

**Differential Pathways of Fathering and Fatherlessness
in Afro-Caribbean Families**

by

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ABSTRACT

DIFFERENTIAL PATHWAYS OF FATHERING AND FATHERLESSNESS IN AFRO-CARIBBEAN FAMILIES

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Lamb's (1975) seminal work on the contribution of fathers to children's development provided the context for research attention to fathers. Scholars conceptualized father involvement with a primary focus on behavioural involvement, leading to criticism that involvement should also include affective and cognitive domains. Moreover, the theoretical understanding of fatherlessness has received less consideration, primarily focusing on family structure (e.g., the residential status of biological fathers). Thus, the conceptualization of fathering, or the lack thereof, resulted in the stereotype and/or overgeneralization of ethnic and minority fathering. The present study extended the current literature on ethnic fathers, particularly of Afro-Caribbean fathers, to challenge assumed stereotypes and to contextualize these fathers in their unique historical and sociocultural context based on the bioecological perspective (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). The current study employs a qualitative methodology from a social constructivist perspective to explore fathering and fatherlessness in Afro-Caribbean families to gain insights into these phenomena. Thematic analysis was used to analyze semi-structured interviews involving 24 Afro-Jamaican fathers (27 to 37 years of age) with at least one child in middle childhood. The findings revealed that fathering and fatherlessness were conceptualized as multidimensional, including behavioural, affective, cognitive, and spiritual domains, extending Palkovitz's (1997) conceptualization. Also, fathering and fatherlessness were regarded as

opposite concepts that included biological and social fathers. The findings also revealed that intergenerational transmission of fathering was reflective of change and stability over time. These findings reinforce the notion of there are features of fathering that may be regarded as universal and provide insights into the culturalized aspects of fathering such as fathering roles and barriers. Implications for research and practice are discussed.

Dedicated to:

My parents, Lloyd and Letitia Green
My wife, Amoy Nicole Marshall Green
My sons, Jonathan and John-Mark Green

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	v
Table of Contents.....	viii
List of Tables.....	xii
Chapter One: Literature Review.....	1
Conceptualizations of fathering.....	8
Definitions of fathering.....	8
Domains of fathering.....	12
Determinants of fathering.....	14
Fatherlessness: Historical and contemporary perspectives.....	21
Conceptualization of fatherlessness.....	22
Causes of fatherlessness.....	24
Consequences of fatherlessness.....	27
Contemporary Afro-Caribbean fatherlessness.....	30
History of Afro-Caribbean fathers.....	32
Aftermath of Slavery: Impact on black fathers.....	37
Cultural, economic, and political contexts.....	38
Systemic issues that affect family functioning.....	42
Continuum of fathering and fatherlessness.....	45
Theoretical framework.....	47
Purpose of the study.....	47
Research questions.....	48
Chapter Two: Methods.....	50
Thematic analysis methodology.....	50
Participants.....	53
Sampling and sample size.....	53
Demographics.....	53
Procedures.....	56
Recruitment.....	56
Demographic questionnaire.....	57

Semi-structured interviews.....	57
Data analysis.....	58
Rigour and trustworthiness.....	62
Credibility.....	62
Dependability.....	63
Transferability.....	63
Confirmability.....	63
Authenticity.....	64
Chapter Three: Results.....	65
Construction of biological and/or social fathering and fathering identity.....	65
Behavioural involvement.....	67
Affective involvement.....	86
Cognitive involvement.....	88
Spiritual involvement.....	89
Fathers' involvement with their own children and reasons for	
non-involvement.....	90
Paternity-related issues.....	91
Issues with children's mothers.....	92
Issues with the law.....	93
Physical distance.....	93
Challenges or barriers in fathering.....	94
Lack of resources.....	94
Child-related issues.....	95
Partner-related issues.....	96
Time constraints.....	98
Work-related issues.....	99
Environmental challenges.....	99
Cognitive pressures.....	101
Fathers' construction of fatherlessness.....	102
Absence of fathering.....	103
Physical absence.....	106

Inadequate fathering.....	106
Separation form biological father.....	107
Detachment from father.....	108
Chapter Four: Discussion.....	109
Challenging fatherlessness.....	109
Beyond dichotomies: Towards a nuanced view of father involvement among nonresident fathers.....	109 110
Both biological and social fathers are important.....	112
Children’s perspectives on fatherhood.....	115
Cross-cultural features of fathering.....	116
Cultural similarities across fathers.....	116
Affective and cognitive involvement.....	119
A sociocultural approach.....	120
Traditional roles.....	123
Teaching/training role.....	125
Leadership role.....	126
Spiritual role.....	126
Barriers to fathering.....	127
Economic barrier.....	128
Social barriers.....	129
Psychological barriers.....	129
Intergenerational transmission of fathering.....	130
Limitations.....	131
Sample size.....	131
Sampling procedures.....	131
Social desirability.....	131
Methodology.....	132
A lack of attention to important areas of fathers’ experiences.....	132
Future directions.....	133
Implications and conclusions.....	135
References.....	136

Appendix A: Certificate of Ethics Approval.....	174
Appendix B: Recruitment Letter.....	175
Appendix C: Recruitment Flyer.....	176
Appendix D: Consent Form.....	177
Appendix E: Background Questionnaire.....	181
Appendix F: Interview Protocol.....	184

List of Tables

Table 1: Demographics and Background Information.....	167
Table 2: Themes and Subthemes in Experience of Biological and Social Fathering and Own Fathering.....	169
Table 3: Conceptualization of Roles and Responsibilities being Fathered and as Fathers....	170

Chapter One: Literature Review

Fathers were ignored in psychology for decades as early theories of parenthood did not regard fathers as equally important to child development as mothers (Parke, 1996). In the 1970s, however, Lamb (1975) proclaimed fathers as the forgotten contributors to children's development, and social scientists in the United States started focusing primarily on fathers' presence (co-residence) in the households of their children. At the same time, there was an increased exploration of fathers' behavioural interactions with their children and the relationships that children had with their fathers, including the infants' attachment to fathers (Pleck, 2010). In addition, the unique contributions of fathers to the cognitive, emotional, and social development of children were examined (Parke & Cookston, in press). For example, infants were found to form attachments with both their mothers and fathers, and fathers and mothers were equally sensitive and responsive to their children (Lamb, 1977). Also, parental closeness, warmth, and nurturance of either mother or father were found to be associated with positive child outcomes (Lamb, 2010; Parke, 1981, 1996).

A significant concern in the 1980s was the definition and operationalization of father involvement. Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, and Levine (1985, 1987) developed the father involvement (FI) model, emphasizing the observable and quantifiable components of fathers' care and socialization of their children. The model encompassed three dimensions, including: (a) engagement (direct interaction with the child), (b) accessibility or availability (within earshot distance of the child), and (c) responsibility (both arranging resources and ensuring that adequate care is provided for the child).

Although the FI model facilitated research, there were some limitations. First, the model was developed based on nuclear families (two married heterosexual parents and their child or

children), overlooking cohabitating unions (McAdoo, 2002). Moreover, the focus was on residential biological fathers, which resulted in a lack of consideration of nonresident biological fathers, social fathers, such as stepfathers or cohabitating male partners (males who function as fathers to children) (Tamis-LeMonda & Cabrera, 1999), and members of the extended family such as uncles or grandfathers who played paternal roles. Second, the comparison was between the relative involvement of resident biological fathers and mothers (Pleck, 2010). Consequently, the contributions of nonresident biological fathers to children's development were unacknowledged or received minimal attention. Third, researchers primarily explored White middle-class American fathers without significant focus on ethnic minority fathers (Chuang & Tamis-LeMonda, 2013). Inadequate investigation of ethnic minority families is a significant concern as these families often have other family members in their family systems (Boyd-Franklin, 2003). Collectively, these limitations restricted the application of the FI model to the variety of family contexts, leading to Palkovitz (1997) theorizing that father involvement should encompass additional domains such as the affective and cognitive domains.

