The Viability of the Universal Caregiver Model

Analysis of the unequal involvement of men in child caring responsibilities; a study of professional Ecuadorian men

[ 9985 words]

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"I hereby state that this report is my own work and that all sources used are made explicit in the text"
Abstract

The unequal involvement of men in child caring responsibilities has influenced women’s access to economic resources. The occupational segregation present in most areas of the economy is a concern for gender and development scholars and professionals. More male participation in care work points towards gender equity. This study gives insight into the degree in which the unequal participation in care work is a choice or a response to constrains for professional men living in Quito. Using interviews as primary sources of information, it illustrates men’s perception of childcare responsibilities. The findings reveal that even though new generation of parents are experiencing improvements in the share of caring roles, the division of labor still maintains gender constructs that place mothers in the private sphere and fathers in the public. Six factors were identified as influential to the degree of parental involvement. The analysis discusses how gendered institutionalized processes define the division of labor and create paradoxes in fatherhood. Following, it analyses the restrictions faced when pursuing the capability to care and makes a brief assessment of gender inequalities with a capabilities approach. Finally it evaluates the viability of adopting a universal caregiver model in the market economy with its social implications.
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I. Introduction

“The biggest flaw in our existing theory of capitalism lies in its misrepresentation of human nature.”

(Yunnus, 2010:xv)

Act 1. Scene 1. On the tube a baby is crying in a stroller. An apparent mother and father are each at one side of him. The commuters look at each other and then to them. They are ordering with their eyes: “Just hold the baby for the sake of all”. A stop later the mother picked the baby up and the crying stopped.

The unequal involvement of men in childcaring responsibilities has influenced women’s access to economic resources. The occupational segregation present in most areas of the economy is a concern for gender and development scholars and professionals. The wage gap between genders goes from 10 to 30%¹ (UN Women, 2015) and “soft skills” fields are overcrowded with women, therefore reducing their wages. The feminist and developmental agenda agree that economic improvement for women is a milestone for a progressive future (Perrons, 2015).

In the second half of the twentieth century, the market economy experienced the mass entrance of women’s human capital as labor force. The need to secure economic growth (Lewis et. al, 2009:434), the presence of diverse family structures and the necessity of dual-home earnings raised female employment in western economies (Tripp-Reimer et. al, 1991:11). Latin America and the Caribbean present an increase of female participation on employment ratio of almost 10 points in the last 15 years [Figure 2] (ILO, 2015:85). Even though figures are not the same to men, women are now active actors of the market economy as labor force and as consumers.

¹ Figure 1 found in Annexes presents the variation of wage gap between 1995 and 2009 for 48 countries. Most countries show a reduction in pay gap between female and male in this period. Ecuador in 2009 has nearly 15% wage gap.
Women’s presence in the market economy is defined with underrepresentation in decision making positions and with less capabilities to access economic resources than men. Care work is considered to be one of the reasons that “handicaps women in [the] economic competition” (Folbre, 2003:223). The division of labor inside households is as pertinent today as it was twenty years ago (ILO, 2015 b). Gender inequalities makes women shoulder the burden of family responsibilities and unpaid work.

The universal caregiver model presented as a thought experiment by Fraser (1997) recognizes that if everyone cared\(^2\) the welfare state would premise gender equity. It sketches how to integrate redistribution and recognition to the agenda by deconstructing gender and changing men (Fraser, 1997:6). If adopted, the inequalities that women experience in the labor market due to childcaring responsibilities should equally affect both sexes or none. This dissertation analyses the extent to which the unequal involvement of men in childcare responsibilities is a choice or a response to constrains. To what extent do fathers have the capability for doing care work? Could the universal caregiver model be gaining momentum in the 21\(^{st}\) century?

This study is of professional men living in Quito-Ecuador. It theorizes around the experiences of six case studies of fathers from different backgrounds and family structures. Using interviews as primary sources of information, it illustrates the perception men have of childcare responsibilities. The findings reveal that even though this generation of parents are experiencing improvements in the share of caring roles, the division of labor still maintains gender constructs that places mothers in the private sphere and the fathers in the public.

\(^2\) Care refers to the act of performing caring tasks. When addressed as care, it means the action of care and the agency towards the activity to do care work.
Men’s involvement in childcare is partially a choice and partially a response to economic and social constraints. From coding the case studies, the research revealed six of the factors influencing men’s involvement in childcaring. The analysis will first discuss how gendered institutionalized processes define the division of labor and creates paradoxes in fatherhood. Following, it analyses the restrictions faced to pursue the capability to care and makes a brief assessment of gender inequalities with a capabilities approach. Finally, it evaluates the viability of adopting a universal caregiver model in the market economy with its social implications.

II. Literary review

The UN World Survey (2009) on the Role of Women in Development, recognized that there have been improvement in women’s access to work. However, they are still experiencing occupational segregation along most working fields. They defined two types of segregation: “Horizontal segregation [that] restricts women to specific sectors and occupations, while vertical segregation limits them to particular positions within occupational hierarchies” (UN Women, 2009). Both types of segregation result on a pay gap between genders throughout the labor market. England (2005) mentions that women earn less than man due to the following factors:

“[The] two things that contribute most to the sex gap in pay are women's responsibility for childrearing (affecting employment continuity, part-time job choice, and exclusivity of career focus) and segregation. Segregation is explained on the supply side largely by socialization or "doing gender," and on the demand side by hiring/placement discrimination” (England, 2005:280).
Because of their assumed caring responsibilities, women have been questioned about their work commitment, their ability to be productive employees and working mothers face judgements on their children’s welfare (Kaufman, 2013:10).

There is an unequal involvement in child care responsibilities between genders. Empirical evidence show that women spend more time than men attending reproductive unpaid work such as cooking, cleaning, childcaring and supplying (OECD, 2011). Nonetheless, men are participating more in domestic work than in their previous generation (Russell, 1983) (Dienhart, 1998) (Kaufman, 2013). This research aims to reveal what influences professional Ecuadorian men to participate in childcare responsibilities.

The reasons for assymetrical involvement vary cross culturally. McBride states that there are two determinants for father participation. First, fathers awareness of his parenting identity and second is mothers exerting direct control over fathering behavior (McBride et al, 2005:361).

“The idea that paternal involvement is regulated by maternal characteristics is referred to as “maternal gatekeeping” and can be defined as (a) a reluctance to relinquish family responsibility by setting rigid standards, (b) a desire to validate a maternal identity, and (c) differentiated conceptions of family roles”. (ibid)

Barnett and Baruch (1987) mention there is a pattern in some fathers where their involvement was influenced by their will to compensate for their own’s father low involvement. They also mentioned that mothers act as gate keepers of father’s participation in family work where their influence could be by fostering or impeding child care involvement (ibid: 30). Some women perceive males greater interest in reproductive issues as threatening and it is regarded as an invasion of their domain. (Marsiglio, 1991:17). The relationship between fatherhood and social class is complex with three main indicators: education, income and occupation (Eriskson et. al, 1991). The access to education is
favourable towards egalitarian attitudes (ibid:129). Father’s higher income compared to the mother’s income negatively influences the degree of involvement (ibid:128). The type of occupation that the father engages with, white collar or blue collar, can be an incentive or an impediment to do child care responsibilities (ibid:129) (Kaufman, 2013). Culture is an important component to fatherhood involvement however it is not deterministic (Tripp-Reimer et al, 1991:21).

