. biological fathers residing with the children and their mothers²⁰⁸) located in the Netherlands. Using memory as an entrypoint, I investigated the prevalence of fatherhood norms within the Dutch context and the changing perceptions, and interconnections, of these norms over time, in order to answer my research question: **how does the memory of the experience of being fathered shape Dutch fathers' own adoption of fatherhood norms, and associated understandings of masculinity?**

Through a mixed-methods design of quantitative (anonymous, close-ended survey which produced a dataset of 40 participants) and qualitative (total of four interviews) research, undertaken within the framework of a hermeneutic-phenomenological methodology, I explored the influence of childhood memory in the intergenerational transmission of fatherhood norms. My research findings are twofold:

Adoption of the 'involved' father model

Dutch fathers' conceptualisations of a 'good' father closely align with the academic definition of the 'involved' father model, with Dutch fathers also embracing 'caring' masculinity and professing a deep commitment to gender equality - granting legitimacy to the academic tendency to understand these three concepts as intertwined. This finding concurs with the hypothesised emergence and prevalence of this model, rendering it the preeminent contemporary fatherhood norm in the Netherlands.

However, this research uncovered evidence of enduring hegemonic masculinity, specifically certain tenets of the breadwinner model (dominance and prioritisation of male paid employment, despite both partners in paid employment) and gendered parenting (father's creation of their own platform in care work, termed 'masculine care', which modifies and reasserts, rather than

²⁰⁸ Lamb, M. and Lewis, C. "Father-child relationships' p.119

transcends, hegemonic masculinity). This discrepancy between self-perception and the reality of circumstances highlights the overlapping and complex nature of shifting fatherhood norms.

Fathers are remembered in contrast to participants' self-perception of themselves as fathers

Although there are notable exceptions, broadly speaking fathers are remembered as embodying a more 'traditional' approach, bound up with hegemonic masculinity and a preference for separate spheres over gender equality. This (self-reported) sharp distinction between fatherhood styles creates a narrative of the 'involved' father growing out of the 'failings' of the 'traditional' father, who serves as a foil - although, as chapter two argued, there are many overlapping characteristics between the two approaches, and it is not a simple and neat transition between them. We therefore need to be cautious in our conceptualisation of fathers into discrete and often binary categories²⁰⁹.

Childhood memories illustrate to participants the ways in which their fathers fell short of being a 'good' father, prompting them to fulfil this lack in order to 'do better' by their own children. This research finds that memories of the experience of being fathered hold a powerful influence over Dutch fathers' engagement with, and adoption of, fatherhood norms, including associated understandings of masculinity. Across the four identified models of intergenerational transmission fathers serve as the blueprint, for better or worse.

These findings reflect a nonprobability²¹⁰, convenience²¹¹ sample with shared characteristics: white, well-educated, middle-aged, middle-class, secular, Dutch fathers. The privileged location of this sample must be acknowledged in shaping the narratives received, with these findings being only a partial reflection of the experiences of those who expressed interest in this topic, themselves a partial reflection of Dutch fathers. Is the pattern of re-emphasising and re-defining the role of fathers and the position of fatherhood²¹², with the theorised rise of the (flawed) 'involved' father, genuinely evident in the Netherlands, or only amongst this group? The study does not seek to elevate this experiential knowledge over that emanating from other, more

²⁰⁹ Parke, R. and Cookston, J. "Commentary: Many Types of Fathers, Many Types of Contexts" p.137

²¹⁰ Not representative of the population

²¹¹ Recruiting participants from places where they are easily accessible - Miner, K. and Jayaratne, T. "Feminist Survey Research" p.316

²¹² Knijn, T. and Selten, P. "Transformations of Fatherhood: the Netherlands" p.169

oppressed demographics of fathers, but rather provide an analytical window into this specific subset.

The relative coherence of the sample can perhaps be explained by the distribution of the survey via relevant Emancipator partners and on social media, reaching fathers who are already engaged with organisations providing specialist services aimed at them, and therefore receptive to such research. There is a need to investigate whether these research findings are also applicable to a broader range of fathers, particularly those currently outside the reach of such organisations, about whom we know even less. Future research could focus on intergenerational transmission of fatherhood norms for fathers of different ethnic backgrounds, social class, sexual orientation, as well as non-resident fathers or those in blended families, amongst other identifiers.

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APPENDIX

Interview guide

1. As you know, I am interested in the connections between childhood memories and approaches to fatherhood. So to begin with, thinking about your experience so far of being a father, what comes up when you think about your daily experiences with your children?
 - a. What are the current challenges you are facing as a father?
 - b. Is there a particular situation you would like to draw attention to?
2. Thinking about your childhood, can you describe how your father raised you?
 - a. What is one of your most significant childhood memories in connection with your father?
3. In your opinion, what does being a good father look like?
 - a. To what extent do you believe you've been able to apply this ideal to raising your children?
 - b. How do your memories of your own father compare?
4. How have you found reflecting on these childhood memories of your father, now that you're a father yourself?
 - a. Do the memories take on new meaning?
 - b. Do you think these memories have any influence over how you approach fathering now?

Field notes: initial impressions of interviews

Interview one: Marcel, May 8th, Den Haag

- How did I feel during the interview?

Felt comfortable and at ease, felt that I managed to fully immerse myself in the conversation and the flow was quite good. Gave him space to talk; felt at one point I might need to redirect the conversation as he was focused on his mother - unsure whether it was the right decision not to, will have to listen back. Felt he painted a good picture and I got a good view of his life for the time we spent chatting.

- Was there anything I would have done differently?

Felt that I maybe phrased things in a leading (or confirmatory) way a couple of times, didn't manage to catch myself in time. Also felt a strong urge to gain neat soundbites and clear themes but have to remember that is not the hermeneutic-phenomenological way and I need to trust that the data will speak for itself.

- Was I comfortable?

Slightly anxious at first as there's so much pressure as I only have three interviews but once I relaxed into the flow of conversation I was very comfortable.

- Did I find any aspect of the interview challenging?

Only one comment towards the end about putting a rifle in a child's hands makes them into a murderer, and pink shoes on a boy turns them 'gay'. Specifically because he was asking my opinion and so waiting on an answer, I was immediately conscious that my face was not under control.

- How did I manage my face work?

Very conscious about this as I've had many comments in the past so I'm quite confident that I managed my face work as (a) the issue was at the forefront of my mind, and (b) nothing too unexpected or controversial arose. Occasionally I smiled but otherwise plenty of nodding and affirmatives to provide encouragement.

- What I thought I heard (emerging areas to be thought about)

- Establishing a legacy
- Spending time together / making memories
- Kinship / importance and influence of wider community
- Rejection of his father's model, yet respect and adoption of certain elements (i.e. placing yourself as a pillar for the child to turn back to)
- Three 'R's': order, cleanliness, routine

- Is this coloured by my prejudice?

These themes jumped out to me during our conversation but perhaps because I recognised them in my own life / he repeated them? Will have to listen back for nuances

- Any other notes

Marcel was very open, plenty of eye contact, and was expressive. He took considered pauses, was friendly and engaged. He seemed aware of his parents' (not just father) influence, conscious of making changes. I got the impression he felt comfortable in himself as a father, at peace with his situation with his parents although he clearly still had some questions.

I'm not sure the first question was presented quite right as I had to explain it and express it differently which didn't create a smooth opening - will rethink for next interview

Interview two: Martin, May 11th, Utrecht

- How did I feel during the interview?

Caught off-guard as I hadn't been expecting to interview Martin so I didn't have my notebook with me and wasn't in that mindset - when he reached out to me it was with interest in my research and a keenness to share his own work in this field so I had anticipated having a general fatherhood discussion and that he perhaps might make some recommendations for further reading. So I felt unprepared, and quite uncomfortable with some of his remarks - I certainly did not agree with his position, which was essentialist and in my opinion quite rightwing and apologetic to toxic masculinity (boys and girls have different strengths / characteristics, need to understand and engage with the negative actions) despite professing otherwise. I felt in general the interview did not go well - it was very long as he kept talking and I felt constricted in my ability to intervene and redirect due to my lack of confidence in HP interviewing combined with my reflections on the last interview when transcribing the audio. There were definitely some comments which were relevant to my research and intriguing, but a lot of the recording is Martin talking about his work.

- Was there anything I would have done differently?

When meeting people in connection with my thesis I should always be prepared for all outcomes in order to remain feeling confident. I think I should have been braver in interjecting as it felt as though I've now gone to the opposite extreme of not steering the conversation at all - Martin clearly had deeply reflected on his childhood experiences (to the point of writing an autobiography) and relationship with his father but evidently I was not a sufficiently skilled interviewer to encourage more of a focus on that area.

- Was I comfortable?

Martin was gracious in welcoming me to his home and providing refreshments. We sat in his office on the top floor of his house. The potential risk to my safety had occurred to me prior to going (I had no idea who he was, he had contacted me, I had no details of his other than his address and phone number) however I was reassured by his older age and the presence of his online profile. At points during our conversation I was uncomfortable with some of what he was

saying, both opinion and revelation. I felt this challenge to my personal views and values physically and mentally, but tried not to reveal my reaction (in my face or using words).

- Did I find any aspect of the interview challenging?