Nevertheless, the FI model has become the most widely used conceptualization of fathering (Fagan, 2014). According to Lamb (2000), the model has guided research in three broad and widely recognized social dimensions of fathers' parenting in the United States: (a) responsible fatherhood, (b) direct interaction of father and child, and (c) the impact of mother–father relationships on child development. However, there has been inconsistencies on how scholars have operationalized the involvement construct with many researchers using the engagement dimension to represent the entire model (Pleck, 2010). Thus, there are difficulties in synergizing the findings across studies, as well as in different sociocultural contexts.

Similar to the focus of the FI model, the history of fathering was viewed from a White,

middle-class perspective. In chronicling the historical pattern of male parenting in the United States, Pleck and Pleck (1997) analyzed over four centuries of American history. They identified the stern patriarchs, distant breadwinners, genial dads and sex-role models, and co-parents (husbands who share childcare equally with their wives) and traced how these patterns of male parenting changed over the course of centuries. However, the historical analyses were focused almost exclusively on variations among White middle-class married residential fathers in each era with little attention to minority fathers or men who fathered outside the nuclear family paradigm. Consequently, when scholars studied ethnic minority fathers such as Black fathers, they generally utilized a deficit perspective (McDougal & George, 2016). Specifically, the family forms and processes of minority fathers were regarded as dysfunctional (e.g., common-law union and social fathering) as they often did not conform to the dominant nuclear family structure (McAdoo, 2002). Thus, a culturally deficit approach to fathering has not facilitated appropriate recognition of inter- and intragroup variations in fathering behaviours, family forms, and processes (McKelley & Rochlen, 2016). Moreover, it has been a problem-based approach that investigated vulnerable and tenuous family dynamics and minimized or not acknowledged the strengths in those relationships as well as functional relationships in the categories of fathering within a particular ethnic group (Johnson & Young, 2016).

However, contemporary scholars have recognized that family processes are more important than form or structure (Parke, 2013). Specifically, the exploration of family processes should encompass the historical background of ethnic minority fathers (Chuang & Moreno, 2008; Chuang & Tamis-LeMonda, 2009, 2013). Due to the recognition of diverse family forms, the broader context of contemporary scholarly research includes not only family structure, but the processes which characterize father-child interactions and, in turn, how these processes

influence child outcomes. Nevertheless, most of the studies continue to focus on two-parent families with limited focus on nonresident fathers and men in extended families (Goldberg, Tan, & Thorsen, 2009). However, the history of fathers in diverse cultural settings has become more salient as scholars increasingly conduct research on fathers in cultural contexts (Roopnarine, 2015; Shwalb, Shwalb, & Lamb, 2013).

Although there is greater attention to fathering across cultures, fathering in ethnic minority families such as Afro-Jamaicans is under-researched and often misunderstood. For example, studies have primarily unacknowledged the role of social fathers. Overall, the limited research on social fathers has simplified the complexities of social fathers by examining whether social fathers were present without attention to what social fathers were doing (Jayakody & Kalil, 2002). In addition, when studies have investigated what social fathers do, researchers primarily conceptualized social fathers as mothers' romantic partners or children's stepfathers (Berger, Carlson, Bzostek, & Osborne, 2008). Furthermore, researchers primarily focused on the relationships of father figures with younger children, which may not capture the importance of these men in children's lives due to the limited time that the fathers and children have been together (Jayakody & Kalil, 2002).

Another issue that needs more consideration is the role of social fathers in extended family networks. Although social fathers have been prominent in some contexts with extended families (e.g., African American families) (McDougal & George, 2016), the role of male relatives who act as social fathers has not been salient in the conceptualization of fathering in these cultural contexts. Moreover, social fathering in extended family networks may contribute to the positive outcomes associated with fathering (Bzostek, 2008)

Although some scholars have explored the sociocultural contexts in which fathering is

embedded (e.g., Chuang, 2013; Este, 2013; Tamis-LeMonda, Kahana-Kalman, & Yoshikawa, 2009), ecological factors have not guided the understanding of fatherhood in some contexts, leading to ethnic minority groups such as African American being stereotyped as unidimensional (McDougal & George, 2016). However, in addition to differences among cultural groups (Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2009), researchers should explore within group differences (Leavell, Tamis-LeMonda, Ruble, Zosuls, & Cabrera, 2012). To illustrate, although fathering in Black families in the United States is not monolithic, researchers have primarily focused on low-income fathers, including the effects of father absence on children, financial support, and establishment of paternity (Gadsden, Davis, & Johnson, 2015). Also, Black families have a high rate of out-of-wedlock births that creates unique family dynamics such as nonresident fathering (McDougal & George, 2016). Moreover, the contexts of Black families are impacted by a history of slavery, oppression, and discrimination, which is often unacknowledged in the exploration of family processes (McAdoo, 2002). Thus, these collective factors should be considered when examining the issues of biological and social fathering.

There is a paucity of research on minority fathers in comparison to White middle-class fathers (Chuang & Moreno, 2008; Chuang & Tamis-LeMonda, 2013). For example, Black fathers in North America have been understudied and misunderstood due to the lack of consideration of factors such as the impact of the environmental context, residential status, and masculinity on parenting (Doyle et al., 2015). Therefore, researchers should focus more on exploring the multidimensionality (resident fathering, nonresident fathering, and social fathering) of Black fathering (McAdoo, 2002). When doing so, scholars are recognizing that Black fathers in North America have been more involved than previously assumed (Cabrera, Ryan, Mitchell, Shannon, & Tamis-LeMonda, 2008).

There has also been a lack of international scope in fatherhood scholarship. This is primarily a result of U.S.-centrism (Pleck, 2013), the implicit assumption that research findings in the United States can be applied universally (Arnett, 2008), which has affected not only the study of fathering but the field of human development and family studies more generally (Pleck, 2013). More specifically, scholars often used models that have been developed in a Western, White, middle-class context to guide research among minority and immigrant fathers, which may not be an appropriate sociocultural framework (Chuang & Moreno, 2008). To illustrate, Chuang (2013) found that the FI model did not adequately capture the Chinese culture as the dimension of responsibility was not relevant to Chinese fathers in Canada. At the same time, the international literature on male parenting is inconsistent in quantity and quality with insufficient research in most countries outside of North America and Western Europe due to factors such as governmental policies and institutional support (Shwalb et al., 2013). Thus, research findings in North America are often used as the basis for evaluating fathering in other contexts such as Africa and the Caribbean. For example, Afro-Caribbean fathers have been stereotyped as uninvolved and irresponsible due, in part, to the influences of North American understanding of fathering.

Most of the studies on Afro-Caribbean parenting practices were conducted in Jamaica (Leo-Rhynie & Brown, 2013). Moreover, Afro-Caribbean family forms and processes were regarded as dysfunctional due to a lack of conformity to the White middle-class nuclear family structure and the high rate of single female-headed households. For example, 32% of Jamaican children 0 to 14 years old lived in female-headed households in 2010 (Planning Institute of Jamaica & Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 2012), and female-headed households accounted for 47% of the households (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2014).

The longstanding trend in household composition in Afro-Caribbean families has resulted in questions regarding the contributions of fathers to their children's development. Consequently, the investigation of Afro-Caribbean fatherhood has been viewed through a problem-based perspective. As a result, Afro-Caribbean fathers have been given labels such as absent and irresponsible. For example, a statement such as "most fathers in the Caribbean cultural communities do not subscribe to the two-parent, married model, and some choose to forego their economic responsibility to biological children" (Roopnarine, 2013, p. 221) inadvertently perpetuates the stereotype. This statement portrays fathers as absent and irresponsible and reinforces a deficit perspective.