The welfare system should be premised with gender equity; Fraser (1997) named seven normative principles to achieve this; antipoverty, antiexploitation, income equality, leisure-time equality, equality of respect, antimarginalization and a principle for antiandrocentrism. Current welfare state systems struggle to achieve gender equity. Ideal feminist models such as the Universal Breadwinner model or the Caregiver Parity model aim to reduce barriers for employment and the later would aim to value unpaid care work with state allowances (Fraser, 1997). Fraser assessed the gender equity principles in these models concluding that neither of them could fulfill what’s required of a gendered parity welfare system. Subsequently she presented a third model as a thought experiment: The Universal Caregiver Model considers making all members of the household “become more like most women are now, namely, people who do primary care” (ibid:61). The model might build up from either of the two previous mentioned and it seeks to change every citizen’s behavior towards an active participation in reproductive work and the use of public services as a compliment (ibid). Fraser highlights that the Universal Caregiver welfare model dismantles gender constructed roles in society which ultimately can be translated to equality in an anti-androcentric society and with gender equality. This dissertation analyses how the changes in women’s employment, fatherhood involvement and changes in the market economy may create opportunities to move towards a universal caregiver model.
III. Methodology

A qualitative analysis of primary sources gathered from interviews was used to understand the unequal involvement of professional Ecuadorian men in childcaring responsibilities and whether it is a choice or a response to constraints. The interviews were converted into six case studies. Each case had a narrative data collection from a single semi-structured interview. The interviews were held individually and lasted between forty minutes to one hour. The questions during the interview aimed to understand the experience of fatherhood and childcare as sons of their parents and later as fathers of their children.

The sample of interviewees was composed by six professional Ecuadorian men who had at least one child younger than 10 years old. The sample belonged to middle and upper social class men from Quito, who have had access to professional education. This segment of the population was chosen expecting to find the adoption of ideas of shared parenting as most likely (Russell, 1983) (Erikson et. al, 1991). From all interviewees but one there was no previous acknowledgement of the parental behavior and the interview was the only way to access information for the study. The remaining subject was deliberately included in the sample. This case study presented a recent change in parental roles which was learned from a personal letter exchanged with his wife. This interviewee was incorporated to secure that the sample included different perspectives from traditional parenting and the gender division of labor in childcaring responsibilities.

The documents produced during the interviews were subject to a qualitative analysis. The interviews were entirely transcribed. Then they were coded by marking relevant words, phrases or

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3 There is a higher probability to share roles when mothers and fathers are highly educated (Russell, 1983) (Erikson et. al, 1991).

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concepts mentioned or implied during the interview process⁴. The coding was followed by a process of creating categories which are presented in the finding. Each interview creates a case study which bring endless possibilities of analysis and more research could be done around them. The findings and cognitive analysis were processed through the perspective of a childless women raised in the global south with privilege. Her academic background is scientific with a recent incursion in social sciences.

Background information:

In the presentation of biannual results for The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) of the UN, Ecuador’s Minister of Social Development Cecilia Vaca, claimed that fighting against inequality is the main governmental policy (Vaca, 2015). Ecuador, as all the western development agenda, has started paying special attention to gender and development (GAD) being now included in the initiative of Suma Kawsay⁵. The minister highlighted the progress in GAD and how the gender inequality gap has shortened in women’s representation in public positions and there has been an increase of initiatives adopted to reduce violence against women (ibid). The system has improved female education (ibid), however still,

“in Ecuador as in other countries in the region, textbooks and teaching practices (as many other social practices) tend to transmit and reinforce gender stereotypes, linking men to public life- and all its dimensions of work, leisure, politics, wealth and power- and women to the private sphere of the household” (Correira, 2000:28)

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⁴ To be considered relevant it had to be directly related to the question of this study, repeated in different cases, present contradictions and/or have concepts similar to other reports in the field. Particular attention was payed to gender relations and to the value that care work has for men and how they value their childcare responsibilities.

⁵ National Initiative for the Well Being
Ecuador’s post-colonial society lives in the shadow of western economic modernity. The limitations to empower its own knowledge has made the Ecuadorian society a hybrid culture. Biopolitics are influenced by foreign ideologies and their adaptation to the local environment. Social relations are marked by coloniality and the resulting intersectional inequalities that create social classes. The interests of the hegemonic masculinities in power, are present in the economic and social agenda.

In 2015 Ecuador’s economically active population was 80% for men and 52% for women (Figure 3). Women’s participation in payed employment increased in 80% between 2001 and 2010 (INEC, 2015 a). INEC mentions that six out of ten women has experienced physical, psychological, sexual or patriarchal violence (INEC, 2015 b). At the beginning of the decade, women earned 129 USD less than men (INEC, 2015 c). Whereas 80% of women did housework only 57.3% of men participate in this activity; 19.8% of women mentioned not doing housework (ibid). To the question of overall satisfaction with life, Ecuadorean women average was eight in a scale from one to ten. To the question of overall satisfaction with professional life and education the average mark for women was six out of ten (ibid).

IV. Findings

The cases studied included the experiences of two generations of fathers; all six interviewees belonged to the younger generation and are the main subjects of this study. They all came from heteronormative family structures. Most households were dual-headed whereas only two were separated from their previous couple and mothers of their children. The case studies are available in Annex 1. The findings reveal that all six case studies shared childcare and breadwinning responsibilities within the couple. Men were more identified with the breadwinner role whereas women were portrayed as more responsible for childcaring responsibilities.
The interviewee’s answers to whether they would like to change the time you spend with your child/children and what was his limitation were:

**David:** Yes, he would like to spend more time with his son; his limitation is his work and the demands of the project he is part of.

**Teo:** Yes, he would like for his son to live with him. His limitations are his ex-wife and his unstable economic situation.

**Leonardo:** No, he wouldn’t like to spend more time with his children. He thinks he is giving them all they need.

**Simón:** (Question included changing roles with the mother) He believes it is unreal to change roles with the mother. For him, the mother will never stop being with her children and she doesn’t want to be with him anymore.

**Francisco:** He didn’t answer the question for his personal experience. He mentioned that the father’s role as breadwinner is what limits men’s involvement in childcaring responsibilities.

**José:** No, he wouldn’t like to change the time he is now giving to his children. His previous limitation was his work.

The finding reveals that the unequal involvement of men in childcaring responsibilities is influenced by six factors:

1. **Gendered division of labor inside the household.**

Mothers are still more involved in childcaring responsibilities whereas fathers maintain being more implicated in breadwinning responsibilities. Fathers are supporting the mothers in childcare chores and in parallel mothers are contributing more to the economic income of the household than in the previous generation. All mothers from the case studies spent overall more time and had more responsibility over their children’s agenda and activities than men.

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6 To be considered a factor, the characteristic was repeated throughout the cases. Involvement due to being a single or double headed households was not considered in the list. It is thought to be irrelevant for the objective of the present study.
The breadwinning role is now shared in all couples whereas in the previous generation there were still women who didn’t participate in paid employment. All interviewees mentioned the father’s responsibility of providing economic resources to the household.

2. **Women act as gatekeepers of childcare responsibilities.**

Regardless of the marital status of the couple, mothers created boundaries for father’s involvement in childcare responsibilities. The hindrances generally included mothers controlling children’s agenda and activities, relying on other female kinship to support the household in time of child care needs and being regarded as the naturally talented child carers. Father’s lack of knowledge in childcaring positioned women as better suited for childcaring tasks; the majority of the fathers admitted to not reading about childbirth or childcaring books during the pregnancy and women around them were responsible for teaching their duties as new fathers. The mother’s close relationship to her family, in multiple times, brought as a consequence the separation of the father from his children. Gatekeeping the children from the fathers may not only be performed by the mother’s but also by their kinship. Women’s gatekeeping can be positive or negative in father’s involvement in childcare.