As above - I lost control of the interview very early on and was aware of this fact yet struggled to decide how to respond, ultimately opting to cede power to Martin. I also, as above, found some of his statements challenging, particularly as throughout the interview he was looking to me for agreement.

- How did I manage my face work?

This I am very confident that I remained in control of, despite some testing discussion areas - it remained at the forefront of my mind, as before, but now, having completed the previous interview with Marcel, I really focused on keeping my face neutral throughout. To the point that I also drastically reduced (almost eliminated) my affirmative nods and 'uhum's, which, although given as encouragement to keep talking, could easily be taken for agreement with the content of what was being said.

- What I thought I heard (emerging areas to be thought about)
 - Multiple sources of identity / father role modelling
 - Looming presence of the second world war
 - Importance of expressing emotions and communication
 - Developmental differences between boys and girls
 - Spending time together / making memories
 - 'Dedicated' father

- Is this coloured by my prejudice?

Not by my personal prejudice I don't think although I was certainly conscious of the themes of the previous interview with Marcel and was interested to notice some common areas, but perhaps Martin's interview was coloured by Marcel's interview.

- Any other notes

Quite frustrated with how this interview played out but I'm hoping at the end of (a very long) transcription some knowledge pertinent to memories of fathers will emerge - letting this data 'bubble up' to the surface from the majority content focused on Martin's work with boys which, while interesting, is not directly relevant.

Although Marcel is 20 years younger than Martin, it will be interesting to see if the next two interviews (if both participants are younger) also follow the same lines of their fathers' being deeply impacted by WWII. Martin also referred to the importance of legacy but perhaps this is generational.

Interview three: Jouwert, May 13th, Utrecht

- How did I feel during the interview?

I felt very welcome at his office, comfortable where we were sat, and enjoyed my tea. I felt this interview both started and continued much more fruitfully than the last two - perhaps because I felt more of an affinity with Jouwert and could understand and recognise his views more readily.

- Was there anything I would have done differently?

Perhaps remained slightly more focused on my role as interviewer - our conversation was so interesting, and I felt much more aligned with Jouwert's worldview, that I slipped more into actual chat. However I'm not too concerned about this as Jouwert offered relevant and concise experiences and thoughts.

- Was I comfortable?

Yes, completely.

- Did I find any aspect of the interview challenging?

Not challenging, just very interesting. Jouwert clearly is invested and engaged in issues of gender so I felt we were coming from a similar perspective. Perhaps the challenge is to question my behaviour / response - this interview was 'easy' compared to the others.

- How did I manage my face work?

Confident that this was fine, not least because Jouwert did not offer any (in my opinion) controversial or challenging comments

- What I thought I heard (emerging areas to be thought about)
 - Social injustice, inequality as an important driving force and focus
 - Discomfort with gendered naming of 'father' = power of language
 - Kinship / local community an important support network
 - Rejection of gendered stereotypes and characteristics
 - Spending time with children, discussing, being present

- Is this coloured by my prejudice?

I personally agree with a lot of what Jouwert said so perhaps the above areas stand out in my mind because they are closest to me - however he did repeat certain things so on balance I think these were the key issues. Interesting that in all three interviews so far participants have spoken about their mothers, despite being aware of the research topic.

- Any other notes

Jouwert was clearly very passionate (we continued talking beyond the interview recording about society and inequality), in his own words he has become 'radicalised' in the last five years as to all the issues facing humanity and the fight against injustice. He came across (and presented himself) as an engaged, caring human who also happens to be a father (he prefers 'parent'). The only interviewee who described his father in a similar way to himself (as a father),

suggesting an adoption. Also clarified that his father did not fit the 'stereotypical masculine model' suggesting this allowed him to embrace the same approach.

Interview four: Thijs, May 13th, Weesp

- How did I feel during the interview?

Relieved that he had arrived despite the delayed start, concerned that the background bustle of the cafe was going to make transcription difficult, happy to be speaking to a younger father to provide variety. Slightly tired having already done an interview earlier, probably wasn't as focused as I should have been. Thankful that Thijs was someone I was happy to talk to, and could relate to more, so less effort was needed to still be present.

- Was there anything I would have done differently?

Maybe probed slightly more - Thijs was the least willing (or comfortable?) to expand on his comments without guidance. What he did say and reflect upon was relevant and insightful but it felt that I had to push him slightly more which I was hesitant to do.

- Was I comfortable?

Mostly comfortable at the cafe, although I was feeling a little drained having given so much energy already to the previous interview. Thijs was very apologetic about being late and also very friendly (although he said that he was struggling with social contact and working to overcome that - I didn't notice).

- Did I find any aspect of the interview challenging?

Not particularly - Thijs didn't say anything that I found controversial or offensive, he was thoughtful and willing to be open and share his experience with me. Conversation flowed naturally, and we got on.

- How did I manage my face work?

I think well, if anything I was too friendly - there was plenty of laughter and we continued chatting after the recording. This interview felt the most like a conversation with a friend of a friend.

- What I thought I heard (emerging areas to be thought about)
 - Conscious commitment to gender equal parenting role modelling
 - Evolution of perspective on father over time (having become a father himself)
 - Importance of spending time together / making memories
 - Generational divide
 - Functional but distant father, not engaged emotionally

- Is this coloured by my prejudice?

Based on phrases that Thijs said that jump out in my mind - he clearly stated that his father provided a model of how not to be a father. Across all interviews I remember feeling that they expressed love and care, also sometimes respect, for their fathers, whilst diverging from their approach.

- Any other notes

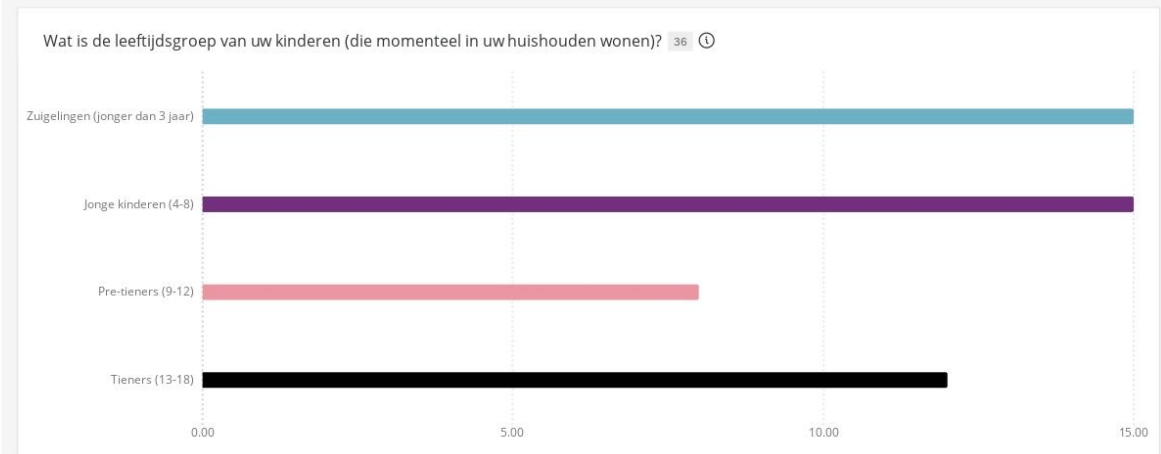
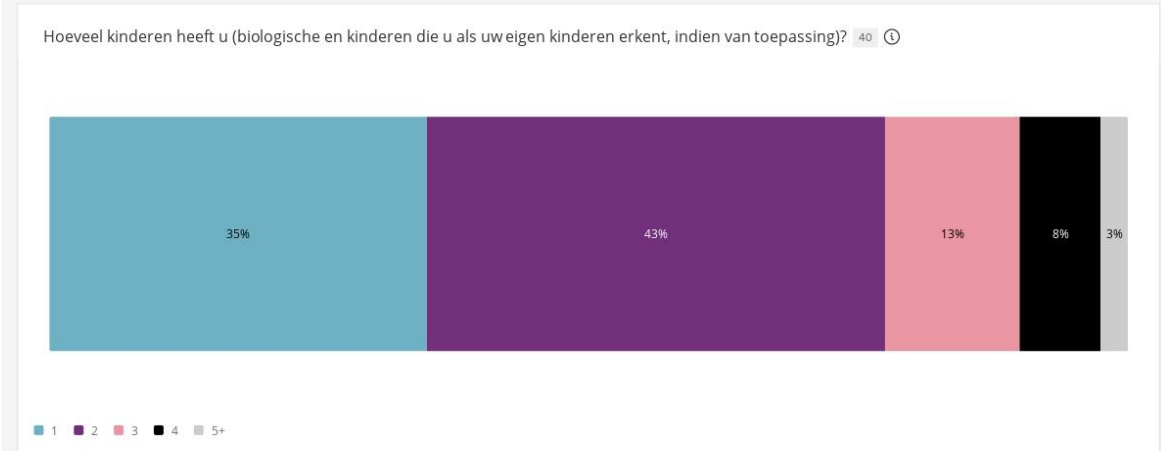
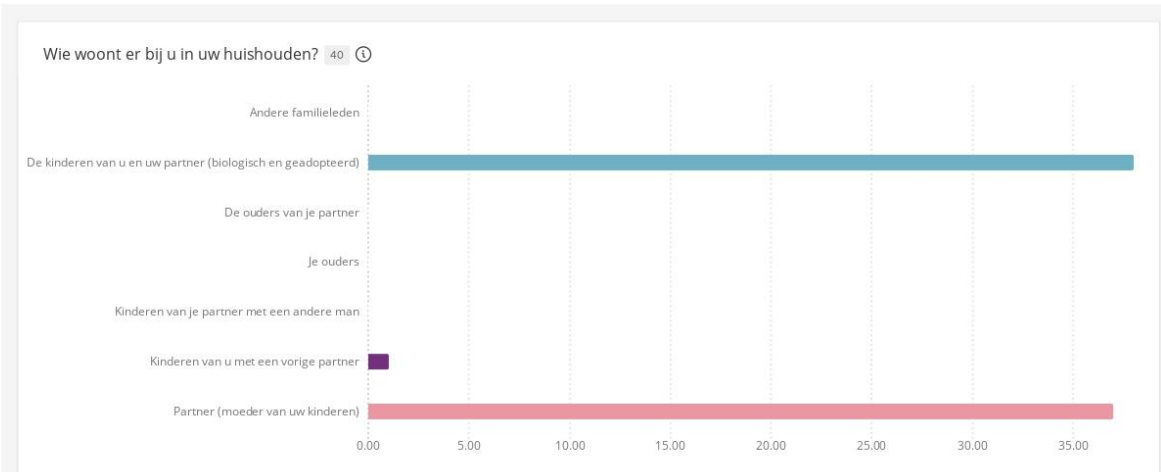
Thijs was expressive and had clearly thought about his relationship with his father in direct comparison to his approach to fathering in detail (through therapy and the resulting confrontation with his father), which meant that he was able to clearly articulate his developed thoughts. Perhaps this is why this interview moved more quickly rather than due to an increased need for prompting and coaxing - the others wandered a lot more, covering diverse ground.