The reinforcement of a deficit perspective is unfortunate as researchers need to reflect current family dynamics and relationships. Afro-Caribbean fathers are more involved in their children's lives than has been acknowledged (Anderson, 2009; Brown, Broomfield, & Ellis, 1994; Fox, 1999). For example, Afro-Jamaican fathers reported that they contributed to their children's development in many ways such as offering financial support, being available, taking care of their responsibility, and providing training in values (Anderson, 2009). Also, there are males who operate simultaneously as both biological and social fathers (Fox, 1999). Thus, there is a gap in our understanding of Afro-Caribbean fathers, and Afro-Jamaican fathers in particular, within their historical, cultural, and contemporary contexts.

In the following sections, I situate the present study on Afro-Caribbean fathers in the general scholarship on fathering and fatherlessness. The factors that influence fatherhood are reviewed with a critical appraisal of their application to Afro-Caribbean fathers. This review encompasses the conceptualizations of fathering, including its definitions, domains, and determinants. Fatherlessness (often referred to as the physical absence of biological fathers) is

also examined with explicit focus on its conceptualization, causes, and consequences. An exploration of contemporary Afro-Caribbean fatherlessness from the bioecological perspective follows (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Next, the view of fathering and fatherlessness as representing a continuum is explained, followed by the purpose of the study.

Conceptualizations of Fathering

Although fatherhood research has been receiving significant scholarly effort (Goldberg et al., 2009), there have been a number of conceptual concerns. Researchers conceptualized males' parenting in many ways, utilizing various terms such as fathering and responsible fathering. Also, father involvement has been used interchangeably as well as defined inconsistently (Pleck, 2010). In addition, the three recognized dimensions of male parenting, including behavioural, cognitive, and emotional domains (Palkovitz, 1997) are often insufficiently addressed.

In addition to the recognition of the multidimensionality of father involvement, scholars have increasingly acknowledged that fathering is determined by many factors such as fathers' motivation, skills, and support (Parke & Cookston, in press). Thus, it is important to first critically explore the definition, dimensions, and determinants of fatherhood as it has influenced fatherhood research and the understanding of fatherhood. These issues are addressed using Afro-Caribbean families to illustrate the value of recognizing how fathering varies across cultural contexts.

Definitions of fathering. Researchers often use a variety of terms to describe males' parenting – fathering, responsible fathering, fatherhood, and paternal involvement. Some scholars used the term fathering to refer to both the biological aspect of fathering (insemination) and the social aspect of fathering (parenting) (Doherty, Kouneski, & Erickson, 1998). For others, fathering was conceptualized narrowly to refer to the physical presence of the fathers and their

behavioural engagement with their children (e.g., playing and teaching) (Flouri, 2005) whereas others conceptualized fathering more broadly; in one study (Fox & Bruce, 2001), it encompassed responsibility (e.g., use of warmth and nurturing), harshness, behavioural engagement, and affective involvement (e.g., the love and want that fathers have for their children). Fathering has also been viewed as a multilateral process that included many stakeholders (e.g., fathers, mothers, children, and the broader community), and these stakeholders were influenced by their culture and institutions (Doherty et al., 1998). In this regard, fathering is a social construction that is shaped by meanings, motivations, attitudes, and behaviours of fathers and all other stakeholders. When fathering is viewed as a multilateral process, it is applicable across cultures as this perspective recognizes that fatherhood is affected by a variety of cultural/contextual factors (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Thus, greater understanding of fatherhood within the particular cultural contexts of families is possible with an ecological approach (Chuang, 2013).

The term “responsible fathering” entered the literature in the late 20th century and explicitly introduced values into the conceptualization of fathering. Responsible fathering refers to the expectations that men will choose to postpone impregnating women until they are emotionally and financially prepared to support children, accept their legal paternity, support their children financially, and share actively in the physical and emotional care of their children. Moreover, this concept has been regarded as applicable to both resident and nonresident fathers as all biological fathers should be able to meet these expectations, regardless of their physical location (Doherty et al., 1998).

However, the term is used to create two categories of fathers in which one group is privileged and the other is disadvantaged. First, financial resources have been used as one of the indicators that an individual is ready to become a father and to demonstrate that he is a good

father. Males who are from privileged socioeconomic backgrounds can meet this requirement without difficulty as their parents who have more resources are able to sufficiently support their efforts to attain higher education. With higher education, individuals can secure better paying jobs due to their higher level of skills. In contrast, males from low socioeconomic backgrounds often receive low education, which affect their job prospects and the quality of lives that they can afford for themselves and potential families (United Nations Development Programme, 2015). For example, low-income and minority fathers in the United States have faced significant challenges in their capacity to provide for their families partly due to the 2008 recession, and there were young men with low skill, low educational attainment, poor employment history, and dismal employment prospects (Smeeding, Garfinkel, & Mincy, 2011). Similar patterns have been found in Canada (see McCready et al., 2013). Also, comparative analysis from 2008 to 2011 showed that Black male immigrants in Canada had the lowest employment rates among all immigrant groups, and those living in Canada five years or less faced greater challenges in the labour market than those living in Canada six or more years (Statistics Canada, 2012). McCready et al. (2013) noted that Black males and fathers encountered significant systemic challenges such as unemployment, racism, and low educational attainment.

Second, emotional preparation (being able to appropriately express and respond to emotions) is considered an important prerequisite to becoming a father, but limited consideration has been given to males' emotional maturity. Moreover, there are men who may be financially prepared, but they are emotionally unstable. Alternatively, there may be males who are financially unprepared, but they are emotionally stable. However, men who demonstrated emotional instability have not been viewed as irresponsible in comparison to males who lacked financial resources. Thus, the conceptualization of responsible fatherhood is not sensitive to the

plight of African American and Afro-Caribbean men who may be emotionally stable but face major challenges that affect their financial preparation as a result of historical and social forces (McAdoo, 2002).

Researchers generally use the term fatherhood to refer to the ways of being a father (Goldberg et al., 2009). However, they also use the term to include both parental status and parenting. When it was narrowly defined as parental status, it referred to fertility status as a male may or may not be a biological father. In cases where it was used broadly, it referred to men who are “social fathers” who functioned as fathers in the lives of children who were not their biological offspring (Pleck, 2010). For example, a man may become the father of a child through the process of adoption and/or remarriage (Eggebeen, Knoester, & McDaniel, 2013). Fatherhood also includes other dimensions such as the timing of parenthood and the age of becoming biological fathers (Pears, Pierce, Kim, Capaldi, & Owen, 2005). For parenting, fatherhood refers to parenting behaviours of males who parent their biological or social children (Pleck, 2010).

When fatherhood is viewed as parenting, males who operate as social fathers are given credit for the roles that they engage in children’s lives. This is particularly important in the contexts of multiple partner fertility. For example, males may be actively involved in at least one of their biological children’s lives at any given time as well as act as social fathers for children in their current relationships (Edin & Nelson, 2013). Also, in some cultural contexts such as Afro-Caribbean communities, males within the extended family network are expected to serve as social fathers (Chamberlain, 2003). However, social fathers have been given limited focus in the increased scholarly exploration of fathering.

Therefore, social fathers should be included in the social construction of fathering or fatherhood. The social constructionist perspective of fatherhood suggests that the roles of fathers

are socially constructed at the institutional, interactional, and individual levels (Højgaard, 1997). At the institutional level, there are social policies that are designed to affect the roles of fathers. For example, some countries have policies that seek to increase the participation of fathers in their children's lives through paternity leave (e.g., Sweden), to support the establishment of paternity (e.g., Brazil), and to encourage the participation of nonresident fathers in children's lives (e.g., Australia) (Shwalb et al., 2013). At the interactional level, there are interpersonal challenges that may develop between fathers and employers. For example, fathers would be expected to discuss issues of fatherhood in the context of work, which may result in conflict regarding priorities. At the individual level, fathers have to determine their priorities and decide how to utilize social policies that support fathering as they navigate the culture of their workplaces. For example, fathers may have to deal with the tension that exists between the "daddy track" and career track (Mundy, 2014). Thus, fatherhood has influences at various levels (Parke, 2004).