3. **Father’s awareness of their own well-being**

Personal well-being is mentioned by the interviewees as part of their fatherhood experience. Most expressed to be concerned about how parenting will affect themselves. Almost all mentioned being scared when they learned about the pregnancy or when the baby was born. Two recognized having gone through emotional crises during the pregnancy. Fathers mentioned to be aware of their personal needs and satisfaction. For example, they mentioned needing personal time or needing to live in a different city for their own well-being.

4. **Fathers’ acknowledgement of the value of childcaring responsibilities.**
Fathers mentioned not feeling their children until they were born; the paternal bond was created when they held and cared for their offspring. Fathers expressed their wish to have quality time and in most cases more quantity with their children. There is a trend among the interviewees to recognize the challenges of doing unpaid labor and attending to children’s activities, nonetheless they recognize the value these have in their children’s and their own well-being.

Most fathers mentioned the sorrow they felt when they had to be separated from their children due to the end of the paternal leave, their children living away from them or being unable to see them because of working responsibilities. There is a trend among fathers to acknowledge the importance of the creation of a relationship with their children. They mentioned that spending time with their children brought them joy. They mentioned cherishing, playing with them, caring for them and being part of their agenda. All fathers recognized that their children sometimes annoy them and may be unmanageable. Two mentioned using physical punishment in specific moments of uncontrollable misbehavior.

5. **Challenging traditional father’s role.**

There was a trend among the interviewees to mention their will to amend their father’s faults and not repeat them in their households. The faults mentioned included abandonment, lack of physical expression of affection, violence and alcohol abuse, patriarchal attitudes and lack of involvement in childcare. Most of the fathers of the interviewees had no participation in everyday child rearing chores. The interviewees don’t recall having their father’s present in their daily routine; they mentioned care work was performed by their mothers, older siblings, female kinship or payed workers. All interviewees mentioned they themselves actively participate in childcaring activities such as cooking meals, shower and dressing and calling their attention and punishing when misbehaved. The father’s role is viewed as an economic
resource supplier and also as an active parent that spends time with his child/children. Playing is consistent for fathers in this and the previous generation.

6. **Economic market requirements.**

All but one case studies presented the productive work as one of the impediment for doing child care tasks. Long hours and distance of the working site made fathers time at home reduced.

V. **Discussion**

Act 1. Scene 2. A mother just picked up a crying baby. She holds her towards her chest and while he calms down, she smells the top of his crown and smiles.

In a umpteenth part of a second, with that sniff, channels connecting the systems of the mothers’ body get stimulated. Neurons secrete neurotransmitters that tackle cells that motivate the neurons, muscles and glands involved in a smile. Underneath the mother-son interaction, Molecular Biology can explain partially the movements and reactions happening in the cells of the body systems involved in expressing a feeling in a situation through a smile (Lodish et. al, 2000). Yet, there is still a lot to understand about the influence of the socially learned reactions that trigger the smile and the initial reaction of picking the crying baby up.

The unequal involvement of men in childcare responsibilities could be considered partially a choice and partially a response to social and economic constraints. On one hand, it is socially expected for mothers to be more involved in childrearing. On the other hand, men have reduced choices to do childcare. Like in a Newton’s cradle relationship, their own momentum is reinforcing their current condition.
The findings of this research revealed that there are at least six factors that influence, positively or negatively, father’s involvement in childcaring. These factors are: 1. Gendered division of labor inside the household. 2. Women acting as gatekeepers of childcare responsibilities. 3. Father’s awareness of their own well-being. 4. Fathers acknowledgement of the value of childcaring responsibilities. 5. Fathers challenging their own father as role model. 6. The economic market time requirement. Each factor was supported by multiple examples from the case studies and they present resemblances to multiple researches around the western world (Graene, 1983) (Barnett and Baruch, 1987)(Marsiglio, 1991)(Tripp-Reimer et. al,1991)(Dienhart, 1998)(McBride et al, 2005)(Kaufman, 2013). The influence that each factor has in the fathering style varies cross-culturally and interpersonally.

Nowadays it is common for parents to share childcare and breadwinning roles, in spite of being unequally distributed. “Overall, men tend to devote more money, and women more direct care time, to the support of dependents” (Folbre, 2006:195). All mothers mentioned during this research were more responsible and/or were more aware about childcaring responsibilities than the other parent. They all controlled and led their children’s agenda and they had more time outside the labour market to be with their off-springs. Unquestionably, the private sphere has a strong female participation.

Fathers, on the other hand, are now encouraged to participate more actively in the family life. By doing more care work, they lighten the female role and they also get the rewards of fulfilling both roles, caregiver and breadwinner (Aumann et. al, 2011:5). Men in this study tended to feel more empowered in the fulfillment of the economic needs of the households than in the caregiving responsibilities. Yet, all interviewees highlighted the pleasures they had while being the caregiver for their children.
1. Paradoxes in father involvement

Men’s degree of involvement in childcaring has evolved positively from its previous generation. In the western world, fatherhood has been reshaped multiple times. “Old” dads are now known for being workaholic men who participate in children’s activities on weekends. Whereas new fathers are men that share the house work and child care while both parents are in the labor force (Dienhart, 1998). New fathers can also see their breadwinner role as less important than their caregiving responsibilities (Kaufman, 2013:7). Empirical evidence suggest that there is a new fatherhood in society. The “old” version is losing momentum among new couples (Kaufman, 2013); yet this doesn’t mean that “old” fatherhood has left (LaRossa, 1997). Even though new dad’s participate actively in parenting life, they change little in their working environment. However, they do try to balance work and family life to have it all. (Kaufman, 2103). New fathers are the norm today and are thought to be the new version of supermoms from the end of the century (ibid:106).

All interviewees claimed to be doing more child care work than their fathers and described their father-child relationship as an active fatherhood. New expectations of fathering include the incorporation of apparently contradictory roles. It requires to incorporate “soft skills” to situations where ideals of fatherhood and masculinity are overlapping. The father role considers being the provider, giving strength and security to the household, and being the disciplinarian actor (Kaufman, 2013) yet new fathers are expected also to be gentle, caring and able to express physical affection. The location of the parental role creates another paradox in father’s childcaring involvement. The gendered division of labor has traditionally placed men in the public sphere since the industrial era while caring is mainly experienced and performed in the private scene. Active fathers struggle to manage work and family because of time constraints and the rigidity in career structures (Russell, 1983).
It is possible to find myriad examples of paradoxes in fatherhood\(^8\) and men’s involvement in childcare. Yet to illustrate the complexity for equal share between parents in childcaring a paradox identified in Leonardo case study will be discussed:

**Leonardo** is 37 years old and father of two girls. He is self-employed and owner. His wife Carla, is an Industrial Psychologist who works part time with him as chief of marketing. Her part time position was proposed by her and agreed by as a couple. His children’s activities are his priority even above his work.

When asked about the household division of labor he highlighted that his house is ran with equity. When the babies came the childcaring chores where shared between both parents. “After the breast feeding we agreed that in my house we will always split the chores by two. In the morning she dresses and calms their hair while I make breakfast and make sure they get the school bus. Moneywise, she handles freely all the house budget while I control the business budget. Nobody interferes in the others business and we are doing great”.

When asked about who handles the children’s agenda and why he answered: “Carla handles 100% the kids agenda. She is always aware of the birthdays and any other event they have..... It simply happened.... Maybe it got to be this way because school moms have a ‘whatsapp’ chat where they have the invitations of the classmates. We as fathers, I don’t know if it is instincts or what, but we don’t make school dad chats and arrange a football game. Besides I have only girls.”