Survey dataset visualisation

Fatherhood x Memory / Section one: you and your household

Filters Passes screening Q26

Responses: 40



Wie is de belangrijkste bron van inkomsten in uw huishouden? 38 ⓘ



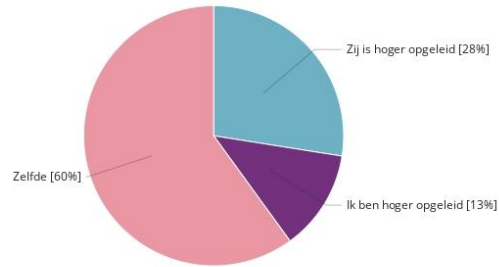
Wat is de werkstatus van uw partner? 40 ⓘ



[tak: indien geantwoord werkzaam of zelfstandige] Verdienen u en uw partner hetzelfde? 40 ⓘ



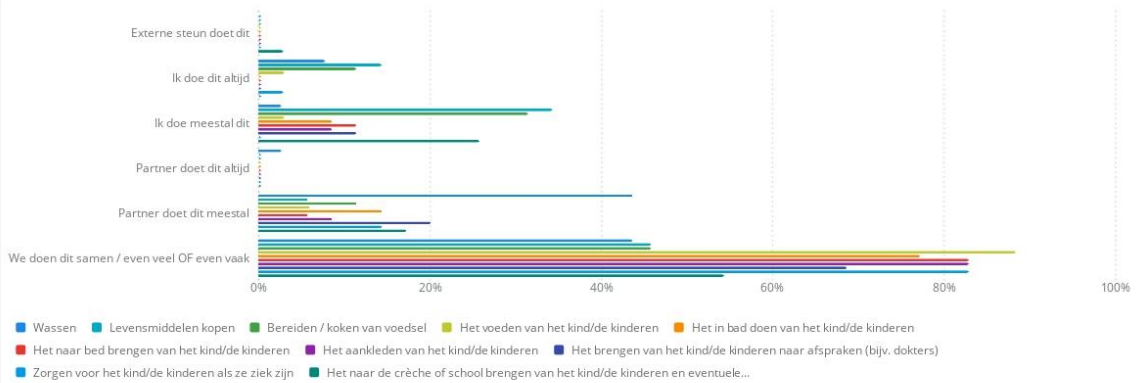
Hebben u en uw partner hetzelfde niveau van academische opleiding? 40 ①



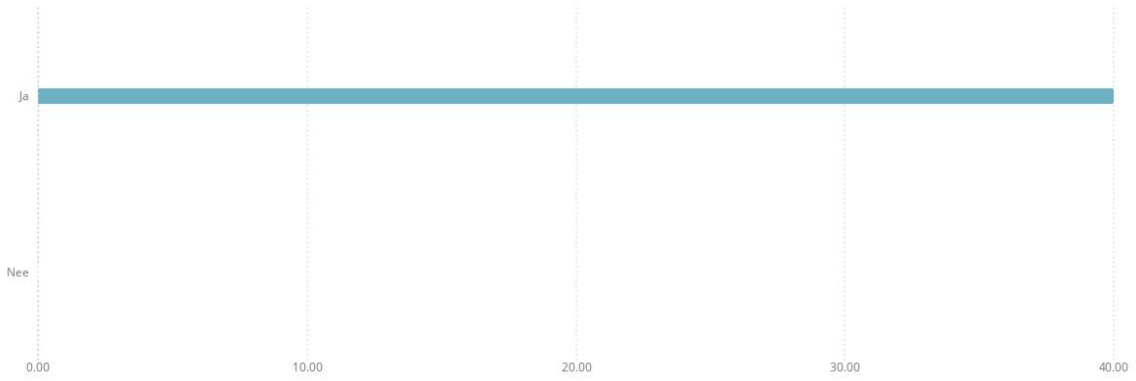
Hoe lang heeft u al een relatie met uw partner? 40 ①



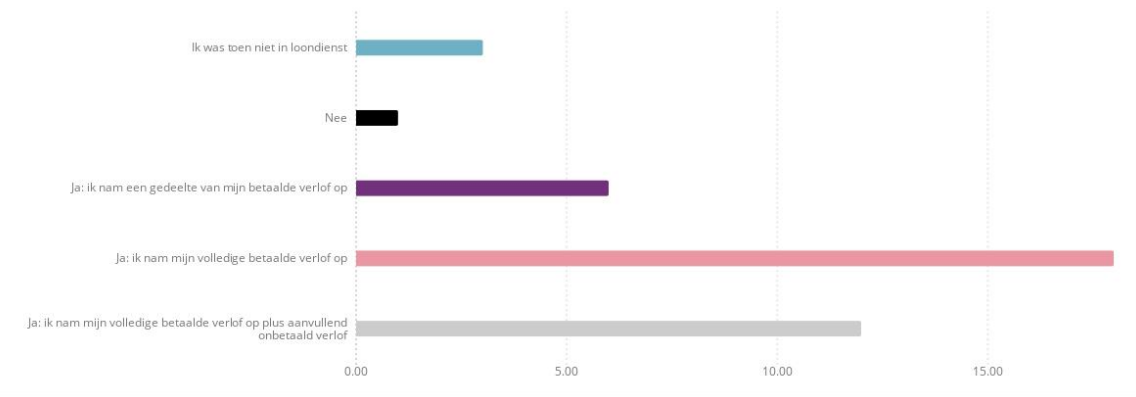
Hoe verdelen u en uw partner de volgende taken in verband met de zorg voor de kinderen? ①



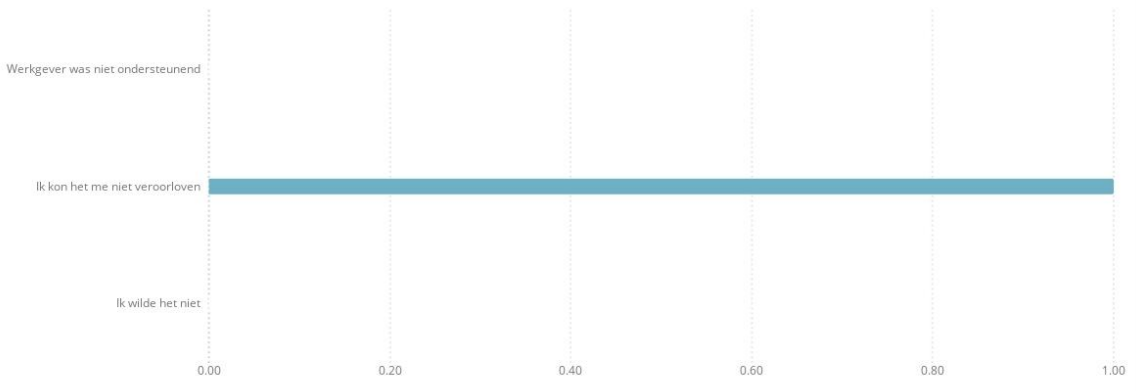
Was u aanwezig bij de geboorte van uw kind(eren)? 40 ⓘ



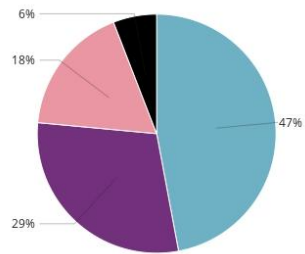
Heeft u verlof opgenomen na de geboorte van uw laatste kind? 40 ⓘ