Consequently, the way that fatherhood is socially constructed affects social policies that privilege the dominant culture and disadvantage the minority culture. For example, Black fathers in North America are often underemployed, so these fathers are unable to benefit from paternity leaves. Similarly, breadwinning has not been treated as a major role in models of father involvement or fathering, although it is still considered a major role of Black fathers based on cultural expectations (Este, 2013). Moreover, social fathers are often overlooked in social policies that are implemented to support fathers (Marsiglio & Cohan, 2000).

Domains of fathering. According to Palkovitz (1997), a broad conceptualization of fathering should include behavioural, cognitive, and affective domains. In assessing the behavioural domain of fathering, scholars often focus on the physical activities of fathers with

their children (Fagan, Day, Lamb, & Cabrera, 2014). However, researchers have been inconsistent in how they operationalized the behaviours of fathers. Some scholars measure father engagement based on specific activities of fathers with their children and include either the frequency of the activities or how mothers and fathers shared the time that was invested (Lamb, 1977; Pleck, 2010). Other scholars have emphasized that engagement should include the thoughts, beliefs, perceptions, and emotions of fathers (Palkovitz, 1997). Notwithstanding, fathering behaviours have been typically measured as the quantity of time that fathers were actively involved in activities with a specific child. The activities typically included playing indoor or outdoor with the child, talking, childcare, and medical care (Pleck 2010), as well as hugging, allowing the child to help with chores, and outings such as to visit relatives or dining out (Waller, 2012).

Although scholars recognize the broader definition of father involvement (overt behaviours), few researchers explicitly explored the cognitive and affective domains of fathering (Fagan et al., 2014). Expanding the scope of research is imperative to gain greater understanding of the complexities of fathering. Specifically, at the conceptual level, there needs to be meaningful exploration of all the domains of fathering including what (behavioural), why (cognitive), and how (affective) fathering is enacted (Pasley, Petren, & Fish, 2014). In doing so, researchers can capture how both biological and social fathers contribute to the development of children.

From a methodological standpoint, researchers often employed quantitative methodologies (Palkovitz, Trask, & Adamson, 2014). However, both qualitative and quantitative methods are required to gain a deeper and richer understanding of fatherhood (Chuang, 2013). Qualitative interviewing is useful for identifying, describing, and understanding concepts such as

fathering (Kuczynski & De Mol, 2015). This is particularly important when attempting to understand socially constructed concepts in ethnic minority families or families in other cultural contexts that are understudied and often misunderstood.

Therefore, the focus of scholars on the behaviours of biological fathers as the hallmark of paternal involvement has resulted in several challenges (McKelley & Rochlen, 2016). There are conceptual challenges as researchers attempt to define the concept of father involvement that has been complex, based on issues such as treating positive engagement activities as the only dimension of involvement (Pleck 2010), overlooking the other dimensions of fathering (Palkovitz, 1997). Another issue is that the measures are often not theoretically driven and frequently use what mothers do as reference for what fathers should do (Cabrera, Fitzgerald, Bradley, & Roggman, 2014). Thus, the measures do not include behaviours that are unique to fathers and that may be critical to the outcome of children in specific situations or contexts such as when the fathers are nonresidential. Finally, the focus on specific behaviours may overlook data that would be critical in an attempt to gain a better understanding of nonresident fathers (McKelley & Rochlen, 2016). Moreover, the specific behaviours that are assessed may not be sensitive to fathering in minority families. For example, father involvement in Black families in North America includes spending time with the child, material provision, emotional support, discipline, decision making/helping, teaching/helping, role modeling, and protecting/ensuring general welfare (Dubowitz, Lane, Ross, & Vaughan, 2004). These issues influence the conceptualization and assessment of fathering, and they are related to the determinants of fathering.

Determinants of fathering. Scholars have embraced the view that fathering is socially constructed, and this perspective has been influencing scholarly examination of the determinants

of fathering. For example, Cabrera et al. (2014) proposed a model of fatherhood in which they included personality and contextual factors such as work, paternal history, and family relationships as influences on fathering. These determinants of fathering have been categorized as biological and social factors (Parke, 2002).

Biological factors. Researchers have found that biological factors may influence the involvement of fathers with their children. These factors include hormonal changes (Parke, 2013). There is increasing evidence that fathers are biologically prepared for fathering through hormonal changes (Gentler, McDade, Feranil, & Kuzawa, 2011; Muller, Marlowe, Burgumba, & Ellison, 2009). Researchers noted that females go through changes in hormones during pregnancy and childbirth that have long been established as factors that may influence their behaviours with their children, and which may also be similar in males. Storey et al. (2000) found similar changes in the levels of testosterone, prolactin, and cortisol concentrations of pregnant mothers and expectant fathers during the prenatal, perinatal, and postnatal periods. Although males and females experience similar stage-specific hormonal concentration differences, the hormone levels in females were linked to their time to birth, and levels of concentration in males were linked with their partners' levels rather than the time to birth. According to Parke (2002), this suggests that fathers' contact with mothers who are pregnant with their children may influence the responsiveness of fathers to their children. Thus, there are interactions between biological and social factors.

Social factors. The context of fathering is affected by the circumstances in which men find themselves (Marsiglio & Cohan, 2000). These circumstances include social factors such as personal characteristics (e.g., attitudes, motivation, and skills), the fathers' developmental history (e.g., family background and socialization), family dynamics (e.g., marital relationship),

employment (e.g., mothers' employment), and child characteristics (e.g., temperament) (Habib, 2012). Scholars have found that compared to mothers, fathers were more sensitive to contextual factors at both the interpersonal and environmental levels (Doherty et al., 1998). These factors may be categorized as personal, familial, and societal (Parke, 2002).

Personal factors. Researchers have established that fathers' family background, attitudes, motivation, and skills influence involvement with their children (Parke, 2002). Men's family backgrounds influence their participation in their children's lives based on the relationships and socialization in their families of origin. There are two explanations for how relationships with family of origin and quality of the fathers' relationship with their parents may determine father involvement (Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Bradley, Hofferth, & Lamb, 2000). One understanding is based on the application of social learning theory (Bandura, 1989) suggesting that fathers model their own fathers (Guzzo, 2011). Alternatively, it is argued that when fathers experienced deficiencies in their relationships during their development, they often resolve to become better fathers. Guzzo (2011) found some support for this compensatory perspective. However, either of the views may be employed based on circumstances, and they are not all-encompassing because fathers may utilize different pathways to construct their image of fathering based on their contemporary realities (Parke, 2002).

The family of origin is also critical in socializing boys into the fathering role. Researchers reported that whereas girls were socialized to undertake roles that were more care-oriented within the house (e.g., washing, ironing, cooking, cleaning, and childcare), boys were expected to engage in performing specific tasks outside of the house (e.g., mowing the lawn, taking out the garbage) (see Lytton & Romney, 1991). Also, unlike boys, girls were given toys that prepared them for the parenting role (e.g., dolls, stuff toys) (Parke, 2002). For example, Salonen et al.

(2009) found that when compared with first time fathers, first time mothers had higher parenting self-efficacy, the beliefs or judgment regarding their ability and capacity to plan and perform specific tasks in caring for their children. However, although socialization may affect fathering self-efficacy, the parenting self-efficacy of fathers may change over time due to factors such as marital satisfaction (Kwok, Ling, Leung, & Li, 2013).

Self-efficacy is another factor that is associated with fathers' skills as their perception of their level of parenting skills affects their behaviours. Caldwell et al. (2014) found that exposure to positive parenting training influenced fathers' parenting behaviours. Similarly, Lundahl, Tollefson, Risser, and Lovejoy (2008) conducted a meta-analysis of 26 studies that included fathers and mothers in training programs and found that these parents received significant benefits such as being able to use more desirable parenting practices and facilitated positive behavioural changes in children.