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\(^8\) Some paradoxes mentioned during this research include:
1. Teo: The higher involvement raising children single-fathers compared to married men.
2. David: The age when fathers are most prepared to become involved fathers physically and cognitively.
3. Simón: The system’s pressure in fathers that demands to work longer hours and also expects more affect and quality time for the family.
When asked about the involvement he has with his children he replied that he spends as much time as he wants with them. He is completely involved as he never misses a school performance, he plays tennis with his older daughter and he constantly calls their attention or punishes them when necessary.

When asked about reading during pregnancy he replied: “No I didn’t read, but Carla read the most famous one and she have me the summary (of what was important)”.

Leonardo’s sees himself as an involved father who is equally sharing the parenting role. He splits with his partner the childcare chores, participates in all the parent-child activities and he has no time constraints to be with his children. He believes his household is ran under principles of equality. When he recognized that his wife handles 100% of the children’s agenda he immediately tried to figure out why that happened finding some peace of mind in the “mom’s-only” chat group from school. The paradox in his equally shared parenting is that he is unaware of the existing inequalities.

There are different understandings of equality when it comes to childcaring involvement. The burden of doing child care does not come from performing the role, but from the gendered consequences it brings. The consequences could be the affective bonding moments while caring or the occupational segregation because of it. The gendered institutionalized processes define the embeddedness of the division of labor in households.

2. The capability to care

“The difference between a functioning and a capability is similar to the difference between achievement and the freedom to achieve something” (Robeys, 2003:63). Shared parenting achieved through equal involvement of both parents requires to socially achieve the freedoms to care. The capability to care has economic and social constrains. The modern economic system has historically
overseen the social complexities of the *homo economicus* (Barker, 1999:571). The market economy has avoided considering men’s caring responsibilities. Only recently with higher women’s participation, the labor market is starting to adopt strategies that may be better aligned to the social need of caring (Lewis et. al, 2009). Flexibility, home working, shared positions, among others have been established with the underlying assumption that women were the beneficiaries and their market participation would improve. These policies have also shown to maintain the gendered relations that secure inequalities (ibid). Yet, studies have shown that “men, not just women, need and want to respond to non-work obligations ...[and] for women and men, combining roles is often energizing, not depleting, especially when the roles are experienced as more rewarding than problematic” (Barnett, 1999:147). The capability to care, for active actors of the economy, is a privilege that few can enjoy.

Today it is more likely to find fathers actively seeking to find ways to be more involved with their children. More than just being the financial providers; they want to be dads (Kaufman, 2013:2). Having a “[m]eaningful engagement in raising children appears to provide a significant boost for fathers’ psychological well-being” (Schindler, 2010: 328). Altergott (1988) argues in his research with police officers in the United States, household roles as husbands and fathers are more profitable for men than payed work (Altergott, 1988:191). Being a more involved father also expands opportunities for growth and allows men to engage more in processes of self-reflection and self-evaluation (Kaufman, 2013). Father’s tend to acknowledge the well-being resulting from participating in childcaring responsibilities.

Fatherhood is constantly adapting to social evolution. The generation fathering the present cohort of children tend to be more present fathers than the previous generation⁹. “A majority of men see their own fathers as “negative role-models”, and say they wish to be different kinds of fathers

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⁹ Back up until before the industrial era where men were thought to be more involved fathers. (LaRossa, 1997)
themselves; they will usually declare that they want to be closer to their children – both emotionally and physically” (Burgess et. al,1997:3). The trends suggest that men are becoming more involved fathers than their own fathers.

Father’s involvement in child care wasn’t accounted for until the last part of the twentieth century (Lamb, 1991). Men and fatherhood have an absence in literature (LaRossa, 1997) and it is only in the past decades that academia included in the debate topics such as masculinities, fathering and male caring role. The recent evolution in male parenting could be implied by three books about the changing in fatherhood from the past decades. In 1983 Russell’s, The Changing Role of Fathers, introduced his argument with the concern of how few examples of models of highly participant fathers where present in the media. Fifteen years later, Diehart (1998) in Reshaping Fatherhood has as her initial argument the fact that participant fathers were gaining momentum. She claims to see them in different places getting more involved even though they were still perceived with less capabilities to care. In 2013, Kaufman started her book, Superdads, noticing how more dads are now at the bus stop than moms. These examples should not be seen as a resemblance of all society. They just reflect the perception of changing fatherhood and its understandings the past three decades.10

In parallel, women’s domain over the field of unpaid work has create gendered constructs that have historically hampered male’s capability to perform certain parenting styles (LaRossa, 1997). Women’s caregiver role reinforce the traditional division of labor and act as gatekeepers of men’s involvement in childcaring responsibilities.

Assessing gender inequality

10 In the privileged global north.
Robeys (2003) proposed a list of capabilities to assess gender inequality in the western world following Sen’s Capability Approach. Because of the restriction in extension of characters of this research, the gender analyses of the capability to have an equally shared parenting will use only two dimensions of the fourteen proposed with no specific order of priority of his “list of capabilities at the ideal level:...

1. Domestic work and nonmarket care: being able to raise children and to take care of others\textsuperscript{11}.

2. Education and knowledge: being able to be educated and to use and produce knowledge”

(Robeys, 2003:71).

The capability to do domestic work and nonmarket care: being able to raise children and to take care of others.

José’s case study will be used to analyze the dimension of being able to raise children and take care of others.

José is 46 years old. He is married, father of three children, 14, 10 and 7 years old. After six months of unemployment he is starting a new career in a start-up. His previous employment demanded from him to spend five and a half days every week away of his home town. José therefore he didn’t participate in everyday childcaring responsibilities. When he stopped working his wife, Eva, started working full time. Now both parents share the childcaring chores but his current job give him more time and flexibility to do more and to be on call for their children’s agenda.

When asked about him changing roles he mentioned: “I started doing things that I have never done before to be honest. I have never attended to [the kids] meetings, check what was going

\textsuperscript{11} Empowerment to care
on with them…. [now] if the kids have any inconvenient I am the spare wheel, Eva is not any more….. I have more flexibility in my schedule, I am more aware of their sports and tennis and when they have trainings.........You know how things are, at first the kids hated the change , they didn’t like it. We have...different [parenting] styles, Eva and I, which I realized within one week of childcaring. Eva screams all the time and exploits with little while I never shout; but I can be stronger and even aggressive, something that doesn’t make me happy... I have learned how to control myself, calm myself and I think I am now even more reflexive than Eva.”

According to José he has a talent for household chores. He acquired these abilities when he was a child and always accompanying his mother, who was a sole caregiver. As for his father he said: “I never in my whole live have seen my father lift a plate from the table. [When I was young] my father got upset with us if we helped [in house hold chores].

When asked about the cost of opportunity of both roles he said: “One doesn’t realize until one gets again all that he has lost. It’s just like the vision, you think you see well and that everyone sees the same as you when you may have a sight problem. Now that I have more time with them I don’t want to have less. Now that we started the project there are days that I can’t be with them and I ask Eva to cover me and it hurts me. Of course you can get used to not seeing them much, as you can get used to never going to their meetings, or helping around the house... You get some things compromising others... I like this more, much more. I have time to talk to them... imagine that three weeks ago my son [14 years old] for the first time called me (not his mother) to tell me he won a game and was excellent, and when he lost he also called to say “I lost, sorry... I think I am recovering”.

Before this year, José has never experienced the responsibility of performing any other role than the breadwinner. After 22 years of not having a professional break, José stopped bringing the
bigger share of the household income. He is currently the kids’ main caregiver while his wife is working full time contributing more to the household economic needs. He claims to be happy in his new role and that he would not change it. José acquired the capability to do care because of a market misbehavior. His breadwinning role got exchanged with his wife’s. Because José now has the capability to do domestic work and nonmarket care, the analysis of his capability will be of the sustainability in time of his role as a caregiver and being able to raise children and take care of others.