[tak: indien nee geantwoord] Wat was de belangrijkste reden? 1 ⓘ

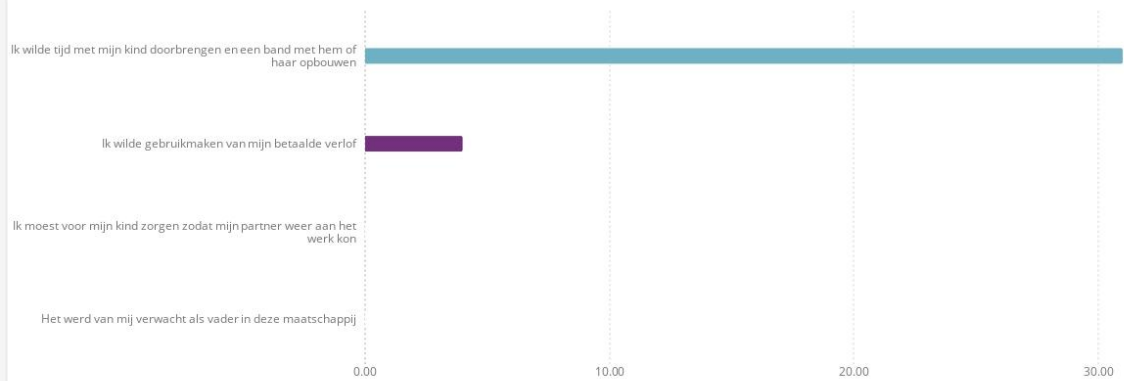


[tak: indien ja beantwoord, volledig betaald verlof] Hoe lang had u recht op (gedeeltelijk) betaald verlof? 17 ⓘ

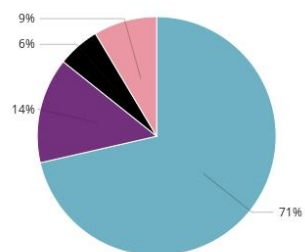


■ meer dan 10 dagen ■ 2 dagen ■ 5 dagen ■ 10 dagen

[tak: indien ja beantwoord, elke variatie] Wat was de belangrijkste reden? 35 ⓘ

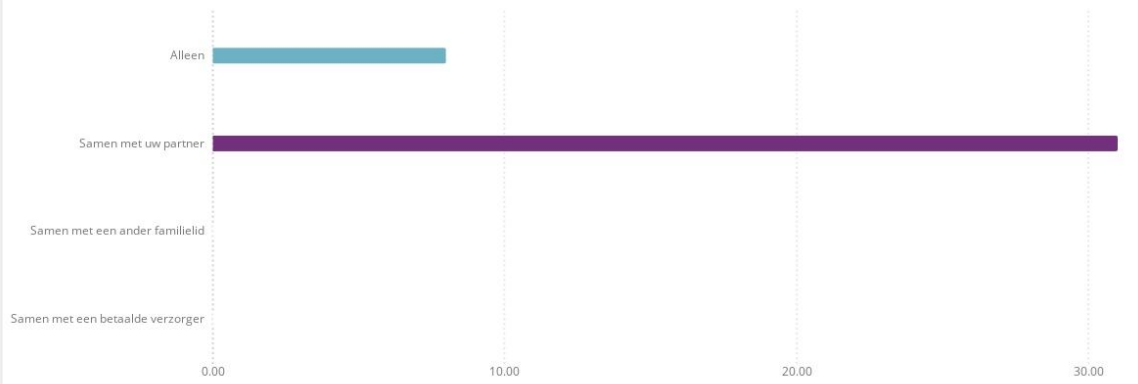


[tak: indien ja beantwoord, elke variatie] Heeft uw partner ook verlof opgenomen om voor uw kind te zorgen (gelijktijdig of opeenvolgend)? 35 ⓘ

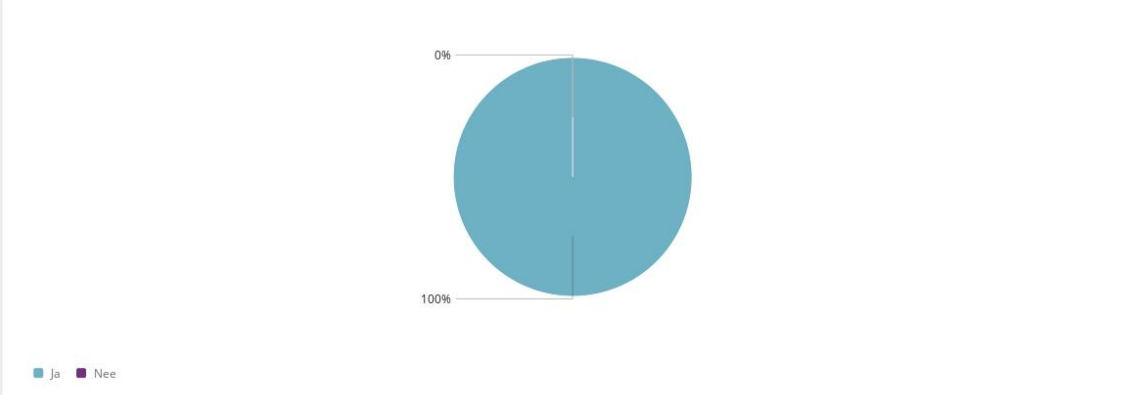


■ Zij nam langer verlof op ■ Ik nam langer verlof op ■ We namen even lang verlof op ■ Zij had toen geen werk

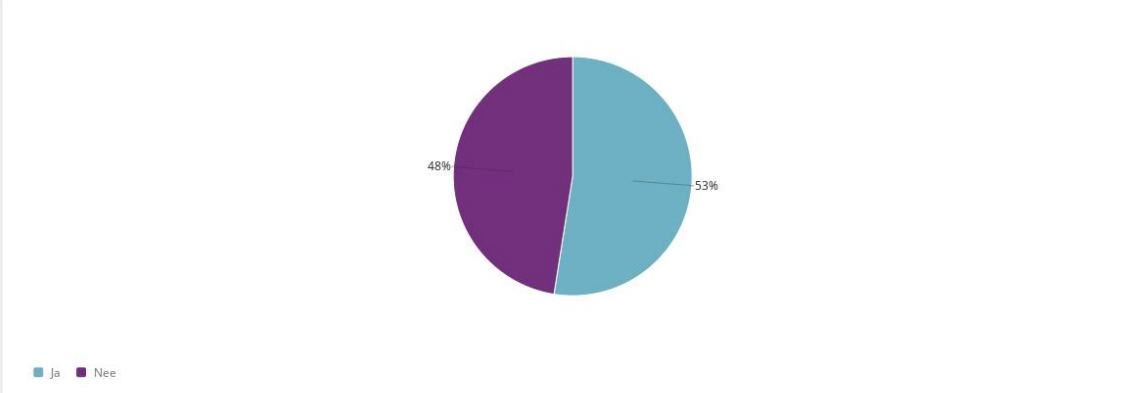
[tak: indien ja geantwoord, elke variatie OF 'Ik had op dat moment geen werk] Was u, terwijl u voor uw kind zorgt, voornamelijk? ³⁹ ⓘ



Vindt u dat u over de benodigde vaardigheden en eigenschappen beschikt om voor uw kind(eren) te zorgen? ⁴⁰ ⓘ



[tak: indien ja geantwoord] Beschikte u altijd al over deze vaardigheden en eigenschappen? ⁴⁰ ⓘ

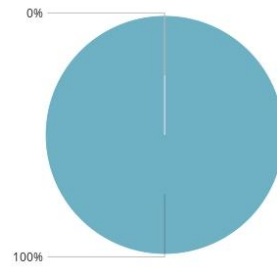


[tak: indien nee geantwoord] Op welk moment hebt u deze vaardigheden en eigenschappen verworven en/of ontwikkeld? 19 ⓘ



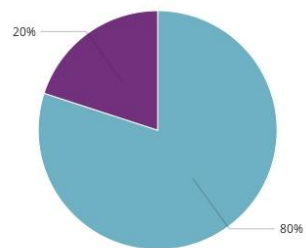
■ Tijdens de zwangerschap, terwijl ik me voorbereide om vader te worden ■ Toen de baby er eenmaal was en ik voor hem of haar begon te zorgen
■ In het eerste jaar, toen mijn baby en ik elkaar leerden kennen

Vindt u dat uw partner de benodigde vaardigheden en eigenschappen heeft om voor uw kind(eren) te zorgen? 40 ⓘ