Other personal factors that influence father involvement include personality, attitudes, and motivation. Scholars have emphasized that the personality (or psychological resources) of fathers is a powerful determinant of father involvement. Personality includes the ability to regulate impulses and exercise appropriate consideration for the perspectives of others (Zahn-Waxler, Duggal, & Gruber, 2002). For example, Al-Yagon (2011) found that fathers' positive emotions contributed to the socioemotional adjustment of their children. Also, personality has been linked to the responsibility that fathers assumed for the care of children in single-earner families (Volling & Belsky, 1991). According to Jain, Belsky, and Crnic (1996), nurturing fathers (e.g., playmates, caregivers) were less anxious, irritable, and hostile in comparison to traditional fathers (e.g., breadwinner, disciplinarian).

The attitudes of fathers influence their psychological investment in fathering. To examine

this association, scholars have utilized identity theory to explore how attitudes determine father involvement. Three key concepts of identity theory are often used include: (a) identity, the personal meaning that one attached to roles based on social statuses, (b) salience, the presence of identities that have been embraced across diverse contexts, and (c) commitment, the continuous enactment of an identity based on the number of persons in one's social network who supports that identity and would be affected if it were to be abandoned (Pasley et al., 2014). Fox and Bruce (2001) found that role salience and reflected appraisal were positively associated with fathering attitudes and behaviours. Commitment towards the fathering role may affect fathers' attitudes, and the attitudes of fathers have positively affected their participation in childcare (Gaunt, 2006).

According to Lamb et al. (1985), motivation is one of the determinants of fathering. This includes both intrinsic motivation (i.e., personal desire and satisfaction with parenting) and extrinsic motivation (i.e., the pleasant responses or rewards received for parenting). Bouchard, Lee, Asgary, and Pelletier (2007) found that fathers' positive sense of satisfaction with their involvement was a source of internal motivation, and their perceptions of interpersonal support (partner support) was a source of external motivation.

Family factors. The family is a primary agent of socialization which makes it a significant factor that determines fathering (Cabrera et al., 2014). Within the family, factors such as maternal attitudes and the quality of the relationships between biological parents are linked to the levels of father involvement. Allen and Hawkins (1999) found that mothers often served as gatekeepers as they possessed significant power that may limit fathers' participation in family work. This was due to mothers' preferences which were based on their set of beliefs and behaviours.

The attitudes of mothers are even more critical, especially in family arrangements such as Black families in North America and Afro-Caribbean families as fathers often do not live with their children. Consequently, fathers usually rely on their children's mothers to facilitate visitation privileges. In the United States among predominantly African American families, women and men used different principles in making judgements regarding the rights and obligations of nonresident fathers. Whereas nonresident fathers used an equality principle (both parents have the same right as biological parents), mothers used an equity principle (level of material contribution determines rights) (Lin & McLanahan, 2007). Thus, the dynamics in the mother–father dyad are influenced by beliefs that may create tensions between parents, which, in turn, negatively affect father involvement.

Researchers have also explored how interactions between the parents influence fathering. Volling and Belsky (1991) found that negative marital relationships were associated with poor interactions between fathers and their children at 9 months. Similarly, Easterbrooks, Raskin, and McBrien (2014) found a negative relationship between marital conflict and the level of parenting that fathers assumed for their infants. Thus, in situations where the levels of conflict were high between mothers and fathers, fathers were more like to disengage from parenting responsibilities (Seltzer, 1991).

Societal factors. Social forces related to economics, sex, and ethnicity are used to group fathers into varying circumstances which then affect how they think, feel, and act in their paternal roles (Marsiglio & Cohan, 2000). Focusing on economics, economic support is regarded as a crucial part of what it means to be a responsible father in social and political discourses. Moreover, fathers believed that a crucial aspect of their role was to provide economically (McCready et al., 2013); therefore, their financial resources influenced their levels of fathering

(LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993). Although minority Black fathers are affected by financial challenges, they still embraced the traditional provider role as critical in being a good father (McCready et al., 2013). Thus, they encountered difficulties in fulfilling the financial obligations that they regarded as indispensable to fathering. This may, in turn, affect the quality of the relationships that they seek to develop with their children.

Regarding sex, historical events may influence gender roles. For example, since the 1950s, women have been pursuing higher education as well as increasing their participation in the workforce (Parke, 2002). In the United States, researchers have found higher levels of father involvement in childcare in European American and African American families when mothers participated in the workforce (Bonney, Kelley, & Levant, 1999; Fagan, 1998).

Finally, ethnicity often influenced participation in the workforce, which is related to participation in childcare (Coltrane, 1996). Researchers primarily divided the type of work into three categories, including: (a) regular work (i.e., employment in the regular service sector), (b) underground work (i.e., legal but untaxed employment), and (c) hustling (i.e., illicit employment like drug sale). Ethnicity has been linked to both the type of work in which fathers participated and their interactions with their children. For example, African Americans who participated in regular and underground work were more engaged with their children than European-American fathers. However, those African American fathers who were more likely to participate in hustling activities were negatively affected in their level of involvement with their children (Woldoff, & Cina, 2007). In the Caribbean context, however, the effects of social class and type of work on father engagement may be the areas for exploration as social class is more likely to affect father involvement than type of work (Anderson, 2009).

In sum, fathering has been conceptualized in several ways, but scholars have been

acknowledging the need for a broad definition of fatherhood that encompasses biological and social fathers, with recognition of the behavioural, cognitive, and affective domains. At the same time, fatherhood should be studied in specific contexts in order to gain a more in-depth understanding of fathering both within and across cultures. Therefore, although scholars have identified many factors that determine fatherhood, many of these factors are associated with White middle-class families and may not be culturally applicable to fathers in ethnic minority groups, especially in the Jamaican context. Moreover, the research should extend to social fathers to ascertain the determinants of fathering and the impact of social fathers on the development of children as Black fathers may hold both forms of fathering, and future research involving Black fathers may provide greater clarity about fatherlessness.

Fatherlessness: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives

The 21st century is not only characterized by the “new father” who takes on more responsibilities for his children as both provider and caregiver (LaRossa, 1997), but also fathers who are absent from their children’s lives (Roy, 2008). Researchers defined fatherlessness as the physical absence of biological fathers from their children’s lives (Culpin, Melotti, & Joinson, 2013; Edin & Nelson, 2013; Shenk, Starkweather, Kress, & Alam, 2013). In the past, children were regarded as fatherless if they experienced the premature death of their biological father due to war or disease. In cases of out-of-wedlock births, children were regarded as illegitimate (Popenoe, 1996), as marriages were required for children to be regarded as legitimate in the family and community (Abell & Schwartz, 1999). However, fathers are now absent from their children’s lives due to changes in family structure such as divorce, separation, delayed marriage, remarriage, stepfamilies, death, imprisonment, and migration (see Krampe, 2003). Also, there is greater focus on fathering and the role of social fathers, which has resulted in the recognition of

the complexities in understanding fatherhood (Daniels, 1998; Tiedje & Darling-Fisher, 1996).

However, fatherhood has been complex in families of African descent in the Americas for centuries. The complexities of fathering in these families are associated with enslavement and its aftermath. African slaves were regarded as chattels that could be bought and sold freely (Patterson, 1967). When slaves were sold, they were separated from their families which negatively affected the roles of fathers (Higman, 1976). Also, fathers had no authority in the relationship with their female partners or their children (Patterson, 1967). These issues created unique dynamics that have affected fathering in families of African descent in the Americas such as North America and the Caribbean. Nevertheless, the conceptualization of fatherlessness overlooks these issues in attempts to understanding fatherlessness in African American as well as Afro-Caribbean families (see Daniels, 1998). Thus, fatherlessness should be examined not only from the mainstream North American literature perspective but from the unique Afro-Caribbean contextual perspective as well.