José’s case presents an example of how men get more empowered about childcaring by performing the role of caregiver. Sharing time and experiences with his children made their emotional relationship grow. His first perception as a caregiver was that he didn’t knew how to handle his children. He mentioned getting violent as a mean to control his children’s behavior. After six months, he believes he is a more rational parent and he is recovering his relationship with his kids. Learning how to handle them has empowered him more as a child carer.

José mentioned valuing his time with his children now more than earning more money. However, when asked about his shared parenting role he started talking about his breadwinner experience. There was a need to justify how he became the primary caregiver. José, as all fathers in this research, is empowered with his provider role and he is just starting to get accustomed to the dual role. Could his latest experience as caregiver empower him enough of his childcaring responsibilities to reject an economic improvement for his family? Could his reality as a main caregiver be sustainable in time? Is he free to choose to care? Men’s continued emphasis on work has never been questioned and they rarely are given a choice of whether emphasize more on work or on family (Kaufman, 2013:10).

\[12\] Violence was mentioned throughout the cases as a mean of control. It included spanking, threatening with the belt or with the broom, no physical injury.
According to Robeyns choices are gendered. “There is no consensus over whether gendered choices are due to nature or to social upbringing. But...we do have convincing evidence that coercive social processes restrict and mold us. We do not know what men and women would choose if they were liberated from their gender roles and thus genuinely free to choose. But we do know that at the moment our choices are constrained unequally because the constraints on choices are structured along gender lines” (Robeyns, 2003:86).

Man and woman capabilities are subject to the social structures that shape constraints around gendered identities. For men part of their gender identity has become being the breadwinner and the market protagonist whereas women’s identity is related to her gender role as caregiver. The challenge for the equality agenda is to deconstruct gender orders and empower all gender identities with their caregiving responsibilities.

*The capability to access education and knowledge: being able to be educated and to use and produce knowledge regarding childcare.*

It is difficult to expect equal empowerment over childcaring when knowledge about childcare is accessed in different ways by men and women. Aside from the social normativity that transmits massively as “for mothers” the knowledge for child care responsibilities (Stearns, 1991), literature is including men parenting role valuable for the dependents and for fathers. Yet non-traditional learning processes are still addressing to future mothers. Cross generational chit chat includes topics of the one thing all women historically may possible share; motherhood. A mother to be tells about her mothering experience to all female who wants to listen. Childrens’ progresses and illnesses are present in ‘female only’ conversation, which, to the childless listener, is a bucket of knowledge. Early encounter with motherhood started with the first doll. Then it changed to a live experience when, as the female older cousin or sister, she was asked to care or play with the new baby. “In practice,
distinctions between work, care and leisure are blurred.” (Perrons, 2000:110) Without knowing, a percentage of women grow to be expert carers with caring instincts acquired in years of leisure time.

On the other hand the access to experiential education seems to have a direct influence in the involvement of childcaring activities for mothers and fathers. Knowing how the baby or child likes to be cared for gives an advantage to the carer possessing that knowledge. To acquire the knowhow usually practical experience is required which starts with gender differences in paternal leaves. David’s case study will be used to analyze some of the gender constructions favoring female’s access to education and knowledge for caring through experience.

David’s narrative about his and his wife’s learning process was the following.

When asked about his parental experience he said: “The advantage we had was that the grandmothers came to help and fix up everything... For 15 days that the parental leave gave me it was nice. I held our baby but I could never bath him. They told me how, but it has to be done by someone who’s an expert. I didn’t bath him the first months... They taught me how to change his diaper and ... how to clip his belly. There are things that the doctor says but there are also things that other mothers or older women tell you to do. They taught me and I learned. ”

To the question why is your wife an expert: “Because a few years ago, when she was single, her older sister had a baby. She learned that way... She wasn’t an expert, but she had the gift of being more delicate because our baby was like a small fragile mouse”.

The research revealed that fathers recognize women around them to have the knowledge and expertise in childcare. Most fathers mentioned learning from their mothers, wifes and/or aunts about their roles in fathering. It is important to consider that only one father mentioned personally reading
a children’s books during pregnancy. Compared to women, men have less access to childcare knowledge, being this traditional learning and experiential education.

3. Hindrances for doing childcare work

The economic market requirements

Since Fraser proposed the *Universal Caregiver Model* (1997) as a gender equity approach almost two decades ago, shared parenting has gained terrain. Yet the capability to care now is not secured in any part of the population. Even though the normative androcentric system has portrayed femininities in childcaring skills, none of the sexes is fully free to *care* for their loved ones. The market economy has not completely accepted and created the conditions that allow the shift of the “economic man” to the “caregiver and economic man”. The inability to value child care responsibilities in the same terms as the breadwinning role has led the market economy to value it for its own interest. It values the productive time more than the reproductive work. Now balancing work and family is a source of stress for men and women. (Burgess et. al, 1996).

To consider a shared parenting, each member of the household must have the same capability to earn economic resources. The occupational segregation influences women’s participation in the productive and reproductive arenas. Due to the gender wage gap, the traditional division of labor in households has become institutionalized, since public time of the male workforce tends to be more profitable.

Social class is also a determinant factor when accessing strategies to do childcare unpaid work. Men with professional white collar careers are better able to adopt flexible schedules or other arrangements to be an active parent than blue collar employees (Kaufman, 2013). To exemplify a situation as such, following a review of Francisco relationship with his parents.
Francisco is 35 years old and is the president of the few indigenous communities left in Quito. He is the second youngest of 8 children. His father worked as a construction worker where he spent 23 days in site and 7 days at home. The limited resources both of his parents produced, forced him to start working when he was 7 years old to be able to go to school.

“I grew up faster because my mother had other things to do and didn’t have the time to be with us. I mean, with 5 years we took care of ourselves. We dressed, showered alone and we set our own set of rules. We did have sisters that helped us in bigger tasks such as washing the bigger garment, but for all the rest we had only ourselves.”

He highlighted the intertwined relationship that childcaring involvement has to economic and social class.

Francisco, as billions of people, around the world are struggling to make a living. He was not cared for by his parents because their economic condition did not give them the possibility to do carework; their time and effort was destined for survivor. Cross national inequalities make the debate of shared parenting as anything but a priority. Yet, it certifies that the capabilities to do care work are different in society; these are also determined by the access to economic resources and social power.

The value being a childcarer

The value acquired by the productive work in the market economy may be perceived as more valuable than the rewards of giving care. A “family involved-style” is thought to be a less desirable experience for a section of the population. Hochschild (1997) agrees that even though the second shift of work\textsuperscript{13} done in the household tends to be shared, there seems to be less time for it because the

\textsuperscript{13} The second shift is considered the unpaid work done home. The first shift is paid work done in the market economy.
time at work is more valuable and brings more personal benefits than the time at home\textsuperscript{14} (Hochschild, 1997). Although this is debatable (Hochschild, 2002), it may be argued that there is a raising trend in a section of the population that does not want the parenting role and choses out of it.

In places were the market has adapted and found strategies that allow caregiving, the results are gendered. For example, ‘Flexicurity\textsuperscript{15}’ was adopted in the EU aiming to have greater competitiveness and growth. (Lewis et. al, 2009). Its results has proven that it maintains the gender order tying women to the private domain. Because men spend more time in the market economy they have less time to do care work. “Unless it is possible for men to opt to do care work it remains difficult to address the gendered division of unpaid and paid work that structure choices” (Lewis et. al, 2009:448).