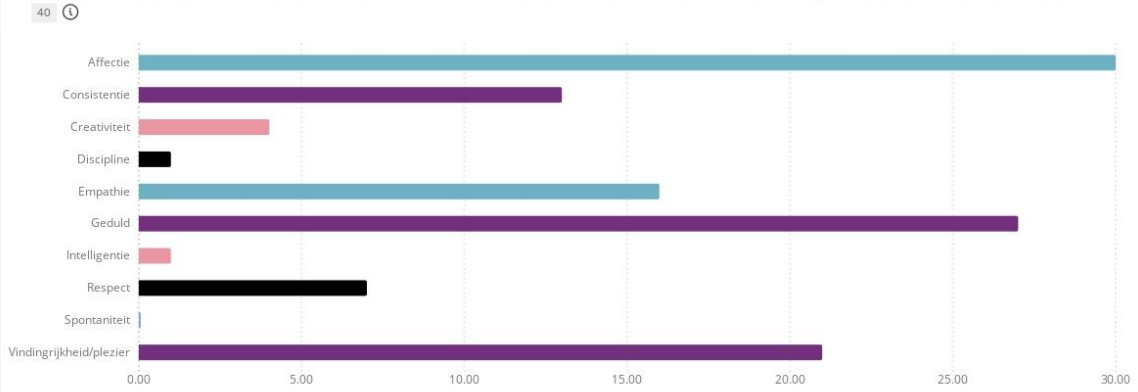
■ Ja ■ Nee

[tak: indien ja geantwoord] Heeft zij dat altijd gedaan? 40 ⓘ

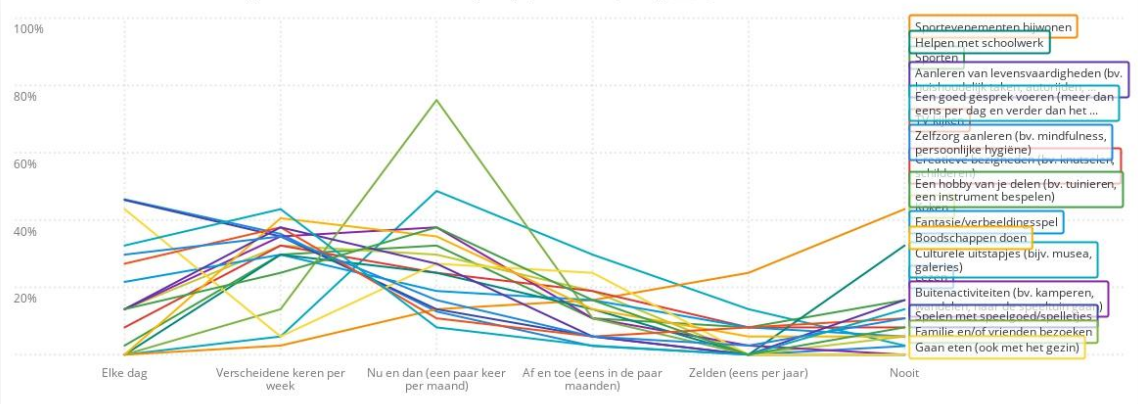


■ Ja ■ Nee

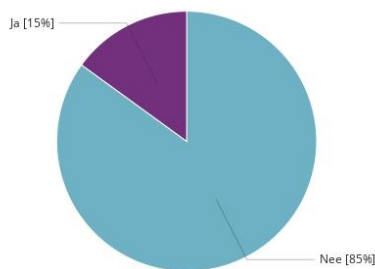
Welke drie van de volgende kwaliteiten zijn volgens u het belangrijkste om als vader te bezitten / te tonen? [slepen en neerzetten drie]: belangrijkste



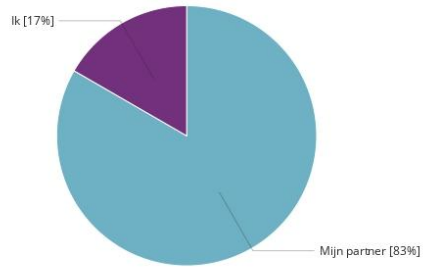
Hoe vaak onderneemt u de volgende activiteiten met uw kind(eren)? [kies er een per rij] 39



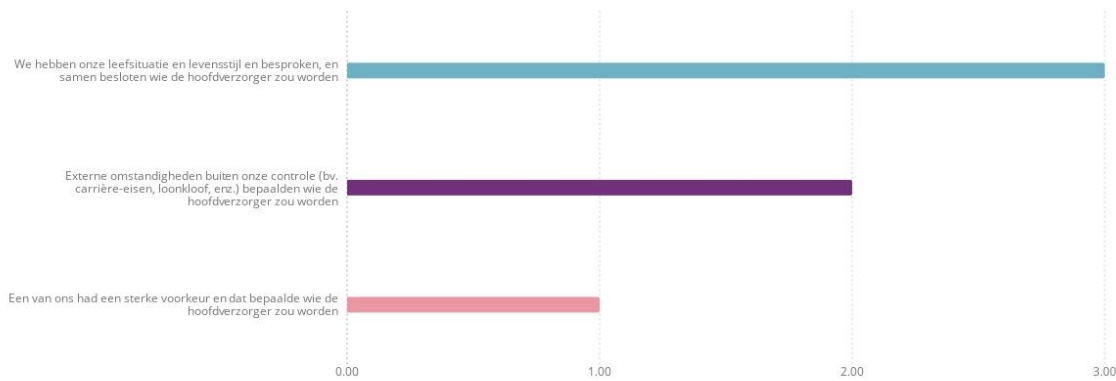
Is er tussen u en uw partner een duidelijke hoofdverzorger van uw kind(eren)? 40



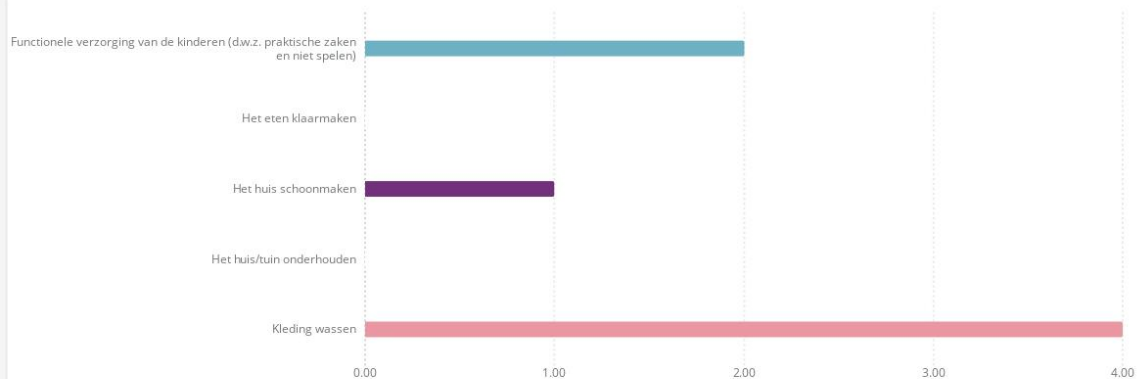
[tak: indien ja beantwoord] Wie is de hoofdverzorger? 6 ⓘ



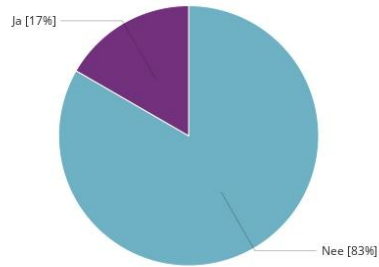
[tak: indien ja geantwoord] Welk van de volgende omschrijvingen beschrijft het best hoe u en uw partner tot deze verdeling zijn gekomen? 6 ⓘ



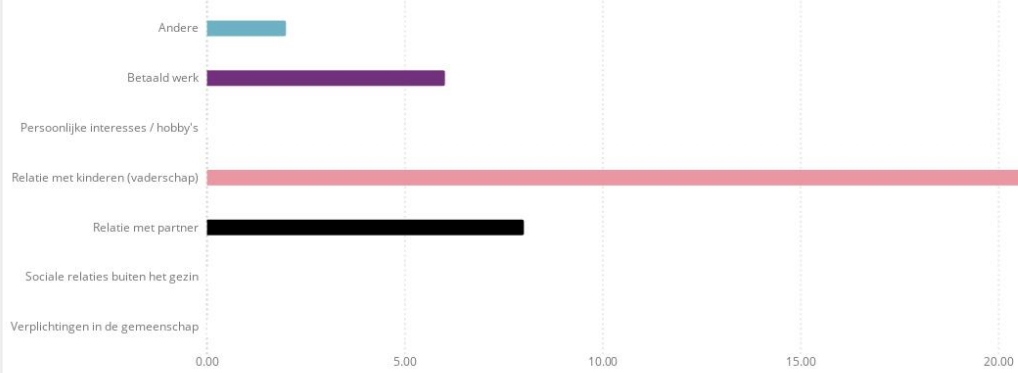
Welke (indien van toepassing) van de volgende activiteiten beschouwt u als "vrouwelijk/moederlijk" [kies alles wat van toepassing is] 6 ⓘ



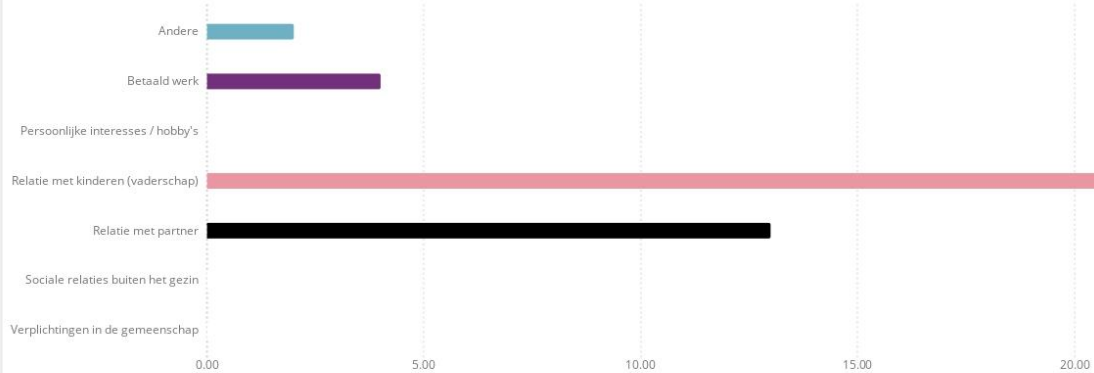
Zorgt dat ervoor dat u zich belemmerd voelt om die activiteiten te doen? 6 ⓘ