Conceptualization of fatherlessness. Terms such as fatherlessness, fatherless family, and father absence are used interchangeably to define absent fathers. However, researchers have tended to primarily focus on the physical location of the biological father. McLanahan, Tach, and Schneider (2013) reviewed 47 studies and found that scholars measured fatherlessness in several ways, such as comparing children of stable married parents to children of divorced parents and children of two-parent families to children of single-parent families. Thus, family type has unfortunately been used as a proxy to define fatherlessness. Family type is also used as the basis for comparison in assessing the causal effects of father absence, which does not reflect important family dynamics.

In operationalizing father absence, researchers should consider the possible reasons for

father absence such as death, relationships with the mothers and/or the children, and divorce (East, Jackson, & O'Brien, 2006). These possible reasons are conceptually different and affect family dynamics and children in distinct ways. For example, according to Amato and Gilbreth (1999), in the case of divorces, the majority of the fathers gradually withdrew from involvement with their children. Factors such as the relationships with former spouses influenced the extent to which biological fathers continued to be involved. Also, the fathers' beliefs about their levels of control and decision-making in areas such as their children's activities and well-being may influence the dynamics of their relationships with the mothers and children, which may attenuate or exacerbate the effects of father absence. The history of past interactions may also affect the relationships (Kuczynski & De Mol, 2015). Consequently, if negative interactions are not offset by positive interactions, the relationships may become dysfunctional (Levitt & Cici-Gokaltun, 2011). Thus, father absence may not be based only on fathers' personal choices but the various dynamics of the social relationship systems.

These varied changes in relationships over time have resulted in a broader understanding of fatherhood. First, there is a shift in the social arrangements between adult males and children as men now interact with children in various relational contexts such as nonresident biological fathering, nonwedlock fathering, stepfathering, and other family configurations. Thus, scholars have suggested that the definition of fatherhood cannot be based on biology (Tamis-LeMonda & Cabrera, 1999). Second, the definition of social fathering has expanded to include men's involvement, actual relationships, and activities with children who are either their biological or social children (Flood, 2003). Thus, the broader definition of fathering results in attempts to measure fatherlessness with attention to biological and social fathers simultaneously.

Consequently, fatherlessness should encompass behavioural, affective, and cognitive

domains as the focus should not be placed primarily on the physical presence of biological fathers. The cognitive and affective domains are also critical in understanding fatherlessness, especially due to children's own sense of connection to their biological fathers as fathers may be physically absent but present emotionally and psychologically (Lamb, 2010). Therefore, children may experience various levels of biological fatherlessness. At the same time, the effects of biological fatherlessness may be attenuated by social fathers. Thus, it is important to explore children's own experiences to understand the complexities of fatherlessness. Greater attention to the causes of fatherlessness may also facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of its effects on children.

Causes of fatherlessness. Researchers have identified a number of personal and social factors that influence fatherlessness (Lin & McLanahan, 2007; Smeeding et al., 2011). At the personal level, there are fathers who are not motivated to fulfill their responsibilities to their children and decide not to be involved. For example, in the case of multiple partner fertility, fathers regard each new relationship as an opportunity to start over without explicit consideration of and preparation to take care of the needs of children from previous relationships. Their commitment to new romantic relationships often creates new family dynamics that may facilitate fatherlessness. For example, fathers who enter new romantic relationships may not continue to be active fathers to their children from previous relationships (Edin & Nelson, 2013). Moreover, there are some single mothers who have made a personal choice to parent alone (Parke, 2013). Hence, children may not have contact with their biological fathers due to personal decisions of fathers and/or mothers.

The social determinants of fatherlessness include relationship dynamics, unemployment, and migration. Focusing on relationship dynamics, the mother–father relationships, especially in

the case of out-of-wedlock births and divorce or separation, often create tensions between parents that may lead to a lack of father involvement (Abell & Schwarz, 1999; Mackey & Immerman, 2007). For example, mothers may serve as gatekeepers and either prevent or limit the interactions between fathers and their children when the mother–father relationship is acrimonious. Tensions in the mother–father relationships may intensify due to different levels of understanding between mothers and fathers as 40% of African American men were found to be functionally illiterate compared to women (Chapman, 2007).

Regarding unemployment, a lack of financial resources has affected the relationships between some fathers and their children’s mothers. Mothers often believed that fathers did not have equal parenting rights if they were not providing financially (Lin & McLanahan, 2007). Moreover, some minority groups like Afro-Caribbean Canadians faced challenges in the workforce that affected their financial resources. These fathers also valued the capacity to provide financially as a characteristic of good fathers (McCready et al., 2013). Thus, fathers may not be involved in their children’s lives due to a lack of financial resources. Specifically, family dissolution is often the result of the disappearance of work among fathers of African descent in North America (Sudarkasa, 2007). In Chicago, for example, 45% of Black men ages 20 to 24 were out of work (Herbert, 2003), and when they had children their role as fathers was likely to be negatively affected by their lack of financial resources.

Finally, a lack of economic opportunity sometimes leads to migration, which affects the participation of fathers in their children’s lives, especially among the working-class in developing countries such as the Caribbean region. For example, in the post-World War II era, working-class men left their families to work in the United Kingdom with the intention that the families would reunite. However, sometimes the families did not reunite, or the process took

several years (Crawford-Brown & Rattray, 2001). Moreover, external migration is still a feature of Afro-Caribbean families that impacts the families (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2016).

There are also legal and policy issues that have contributed to fatherlessness. From the perspective of the legal system, researchers have found that in comparison to European-Canadian men, police were more likely to target Afro-Canadian/Caribbean men (McCready et al., 2013). Similarly, the justice system was more likely to negatively impact African American males (e.g., incarceration) than other ethnic groups, which prevented them from being involved in their children's lives (Smeeding et al., 2011).

Regarding policy issues, Tamis-LeMonda and Cabrera (1999) reported that public policy has been enacted in the United States to enforce paternity establishment and child support. The policies targeted nonresident fathers to encourage continuous involvement in their children's lives, which included financially supporting their children until they are 18 years of age. Moreover, custodial mothers who applied for benefits under the welfare system were expected to push the establishment of paternity and child support. The US government has been using strategies to collect money from nonresident fathers that include letters to delinquent fathers, arrests, and suspension of drivers' licenses. However, these policies may negatively affect father involvement. For example, many Black fathers experienced a lack of economic and social progress since early 1980s, and high levels of both unemployment and incarceration. At the same time, social policy often resulted in arrests and accrual of child support arrears while fathers are incarcerated. These issues often further distanced Black fathers from their children (Smeeding et al., 2011). Also, being punished for a lack of financial contribution that the children's mothers demanded when there was a lack of resources may create conflicts in the mother-father relationships that may result in the withdrawal of fathers.

Finally, fatherlessness is often assessed based on the physical absence of the biological father and a failure to recognize social fathers. However, resident social fathers were found to be as beneficial to the well-being of children as resident biological fathers (Bzostek, 2008). Moreover, social fathers may have biological children who are nonresidential, but they were not usually asked about biological children who may not be living with them. As a result, fatherlessness should not be examined without adequate regard for the contributions of social fathers who may not be actively involved in the lives of their biological children but who are serving as good fathers to other children (Edin & Nelson, 2013). Unfortunately, researchers often assessed father absence with attention to only the biological father instead of exploring biological and social fathering simultaneously.

Attention to the roles of social fathers is not intended to undermine the importance of nonresident biological fathers (Jayakody & Kalil, 2002). Importantly, biological fathers may be involved in their children's lives in different ways over time, and social fathers may complement or supplement the role of nonresident biological fathers. For example, children may be nurtured in environments where they have relationships with men who serve as social fathers (McDougal & George, 2016). Some of these relationships may be continuous (e.g., uncles) or situational (e.g., mothers' romantic partner). However, there is inadequate knowledge about the roles of social fathers (Coles & Green, 2010). This lack of attention to social fathers and multiple fathers, especially within certain cultural contexts, may have created only an appearance of fatherlessness. For example, biological fathers may be involved, but due to multiple partner fertility and complexities in relationships their presence is obscured (see Edin & Nelson, 2013).