4. Opportunities to adopt the Universal Caregiver Model

When Francisco was asked about how to care he said:

“[Y]ou think that you want for your children to don’t go through the same [difficult reality] and give them everything you didn’t have. For me this is a mistake because if humans don’t live and feel things they don’t feel the need to change them.... By thinking collectively and acknowledging that the problem is not just mine but there are other hundreds or thousands living under the same conditions, why don’t we all join and find a way out together.... thinking holistically”.

Francisco philosophy for raising children is that if they would have it all, they would never feel and live the experience that makes social change possible. By thinking collectively and by being aware that there are others that are struggling through the same conditions, it might be easier to find a solution.

\textsuperscript{14} A research done in a Folbres 500 company revealed that 20 percent of the families feel home as work and work as home (Hochschild, 2002). It may be argued that home work is less desirable than productive work.

\textsuperscript{15} Flexibility and security for carers (Lewis et. al, 2009)
to a global problem. Social change in the institutionalized system and current division of labor will happen when organizations and its human capital work together for the same goals. The evolution of organizations and the mindset of men towards childcaring responsibilities present an opportunity to establish shared parenting and moving towards the *Universal Caregiver Model* in a section of the population.

**Market economy and organizational evolution**

Mainstreaming gender has positioned gender in the vast majority of modern and developmental actions. Women’s awareness of the need of their economic and social empowerment has created a critical mass that is slowly changing the politics, representation and organizational human talent policies. Gender equity is a progressive organizational initiative. The gender aware actions happening in the market environment are opening institutional opportunities that may enable shared parenting.

Since Adam Smith (1776) pointed out at the beginning of the new economy model, the accumulation of capital has allowed investments to seek its own productivity\(^{16}\) (Smith, 1991). F. Taylor in the early 20\(^{th}\) century, started researching he optimum way of production by timing and measuring every employees movement to achieve its highest performance\(^{17}\) and looking to improve the productivity (Taylor,1911). Since then, the scientific study of organizational innovation and improvements (Burns et. al, 1961) has led the rise of global organizations with economic power

\(^{16}\) The *Wealth of Nations* states that: “The division of labor, however, so far as it can be introduced, ...[gives] a proportionable increase of the productive powers of labor. The separation of different trades and employments from one another, seems to have taken place, in consequence of this advantage. This separation too is generally carried furthest in those countries which enjoy the highest degree of industry and improvement; what is the work of one man, in a rude state of society, being generally that of several in an improved one.” (Smith, 1776:4)

\(^{17}\) The “wage slavery” at that time it did not have many supporters, however some organizations resemble its operation in today’s global economy
resembling countries (Hayman et. al 2015). The influence of organizations in the market economy is shaping the global history.

The race in the market for qualified\(^{18}\) human capital has forced organizations to try to be “at their best” to be more competitive (Hayman et. al 2015). Organizations started to care about their employees and stakeholders in the second half of the past century (Perrows, 1986)(Donaldson et. al, 1995). Managing human resources for productivity makes organizations aware of the working environment, the production processes, the use of resources and technology and the management of different employee’s capacities. The recent successes points to the productivity achieved by aligning the organizational culture to its employees (Kunda, 2006).

“[H]uman beings engaged in business are portrayed as one-dimensional beings whose mission is to maximize profit... This is a badly distorted picture... The essential fact about humans is that they are multidimensional beings. Their happiness comes from many sources, not just making money” (Yunnus, 2010:xv).

By pursuing a mission other than just capital, organizations are allowing stakeholders to share the thrive, bringing the best results for growth and efficiency\(^{19}\) (Kunda, 2006).

“Business as usual is over. Belief is the new currency and to succeed you must follow new rules: purpose as the route to profit; mind share to gain market share”. (Hayman, 2015)

Netflix’s Chief Talent Officer informed on August 4, 2015 the establishment of a new company policy: Unlimited maternity or paternity leave for up to the first year of the birth or adoption\(^{20}\) (Cranz, 2015).

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\(^{18}\) To be qualified means you have a fit body that complies with institutionalized normative isomorphism associated with professionalization. It is easier if the body has a causality with group in power.

\(^{19}\) Tech companies are thought to be an example of how aligning the culture of the companies to those of the employees works out for productivity. Creating the environment that fits the culture is part of this process. It is common to see in “Progressive” organizations an open room with video games or meditation areas.

\(^{20}\) The policy is only for the staff in the on line division of the company.
With the viral impact in the media, Netflix just got a head start in the race for scouting and retaining the most profitable bodies looking for those types of benefits. This is recognized in major companies that try keeping their social and gender equality reputation intact “in today’s highly competitive tech hiring market” (Bezos, 2015). There is a trend in business to care and share (Hayman et. al, 2015) as part of their strategies of differentiation. And institutional isomorphism is now taking the socially daring companies as their role models opening a new dimension in the world of business (ibid).

As a result of innovation, the world entered the era of communications and technology (ICT). “The new economy is characterized by the increasing use of information and computing technologies... it is clear that new ways of organizing the production, distribution and exchange of existing goods as well as entirely new goods and services have come into being” (Perrons, 2003:67). Access to ICT has opened new organizational possibilities by expanding the scope of influence of the location for production that were not previously possible21. Because of this, the working scenario has now more flexibility22.

Yet, men’s involvement in childcare responsibilities goes beyond the gender aware policies adopted in organizations. Men need to have agency toward childcaring for the universal caregiver model to be viable.

**Awareness of personal well-being and value given to childcaring responsibilities**

The changing hegemonic masculinity has allowed fathers to recognize the value they give to their childcaring responsibilities. These are some of the quotes found in the interviewee’s narratives that highlight what value they give to the caregiving role:

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21 Examples of this can be found for instance in cloud computing, cero paper offices, videoconferences, among many others.
22 Mainly in in whitecollar jobs.
Simón “Women are not the only ones who suffer and give birth. I gave birth two times with my kids, not physically but spiritually and affectively”.

Teo “The first time I dressed him I felt what being a father meant…. I cried of happiness”.

David “I regret that during the first year… I couldn’t be with him. I arrived at 8pm (from work) when he was asleep and I didn’t enjoy him at all. I just saw him sleep”.

José “The days that I cannot see them (the children) and I ask their mother to replace me, it hurts; I am used to see them now”.

Leonardo “They are my priority and they are above all.”

Francisco “I don’t like taking care of the children….I do what I feel”.

Fathers claim to highly value their childcare responsibilities. Most fathers mentioned the sorrow they felt when they had to be separated from their children due to the end of the paternal leave, their children living away from them or being unable to see them because of working responsibilities. There is a trend among fathers to acknowledge the importance of the creation of a relationship with their children. On the other hand, father’s awareness of their own welfare reaffirms that hegemonic masculinities are still established in their gendered identity. Personal well-being is mentioned by men as part of their fatherhood experience and spending time with their children brings them joy.

The cultural value that professional men give to their childcaring responsibilities suggests that fathers awareness of their personal needs also includes being able to give care. Having participants of the labor market valuing care brings an opportunity for a change in the system where organizational structures are adaptable. Through men’s agency to suit their needs, there may be hope to move towards a universal caregiver model.
VI. Conclusions

Act 1. Scene 3. The tube stopped. As the mother and baby passed by, the father also smelled the need for a new diaper; then he follows pushing the stroller towards the exit door.

The situation of women will improve if unpaid care work is shared with men. There are now more households sharing roles than before, which support the fact that men are becoming more empowered about their caregiving responsibilities. Yet, due to social and economic factors, parenting is considered a privilege. The capability to care is diminished by the market economy’s demands over the labor market and by other social constructs such as gender. Gender constructs favor women as caregivers and detach men from this task. Men’s choice in childcaring involvement is therefore biased. Agency towards carework is shaped by normative actions which reinforce the lack of empowerment men have in unpaid work.