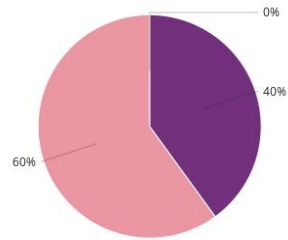
Aan welk aspect van uw leven geeft u voorrang boven alle andere? [slepen en neerzetten een]: hoogste prioriteit 39 ⓘ



En welk aspect vindt u het belangrijkste? [slepen en neerzetten een]: belangrijkste 40 ⓘ

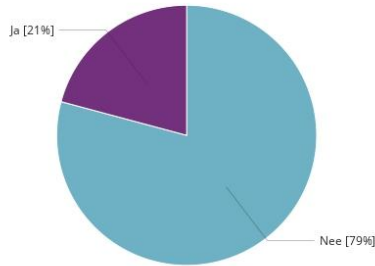


Welke van de volgende categorieën beschrijft volgens u het best uw benadering van het vaderschap? 40 ⓘ

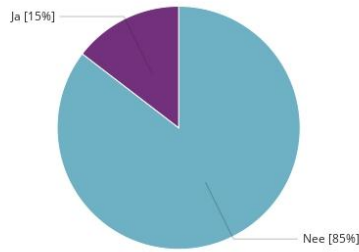


- Hoofdzakelijk gericht op (betaald) werk om het gezin te onderhouden, weinig betrokken bij de verzorging van de kind(eren)
- Hoofdverdiener maar ook aanwezig in het gezin, enige betrokkenheid bij de kinderopvang
- Niet de hoofdverdiener, sterk betrokken bij de kinderopvang

Hebt u gehoord van campagnes of activiteiten in uw gemeenschap of op uw werk die de betrokkenheid van mannen als vaders bevorderen? 48 ⓘ



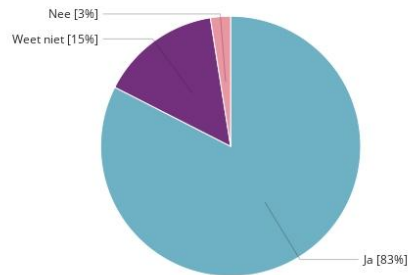
Hebt u ooit deelgenomen aan een activiteit in uw gemeenschap of op uw werk om te praten over vaderschap of uw rol in het leven van uw kinderen? 48 ⓘ



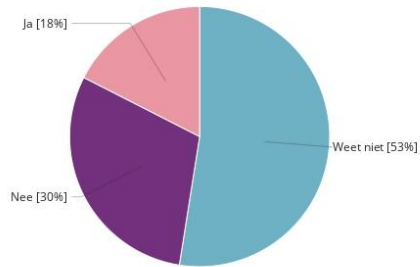
Wat zou u nuttig vinden voor toekomstige activiteiten die gericht zijn op het ondersteunen van vaders (op het gebied van onderwerpen, format, structuur, locatie, aangesproken gemeenschap, etc.) 20 ⓘ

- niets ...
- Hm, geen idee ...
- Bestaande informatie/activiteiten over ouderschapsverlof zich niet alleen moeders richten. ...
- Ja ...
- Ja ...

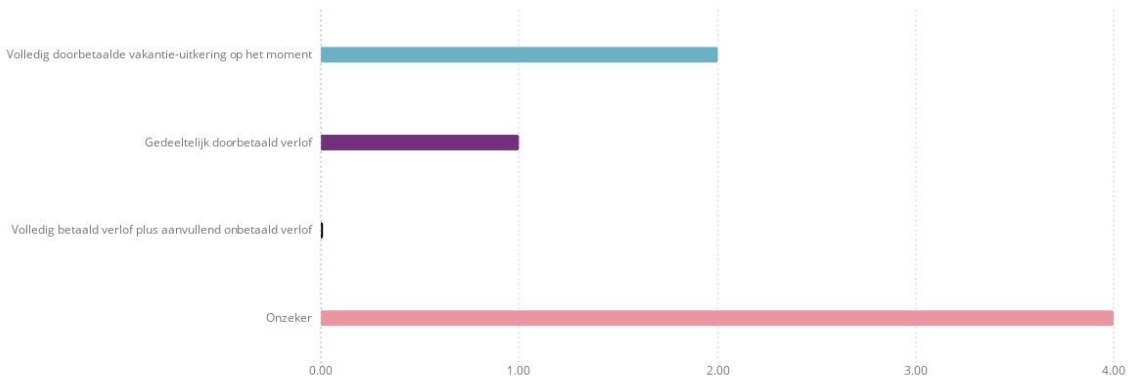
Was uw vader aanwezig bij uw geboorte? 40 ⓘ



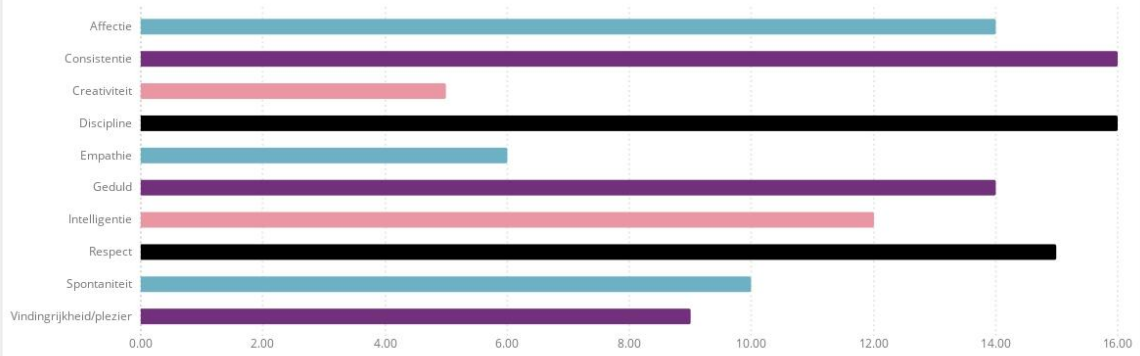
Heeft uw vader verlof opgenomen om voor u te zorgen toen u een baby was? 40 ⓘ



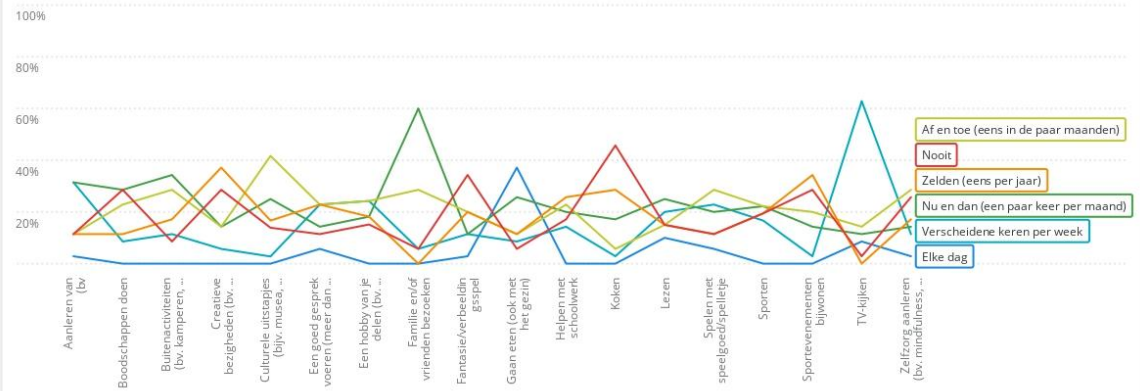
[tak: indien ja geantwoord] Weet u hoe lang uw vader verlof opnam om voor u te zorgen? 7 ⓘ



Welke drie van de volgende kwaliteiten herinner je je het sterkst in verband met je vader en je relatie met hem als kind? [slepen en neerzetten drie]: kwaliteiten 39



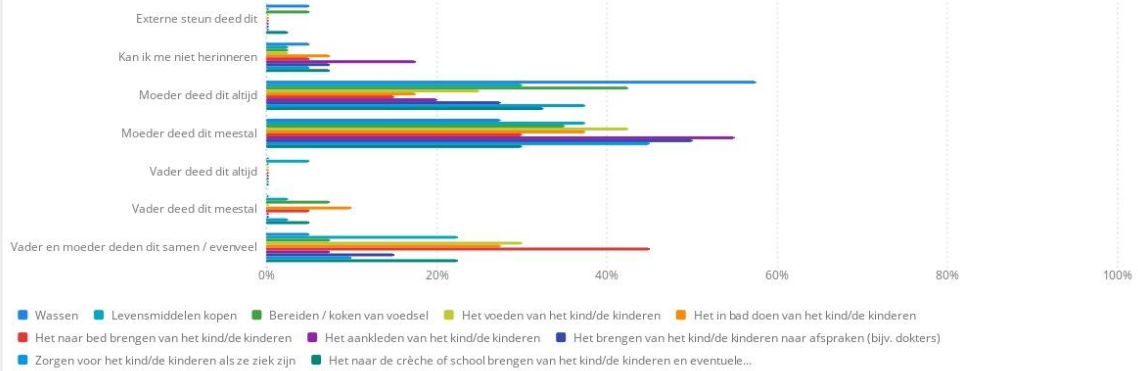
Hoe vaak ondernam uw vader de volgende activiteiten met u als kind? [kies er een per rij] 40