Consequences of fatherlessness. Scholars have established a relationship between fatherlessness and negative child outcomes (McLanahan et al., 2013). More specifically,

researchers have found that father absence is linked to negative cognitive and educational outcomes for children, including higher levels of antisocial behaviour (Pfiffner, McBurnett, & Rathouz, 2001), increased juvenile delinquency (Kofler-Westergen, Klopff, & Mitterauer, 2010), drug use (Farrell & White, 1998), and risk of incarceration (Harper & McLanahan, 2004), as well as decreased rates of college attendance for boys (Doherty, Willoughby, & Wilde, 2015). Also, children from poor single-mother households, which are associated with a lack of nonresident father involvement, were found to be at increased risks for emotional, social, and academic challenges (McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994). However, these negative consequences that have been attributed to father absence may be based on the various conceptual limitations that, for example, simplified the complexities of single-mother families.

Scholars have acknowledged that the dynamics are complex in single-mother families as mothers may be living with their children without the coresident of the biological fathers for many reasons. This is due to variations in the types of single-mother families such as divorced mothers with custody, adolescent mothers, single mothers by choice, or mothers who choose to have children without the involvement of fathers (Weinraub, Horvath, & Gringlas, 2002). Thus, when the differences in the constellation of single-mother headed households are included in the investigation of father absence, the negative outcomes may be attenuated by other factors. For example, Golombok, Zadeh, Imrie, Smith, and Freeman (2016) compared heterosexual solo mothers and married or cohabiting heterosexual mothers with donor-conceived children 4 to 9 years old and found that there was no difference in child adjustment. Also, parenting quality was similar except for lower conflict between mother and child in solo mother families. These findings suggested that the outcomes of father absence cannot be ascertained by focusing on single-parent families as children may progress well when they are accustomed to single-mother

family structure.

Another important issue is that the outcomes that are linked to father absence may instead be as a result of the absence of specific parenting practices (Patterson & Fisher, 2002). For example, mothers may become too emotionally engaged with children which may blur the lines between being mothers and friends to their children. Moreover, the effects of a single-mother family structure to which children are accustomed may be different when compared with adjustment to a new family structure (McLanahan et al., 2013). At the same time, biological fathers may be involved in their children's lives in complex ways in single-mother families. Thus, the focus on single-mother families is simplistic and misleading when used to determine effects of father absence (Weinraub et al., 2002).

To summarize, research on fatherlessness often focuses on the physical location of the biological father with limited consideration of the roles of social fathers. Researchers also often do not conceptualize father absence as encompassing behavioural, cognitive, and affective domains. These limitations have resulted in oversimplification and overgeneralization of the causes and consequences of father absence. Moreover, children's own sense of being fathered and the different ways in which father presence or absence is experienced throughout their life-course have not been investigated to gain a greater understanding of the effects of father absence. This is important as both biological fathers and/or social fathers may be involved in their children's lives at various levels based on the family structure within their culture or a change in family structure. Therefore, fatherlessness should be explored with attention to family processes to provide a more critical exploration of the outcomes for children than family forms (Parke, 2013). Despite the limitations in the scholarship on fatherlessness, many of the issues are equally applicable in exploring Afro-Caribbean fatherlessness. At the same time, the causes of

fatherlessness may be further illustrated by the unique cultural context of Afro-Caribbean families.

Contemporary Afro-Caribbean Fatherlessness

Scholars have emphasized that fatherhood should be interpreted with regard to fathers' beliefs about their roles, how they enact their roles, and child outcomes in the contexts of current history, culture, community, and family (Cabrera et al., 2000). This ecological embeddedness of fathering requires exploration of fathers in many different social contexts (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). The inclusion of different cultures has contributed to a greater acknowledgement of the importance of contextual factors (Flouri, 2005). For example, researchers have compared fathering among minority groups in Western industrialized societies (e.g., Cabrera et al., 2008; Chuang & Moreno, 2008; Chuang & Tamis-LeMonda, 2013; Williams, Hewison, Stewart, Liles, & Wildman, 2012) and groups with similar histories (Roopnarine & Hossain, 2013). Specifically, African American and Afro-Caribbean fathers have been compared as they share similar ancestry, history of slavery, prolonged oppression, and intergenerational family connections. Even though these groups are similar in several ways, significant differences exist in childrearing practices, beliefs, and goals (Roopnarine & Hossain, 2013). Thus, many scholars have used Bronfenbrenner's (1995) ecological theory to explain and explore the ecological embeddedness of contemporary fatherhood (Cabrera et al., 2014; Chuang, 2013).

According to Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006), the bioecological model is an evolving theoretical system that is used to study human development over time with an emphasis on continuity and change in human beings' biopsychological characteristics as individuals and groups. Process, person, context, and time with their dynamic interactive relationships are the defining properties of the model (PPCT; Bronfenbrenner, 1995). One of the basic premises of

this theoretical system is that development must be viewed as a function of forces arising from various settings and the relationships among all the settings. Process is the unique interactions between the organism and its environment. More specifically, this component is referred to as proximal processes which are the interactions between the developing person and his or her immediate environment (person, symbol, or object) that operate over time and are regarded as the primary mechanism through which development takes place (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). Thus, both an individual and society have effects on each other as influences are bidirectional.

According to Bronfenbrenner & Morris (2006), the immediate and remote environmental settings of individuals that interact and influence each other include several systems. The microsystem encompasses the immediate environments of individuals and the interactions and relations between these settings, including home, schools, peer groups, and other social contexts. The mesosystem includes the interrelationships between individuals' environmental settings such as home, schools, neighbourhoods, and other social contexts. The exosystem encompasses the interactions between distal structures and institutions whether formal or informal that influence the proximal contexts of individuals. For example, the interactions between the neighbourhoods of individuals and the workplaces of members of their households. The macrosystem is the structural component that determines how society functions. It includes the explicit formal structures provided by laws and legislative policies and the informal and implicit arrangements such as cultural practices. These explicit and implicit structures are the broad framework of culture and subculture that includes social, economic, legal, and political systems. The macrosystem is manifested in the micro-, meso-, and exosystems as the roles and relationships of the individuals are influenced by the macrosystem. Finally, the chronosystem encompasses the

individual and environmental changes that occur over time that influence conditions and events which impact individuals throughout the historical period in which they live. These changes influence all the levels of the system (Bronfenbrenner, 1995).

The relationships between the systems are critical to understanding the development of individuals (Bronfenbrenner, 1995). Moreover, the various contexts in which individuals live, including the social, political, and historical settings, have powerful effects on their growth and development. Therefore, before exploring these systems in contemporary Afro-Caribbean families, it is important to provide the historical context, including the history of slavery, colonization, and indentureship.

History of Afro-Caribbean fathers. The unique history of Black fathers in the Caribbean began in the 15th century when Africans were captured, transported, and enslaved in the Americas (Boyd-Franklin, 2003). Enslavement radically transformed the fathers' social heritage due to the emphasis that slave holders placed on economic productivity on the plantations (Frazier, 1939). Therefore, the labour-maximization priority of the slaveholders had deleterious effects on virtually all aspects of fathers' family lives, such as providing for and protecting their families (Jemmott, 2015).

Before slavery, African family ideology was communal, interdependent, and intergenerational with a high value on family relationship and unity (Aborampah & Sudarkasa, 2011), an integrated network of extended families (Jemmott, 2015), and fictive kin (Aborampah, 2011). In this extended family context, members worked together to complete duties, tasks, and jobs (Aborampah & Sudarkasa, 2011). These extended families, in comparison to the European family (mother, father, and child), were ideal families that included relatives from several generations and spouses who joined the family through marriage (Hill, 1999). Thus, the family

was based on blood, in-law, and fictive kin (a nonrelative who is considered a part of the family) relationships that supported childrearing and provided resources.