This dissertation is an initial indication of father’s experiences and desires concerning the division of caregiving in the household. Further research could systematize our understanding of men’s role in the household by increasing the size of the sample with a diversity of gender, race and class. It could be complemented with a research on the effects of the adoption of the ‘care’ culture in organizational productivity and in its stakeholders. The size of the sample and the methodology used in this research has limitations in addressing such a complex topic. Because of time constraints it was not possible to do more than one interview per participant. Using a bigger sample that included men from different social backgrounds would have given a better perspective of the matter of study and the Ecuadorian social reality. The methodology used as case studies and through single interviews brings a danger of distortion of the truth because it is difficult to cross-check information23 (Bell, 1999:11). Therefore it

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23 It is highly unlikely to develop a relationship of trust that allow sharing intimate information in a single encounter.
is important to consider that this study analyzed the narrative of the interviewees without possibility of authentication.

Professional Ecuadorian men face paradoxes while performing the caring role and gender constructs have limited their capabilities in performing their caring role. Even though the participants of this study claimed to have an emotional bond with their children, social and economic constrains restrained them from an equal involvement in childcare responsibilities; regardless of their wish to care. Men’s narrative suggest that they have less confidence in themselves as careers; they perceive themselves as less talented and women still dominate the knowledge about caring. Feminine normativity in the unpaid care work supports female capability to care. The gender performativity and cross-generational and cultural knowledge secure women as the dominant caregivers against the interests of GAD. On the other hand, the social constructs determining the gendered division of labor limits men’s freedom to achieve being a care giver. It may be regarded as less crucial (Robeyns, 2003) for an individual development, but if it is enabled it will open new opportunities for equality.

The universal capability to care is a milestone to achieve gender equity (Fraser, 1997)(Lewis et. al, 2009). The viability of the universal caregiver model is hinged on the value given to unpaid carework and the economic restraints found in the market economy. Improvement of female representation, globalization and ITC innovations have opened a possibility in the market economy for gender equality. Organizations are recognizing the value of parenting in their employees and it is now used as a strategy for recruitment. Still, women tend to be more likely to embrace this policies that support childcaring therefore institutionalizing the gender occupational segregation. The subjective value given to child caring responsibilities makes it imperative to recognize that men need to get empowered with their child caring responsibilities. It is crucial to deconstructive the gender division of labour in households to improve men’s education and access to the practical acquired knowledge and value in doing care work. Only then society will have to get prepared for the inclusion of men in the caring agenda.
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VIII. Annexes

Figure 1:

Evolution of monthly gender pay gaps of 48 countries CA. 1995 to CA. 2009

Source: ILO Statistics; Eurostat
Figure 2:

*Latin America and the Caribbean – Gender gap: difference between male and female employment-to-population ratios (percentage points)*

Source: (ILO, 2015: 85)

Figure 3:

*Ecuador’s Economically active population and Population in age of work by sex nationwide, March 2015*

(In thousands of people)
Data: (INEC, 2015) Source: (Granda et. al, 2015)
Annex 1

The following table presents the profile of the interviewee and his family members. The second part of the table includes the summary of the most relevant aspects that build up each case study. The names of the interviewees are pseudonymous to protect their identities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of interviewee</th>
<th>David</th>
<th>Teo</th>
<th>Leonardo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee profile</td>
<td>36 YO. Married. Middle level public servant in a full time job with extra hours. Younger of 4 children.</td>
<td>36 YO. Divorced. Plastic artist with flexible job and no steady income. Second youngest of 6 children.</td>
<td>37 YO. Married. Self-employed and owner with his father of a mechanic workshop. Middle child of three; oldest son.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offspring(s) profile</td>
<td>2.5 YO boy Planned pregnancy Goes to mother’s work nursery.</td>
<td>8 YO boy Unplanned pregnancy outside of marriage. Lives in Cuenca (7 hour drive from Quito). Goes to school his grandmother owns.</td>
<td>7 and 3 YO girls. Planned pregnancy. Girls go to school and nursery. After school activities are tennis and ballet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother of offspring(s)</td>
<td>IT engineer. Works full time with no extra hours.</td>
<td>Finishing her studies. Is economically supported by her family.</td>
<td>Industrial Psychologist. Works part time in husbands firm as chief of marketing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24 YO: years old
<p>| <strong>Father of interviewee’s profile</strong> | Full time job. Employed in an office and later self-employed as wood trader in the East region of Ecuador. Died 20 years ago. Authoritarian and had a problem with alcohol drinking and violence. | Full time job as teacher and later became a congressman and participated in different roles in the government. He has different hobbies and is very social. | Full time job as a mechanic. Spend five years in prison when his offspring were aged 2, 7 and the oldest girl was starting puberty. |
| <strong>Mother of interviewee’s profile</strong> | Stay at home until youngest son was 12 when she joined her husband in the trader business. | Stay at home mother. Cares for husband and his accomplishments. | Worked with husband. |
| <strong>Narrative of childcare responsibilities and fatherhood as a son</strong> | His father was authoritarian and very strict. His father was the primary breadwinner and constantly supported the education of all his children. His mother controlled the children’s agenda and physically expressed more affection than the | He was raised by paid care with little parental supervision. His father used to play with him and supported his decision since a young age. His father didn’t impulse him in his education and he blames him for his professional career choice and current unstable economic situation. His mother | In his father’s absence he assumed the role of the man of the house. This is identified as a very bad period of his childhood. His father’s best quality is the security and optimism he portrays. He sees his father as easy going and his mother as difficult. His mother didn’t |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Father. Childcare was shared in the couple. Siblings and relatives helped in child caring responsibilities when parents were absent. The first ‘alone’ time he remember with his father was when he was 12 years old.</th>
<th>was always around the house and doing carework. She physically expressed more affection than the father. He sees frustration in her due to the lack of personal accomplishments. Older siblings helped in child care responsibilities.</th>
<th>allowed them to participate in any household chores because these were done only by servants. He blames his father for not being able to stand up to his mother and make them do more household activities and rise them to be more responsible.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The mother leads the son’s agenda and looks after him after work. His husband considers her as an expert childcarer. During the first year they had payed child care while the mother worked. The father’s role includes breakfast preparation every day, bed time story and showers on weekends. He likes to play horses.</td>
<td>The mother, influenced by her family, controlled all the decision during the pregnancy and child birth. This external influence eventually lead to their divorce. When they separated four years ago, their son spent half of the week with each parent. Since he moved to Quito he tries to see him one week every month in Cuenca and in his place one month during the summer break.</td>
<td>His children’s activities are his priority even above his work. He promised himself to never leave his children and to be with them as much as possible. The mother of the children since the beginning fought for equality. After the babies, the mother changed from a full time to a part-time employment to have more time and to be more relaxed. Both</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
with his son. He doesn’t like to call his attention or punish him. The son sees the mother as authority and father as a playmate.

As a lone parent he does all the child caring chores when he is with his son. He likes to see his son sleep, do caring tasks such as washing and dressing him and have a good time. He is aware that he is limited to call his attention or punish him because he is present only part time. When the mother had a resent life threatening experience she recognized that he was the second best choice to take care of his son in case she’s not around. He would like for his son to live with him when he is older. When the son is in Quito the mother calls every day to check up on him.