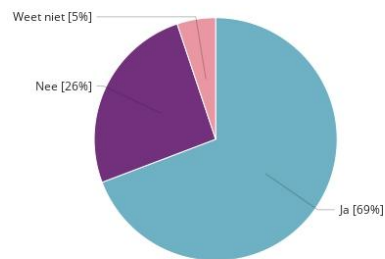
Wie zorgde er hoofdzakelijk (dagelijks) voor u toen u opgroeide? 40



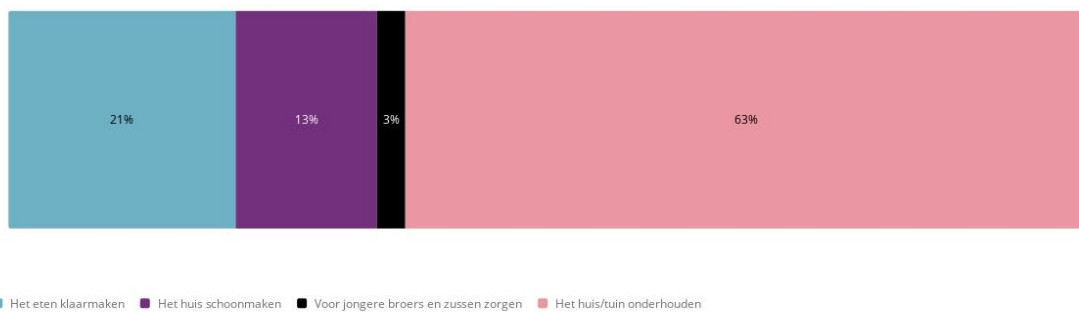
Hoe verdeelden uw vader en moeder de volgende taken in verband met de zorg voor kinderen? [kies er één per rij] ⓘ



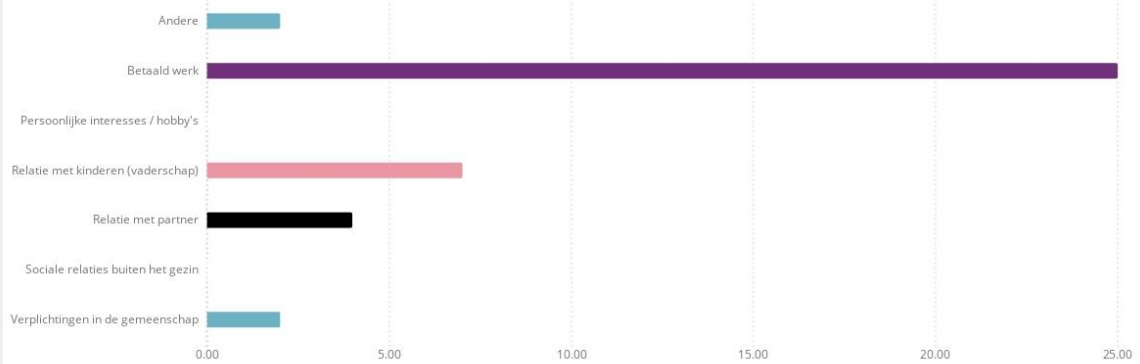
Heeft u het gevoel dat de verdeling van deze taken meer bespreekbaar is tussen u en uw partner dan tussen uw vader en moeder het geval leek te zijn? ⓘ ⓘ



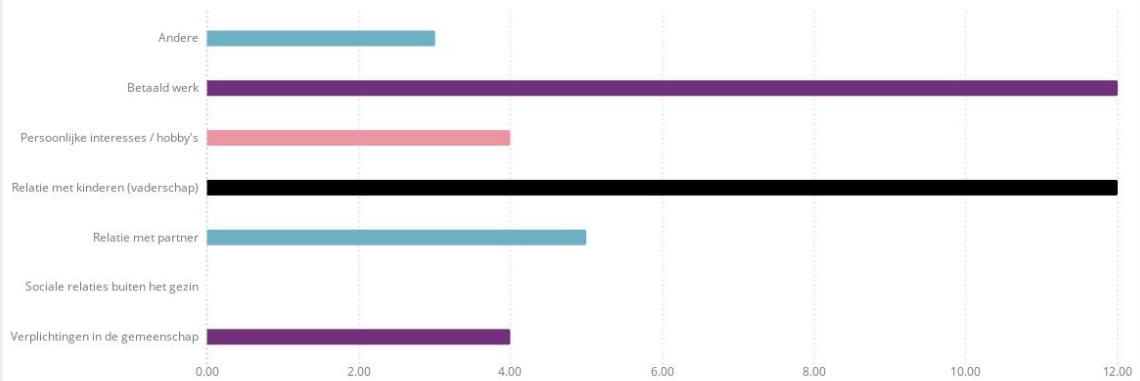
Toen u een kind of tiener was, welke (indien van toepassing) van de volgende dingen heeft uw vader u geleerd te doen? [kies alles wat van toepassing is] ⓘ ⓘ



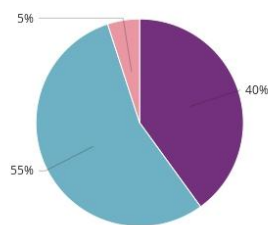
Welk aspect van zijn leven gaf je vader voorrang boven alle andere? [slepen en neerzetten een]: hoogste prioriteit 40 ①



En welk aspect waardeerde hij het meest? [slepen en neerzetten een]: belangrijkst 40 ①

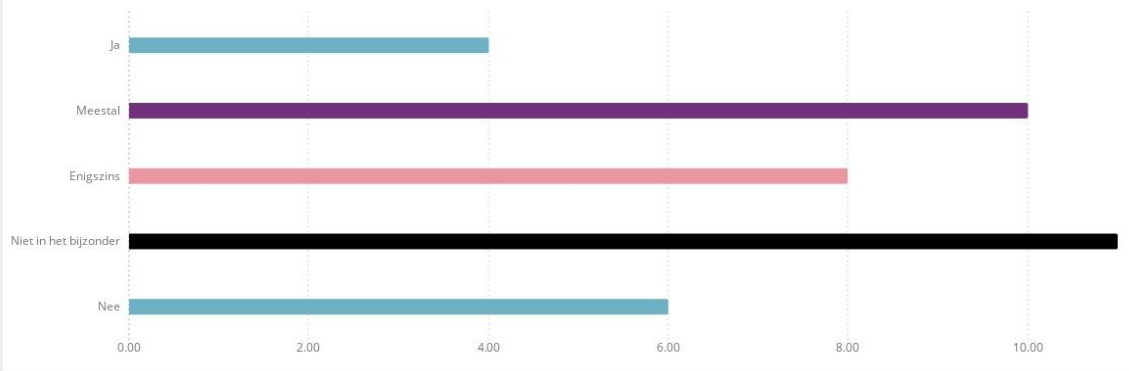


Welk van de categorieën beschrijft het best hoe je vader het vaderschap benaderde? 40 ①

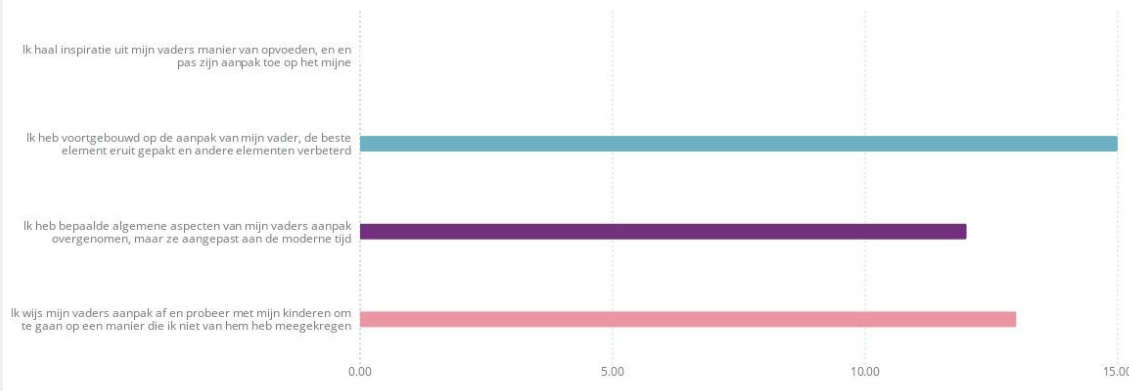


- Hoofdzakelijk gericht op (betaald) werk om het gezin te onderhouden, weinig betrokken bij de verzorging van het kind/de kinderen
- Hoofdverdiener maar ook aanwezig in het gezin, enige betrokkenheid bij de verzorging van het kind/de kinderen
- Niet de hoofdverdiener, sterk betrokken bij de verzorging van het kind/de kinderen