<p>| parent share all the child caring responsibilities; in the morning while the mother calms their hair, he cooks breakfast and takes them to the school bus. The mother handles the household budget and he is responsible for the business budget. The mother handles the children’s agenda, birthdays, extra curriculum, among others. He never misses a school performance. He likes to play tennis with his older daughter. He constantly calls their attention or punishes them when necessary. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrative of pregnancy and birth.</th>
<th>When he realized his wife was pregnant he was excited but also felt scared of the future and of not being able to raise him well.</th>
<th>When he learned they were expecting, he said out loud “I can’t be a father”. The mother’s reaction was “I don’t want anything from you, not even one diaper”. After the first shock he was eager to become a father.</th>
<th>When his wife got pregnant he got depressed and sick. He thought of the economic implications that the future will bring. His wife read the book “What to expect when you are expecting” and gave him a summary of it. The first day with the new born baby at home was the scariest day of his life.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quotes that resemble the value of child caring responsibilities.</td>
<td>“Fatherhood is an incredible experience”. “When the paternity leave finished, after 15 days, I felt bad because I got used to spend time with him”. “I regret that during the first year... I couldn’t be with him. I arrived at 8pm (from work) when he was asleep and</td>
<td>“The first time I dressed him I felt what being a father meant.... I cried of happiness”. “Deep inside me I still have unfinished business because I cannot be with him all the time and I hope that when he is an adolescent he can live with me”. “When I sleeps with him he holds me and I say he needs me and I need him”.</td>
<td>“They are my priority and they are above all.” “I have cancelled business trips if they stand between their birthdays”. “I go to every music rehearsal at school and leave any appointment not matter how important...because I am aware that</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Answer to the questions:</strong> would you like to change the time you spend with your child/children and what is your limitation?</th>
<th><strong>Yes, he would like to spend more time with his son; his limitation is his work and the project’s demands.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Yes, he would like for his son to live with him. His limitations are his ex-wife and his unstable economic situation.</strong></th>
<th><strong>No, he wouldn’t like to spend more time with his children. He thinks he is giving them all they need and children need to be at school and he needs time of his own also.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I didn’t enjoy him at all. I just saw him sleep”.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>those moments would never repeat and nobody else will give them to you”.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of interviewee</td>
<td>Simón Francisco</td>
<td>José</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Offspring(s) profile</td>
<td>19 YO man, unplanned pregnancy outside marriage. Lives in Guayaquil (6 hour drive from Quito). 5 and 3 YO girls planned pregnancies. Live in Malchingui (3 hour drive from Quito).</td>
<td>10 YO boy and 8 YO girl. Pregnancies in marriage. Both go to school.</td>
<td>14 and 10 YO boy and 7 YO girl. Pregnancies in marriage. All go to school. Every day as after school activity they train tennis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mother of offspring(s)</td>
<td>Self-employed in a house/hostel build where she lives. She is English.</td>
<td>Works full time.</td>
<td>BA education and agronomy. Works full time between three jobs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25 Francisco indigenous background made the interview difficult to get straightforward answers; the interview was in Spanish.

26 The relationship of the mother of the oldest son is outside the scope of this study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father of interviewee’s profile</th>
<th>Patriarchal macho man. Entered the household when son was 3 years old.</th>
<th>Worked as a construction worker where he spent 23 days in site and 7 days at home. The days at home he handled social affairs and worked the field for crops</th>
<th>Employed full time. Worked away from home. Dominant macho character.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother of interviewee’s profile</td>
<td>Worked looking after the family’s supply store.</td>
<td>Worked full time in a physical demanding job.</td>
<td>Stay at home mother.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Narrative of childcare responsibilities and fatherhood as a son</td>
<td>He has no relationship with his father. His paternal figure was his mother’s brother with whom his father had a lot of problems. His aunt and uncle looked after him and where his role model. He grew up alone and left the house when he was 20 because he couldn’t stand sharing the house with his father. He highlighted the intertwined relationship that child caring involvement has to economic and social class. The limited resources both of his parents produced forced him to start working when he was 7 years old to be able to go to school. Because his father worked away from home he barely saw him and never built a relationship with him. His mother was</td>
<td>His father has a very dominant character and his family was very patriarchal. He used to get upset when his children helped in house hold tasks. His father was the sole breadwinner and mother the only caregiver. His father played with him, pushed him to do sports, and was a positive example of staying away from alcohol and drugs. For him, his mother</td>
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<tr>
<td>Narrative of childcare responsibilities and fatherhood as father of their child (children)</td>
<td>With his first son he economically supported the child and some weekends each month he looked after him. With his youngest daughters he shared all the child caring responsibilities with the mother until they separated. The separation was a unilateral decision.</td>
<td>His philosophy for raising his children is that if you give them all what you didn’t have, they will never feel and live the experience that makes social change possible. By thinking collectively, being aware that there are others that are struggling through the same conditions, it might be easier to find a solution. He took the children with him to When asked about fatherhood experience he started narrating things about his work away from home and how it ended up in a change of roles. He used to spend only one and a half days at home every week and had no possibility to participate in any child caring responsibilities. Six months ago when he worked harder than his father in unpaid labour of the house hold and the child caring responsibilities. The household had payed help. When he was young, he was always with his mother therefor he learned how to do the house hold chores.</td>
<td>partially blames the lack of communication and sexual education with his parents for his unplanned pregnancy. overall in charge of the household. Relatives and older siblings supported child caring responsibilities. He finds little support in his parents and he blames the system for his relationship with them. For him the system is making fatherhood a role that has to focus mainly in the economic resources to feed the family.</td>
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</table>
of the mother. Now the mother lives with the two girls. He is aware that he cannot determine how to raise his children if he is not with them. He is working in Quito because he believes that how that his children are growing need money.

do all his chores up until they were 2 years old. He doesn’t enjoy taking care of his children. He blames the limited affection he received in his childhood as what limits his involvement in child caring responsibilities. His role as a father is to create room for dialogue, freedom, and respect for their processes. He gives them affect. He actively participate in the school “mingas”

stopped working his wife started working full time. Now both parent share the child caring responsibilities but he has more time and flexibility to do more. He sees himself less talented to do house hold chores. Before his change of roles, he got used to never do anything else but being the breadwinner. Now he has sacrificed partly the economic income to have more time for the children. He is learning to be more patient to handle better the child caring responsibilities. He is enjoying his time with his children and being part of their life.

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27 Minga: collective work done by members of a community for the general good of the community.
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<tr>
<th>Narrative of pregnancy and birth.</th>
<th>In the first pregnancy his narrative was that Mother A. was pregnant. In the second and third pregnancies with Mother B., his narrative changed to “we were pregnant”. He didn’t read any children’s books.</th>
<th>He doesn’t remember if he wanted to be a father therefor he had no expectations. He read no books about pregnancy however female family members taught him how to act. When holding the baby for the first time he felt scared because they are so small that it seemed “that I was breaking his bones”</th>
<th>He had no expectation of how to be a father.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Quotes that highlight the value of their child caring responsibilities.</td>
<td>“Women are not the only ones who suffer and give birth. I gave birth two times with my kids, not physically but spiritually and affectively”. “As a person I need to be with them, I want to sleep with them. Cutting my time with my kids is killing me.... I don’t have my core that are my girls”.</td>
<td>“When holding the baby, it was all different”. “I don’t like taking care of the children”. “I do what I feel”.</td>
<td>“The days that I cannot see them (the children) and I ask the mother to replace me, it hurt; I am used to see them now”. “Now that I have more time and have less the breadwinner responsibility... I like it better”. “I now can talk to them... three weeks ago my son for the first time called me”</td>
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<td>Answer to the questions: Would you like to change the time you spend with your child/children and what is your limitation?</td>
<td>*Question included changing roles with the mother: He believes it is unreal to change roles with the mother. For him, the mother will never stop being with her children.</td>
<td>He didn’t answer the question for his personal experience. He mentioned that the father’s role as breadwinner is what limits their involvement in childcaring responsibilities.</td>
<td>No, he wouldn’t like to change the time he is now giving to his children. His previous limitation was his work.</td>
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