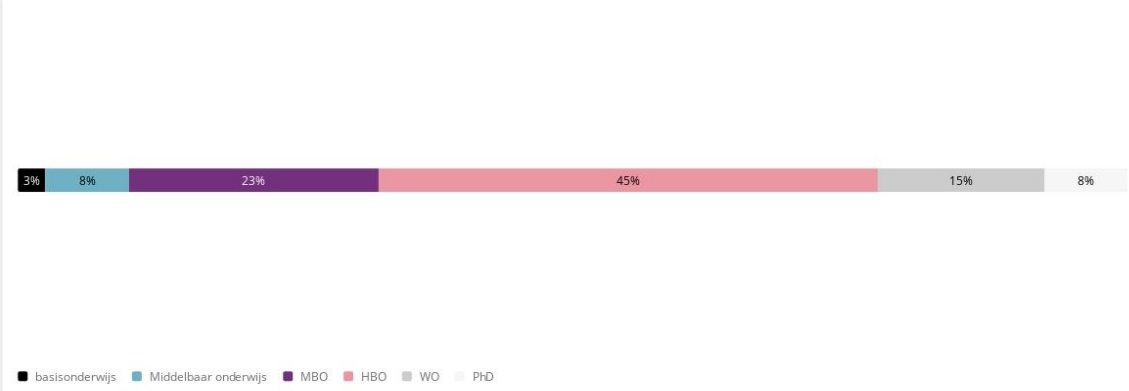
Als u denkt aan de eigenschappen / waarden / lessen waar uw vader veel belang aan hechtte, hecht u dan evenveel belang aan het overdragen van diezelfde eigenschappen / waarden / lessen aan uw kind(eren)? 39 ⓘ



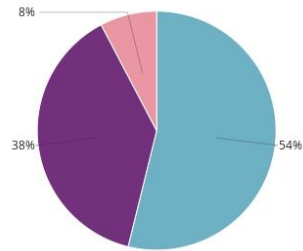
In welke mate (per saldo) heeft u in de opvoeding van uw kinderen de aanpak van uw eigen vader overgenomen? 40 ⓘ



Wat was de hoogst voltooide onderwijsgraad van uw vader? ⓘ



Hadden uw vader en moeder hetzelfde niveau van academisch onderwijs? ⓘ

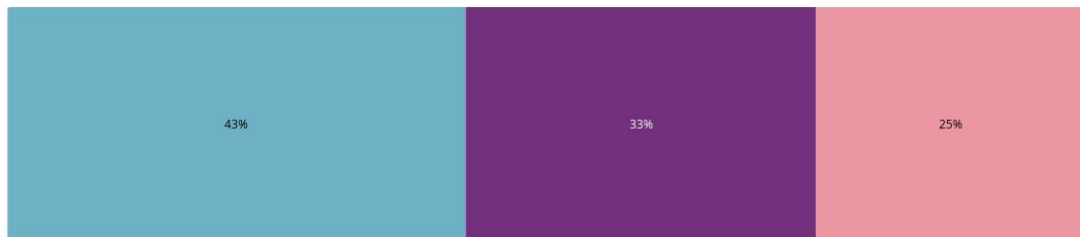


■ Zelfde ■ Vader was hoger opgeleid ■ Moeder was hoger opgeleid

Filters Q26

Responses: 40

Hoe oud bent u? 40



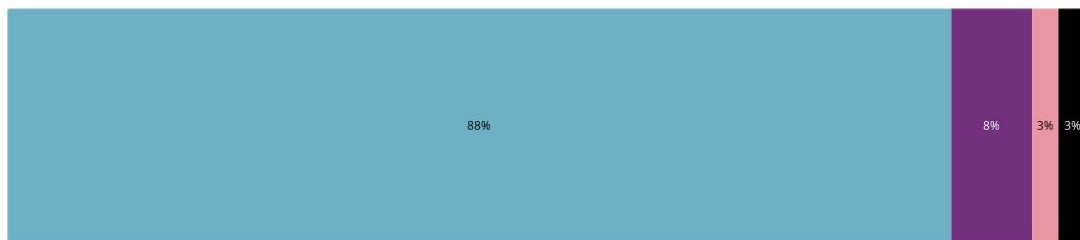
36-45 46-59 26-35

Wat is uw hoogste, voltooide onderwijsgraad? 40



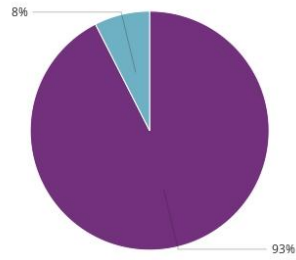
Middelbaar onderwijs MBO HBO WO PhD

Tot welke etnische groep rekent u zichzelf? 40



Wit Nederlands Andere Nederlands Caribisch Indonesisch

Bent u religieus? 40 ①



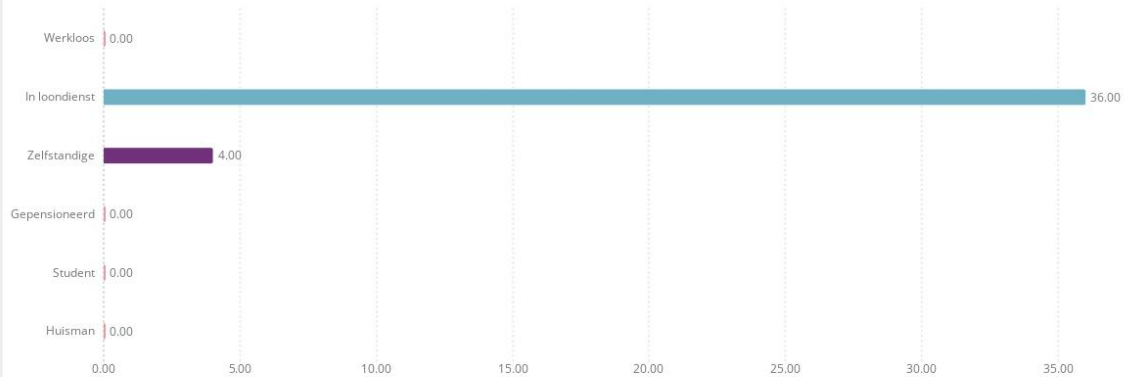
■ Nee ■ Ja

Wat is uw godsdienst? 3 ①

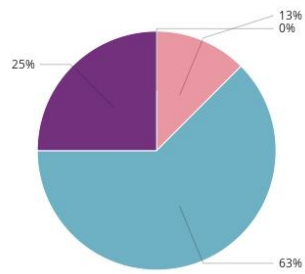


■ protestants ■ rooms-katholiek

Wat is uw werkstatus? 40 ①

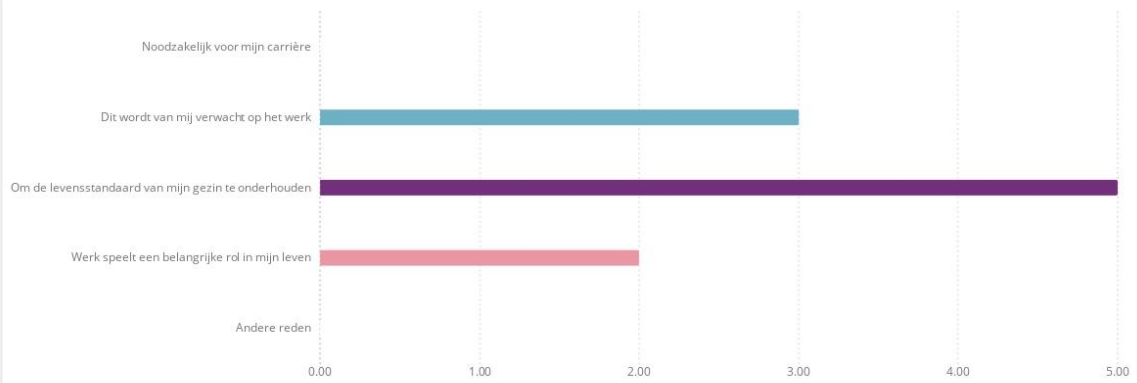


Hoeveel uur per week werkt u normaal gesproken (inclusief overwerk en ander betaald werk buitenshuis)? 40 ⓘ

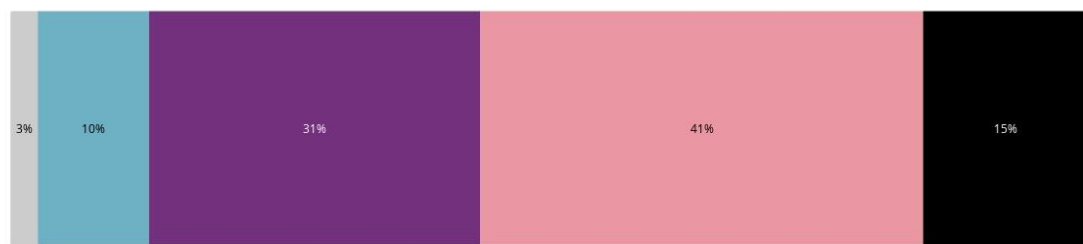


■ <15 ■ 16-29 ■ 30-38 ■ 39+

[tak: indien geantwoord 39+] Wat is de belangrijkste reden? 10 ⓘ



Hoeveel verdient u netto (na aftrek van belastingen) per maand? 39 ⓘ



■ minder dan €1000 ■ €1000 - €2000 ■ €2000 - €3000 ■ €3000 - €4000 ■ €4000+