Childrearing took place in the context of the community as a corporate responsibility (Kyomugisha & Rutayuga, 2011). In these contexts, women who had many children were celebrated because children represented the continuity of life, and mothers were more closely attached to their children than were fathers. Also, mothers had domestic and homemaking roles as well as the role of economic provider. However, parental roles were flexible and egalitarian, but fathers were the heads of their families (Hill, 1999). Thus, fathers were highly respected with important responsibilities to their families.

During slavery, the traditional roles of fathers disintegrated as their extended family patterns were disrupted (Aborampah, 2011). This was largely as a result of the brutality that slaves experienced on the plantations (Boyd-Franklin, 2003; Cooper, 2006; Trudel, 2013). For example, the plantation system reinforced inequality as enslaved Africans, representing a race that was considered inferior, and were treated as property. The plantation system also prevented most of the Afro-Caribbean males from acquiring wealth, and they were denied formal education (Winks, 1997). Moreover, scant regard was given to the sanctity of marriage and the importance of family relationships (Hill, 1999). For example, sexual unions of slaves were often terminated through the sale of slaves (Dunaway, 2003).

According to Klein (1986), several aspects of plantation society were unique to Jamaica. For example, in the 17th and 18th centuries, only a few persons among the Black and Mulatto (the child of a Black female and a White male) populations were free. Also, leading planters dominated society through the ownership of most of the productive lands and slaves, and they also controlled the politics at the local and imperial levels. Thus, they influenced laws that

negatively affected the lives of the slaves. For example, the family lives of the slaves were disrupted through the internal slave trade as planters were allowed to engage in selective purchase of slaves. At the same time, the paternity of Black males was less dominant due to miscegenation as the majority of the slaves were related to people of colour by 1834. Also, it became rare for women to bear children darker than themselves (Higman, 1976).

Although the slave code of 1816 included provision for women to be rewarded for reproduction such as exemption from field labour for producing six children, plantation management did not facilitate the bearing of children as a justification for the development of families. Moreover, marriages were initially forbidden but later became a privilege masters could confer based on the slave code of 1826. Marriage as a privilege did not have any significant impact as over time the slaves had developed negative attitudes towards marital unions. The lack of embrace for the institution of marriage was reflected in a male slave's response when he was encouraged to get married by a missionary. He reasoned that Buccra (the slave master) is able to read the Bible and have plenty of women (Turner, 1982). Thus, the sexual exploitation of Black women by White men (Patterson, 1967) had deleterious effects on the attitudes of slaves to marriage and sexual expressions.

Furthermore, sexual behaviours disintegrated as there were no social sanctions to regulate mating patterns. According to Patterson (1967), the erosion of sexual values and the traditional forms of marriages occurred throughout the New World, but the greatest sexual abandonment was in the Caribbean as the greatest sexual laxity was in Jamaica. The institution of marriage in its traditional African or European forms was primarily ridiculed. Marriage was not permitted among slaves or encouraged among most of the White population. Thus, males acted as libertines and treated females as prostitutes. This was partly as a result of the imbalance in the

ratio of male and female slaves which facilitated promiscuity as Black males and White males competed for the availability of Black females. Consequently, the mating pattern of slaves throughout their lifecycle encompassed promiscuity, unstable unions, stable unions and multiple associations, and stable monogamous (common-law) and legal marriages. Within these mating patterns, however, there was no encouragement to partake in family functioning.

Moreover, promiscuity led to cases of bastardy, which contributed to the development of a culture in which the main bond of children was with their mothers (Wilson, 2003). This culture facilitated the rise in female single headed-families, as well as a sense of disconnection and disjointedness in Black families. Also, fathers were treated as subhuman whose primary purpose was to increase the wealth of their owners, which was viewed as more important than the functioning of their families. Thus, males had no authority as husbands and fathers (Patterson, 1967) as African traditional extended family form could not be practiced or maintained (Brodie, Walker, & Morgan, 2011).

To cope with the negative impacts of enslavement, religion served an important role as it provided psychological and spiritual advantages (Martin & Martin, 1978). Religious practice was the centerpiece of the cultural practices that developed. As a result, religion served as a comprehensive guide to how they lived, despite adversity. For example, religion guided the development of a set of ethics and a perspective of the universe, which provided them with spiritual independence from the oppression of the slave owners. Specifically, they prayed impassioned prayers, believed in retribution (God will repay their oppressors), gained emotional release as they worshipped with their hearts and hands, and viewed what the White people called theft as appropriation (Escott, 1979). Importantly, the White fundamentalists viewed the Bible as the source of unchanging truth, but Black people regarded it as containing historical experiences

that provided a moral context to discuss their world as it was a source of inexhaustible good advice for living a proper life (Genovese, 1974).

In the period immediately before emancipation, fathers still had limited power and authority over their families lives. For example, the planters were able to influence the enactment of a law with a prison sentence of 14 days with hard labour to prevent fathers from visiting their families on other plantations during the week (Jemmott, 2015). However, when slavery ended with abolition in 1834 and emancipation in 1838, fathers had more control over their family decisions and records showed that, for example, in Jamaica approximate 70% of fathers on the New Montpelier, Shettlewood, and Old Montpelier plantations chose to maintain their family linkages and lived predominantly in nuclear family arrangements (Higman, 1976). Also, ex-slaves tried to locate their family members by visiting other plantations in order to establish or rebuild their family connections (Demerson, 2011; Jemmott, 2015).

At the same time, there were diverse family structures (Chamberlain, 2003; Roopnarine & Hossain, 2013). These family structures included: (a) the simple family consisting of parents and child or children, (b) the extended family consisting of one or more kin from another generation into the simple family, (c) the denuded family consisting of the simple or extended family with only one parent, (d) the sibling family, and (e) the stepfamily which included the children of the mother, father or children of both parents from previous unions (Clarke, 1957, 1999). Thus, fathering took place in various family arrangements, often in extended family networks (Chamberlain, 2003).

The capacity of Afro-Caribbean fathers to provide for their children was negatively affected by indentureship which was introduced in 1838 as Portuguese, Indians, and Chinese were brought to the region to work on plantations. Indentured workers sold their labour for low

regular wages on contracts that they were compelled to complete in 3 to 5 years in order to be freed from servitude (Shepherd, 2001). This alternative supply of labour in the region significantly affected the ex-slaves. For example, when education was introduced for children 5 to 15 years of age, parents regarded providing for the family as the top priority. Consequently, many parents prevented their children from attending school as they were needed to help the family economically (Jemmott, 2015). Specifically, children engaged in agricultural work or assisted with selling in the market (Wilmot, 1997). In sum, slavery significantly affected Afro-Caribbean family life with effects that may be contributing to the enactment of contemporary fathering.

Aftermath of slavery: Impact on black fathers. These systemic influences are crucial in gaining a better understanding of the various influences on contemporary fathering in Afro-Caribbean families. From as early as the 1950s, Clarke (1957, 1999) found that there were Afro-Caribbean fathers who were involved in their children's lives in nurturing ways. More recently, Anderson (2009) found that there was an emerging cultural shift towards nurturing as an essential dimension of fatherhood. At the same time, there were a number of children living in female-headed households. However, the high rate of female-headed households was frequently not placed in the context of Afro-Caribbean fathers as descendants of slaves whose traditional approach to male–female relationships and family life were interrupted and restricted during slavery (Leo-Rhynie & Brown, 2013).

Contemporary researchers often did not place female-headed households in the context of Afro-Caribbean mating pattern that developed during slavery as the mating pattern has been viewed as pathological (see Chevannes, 1993). Thus, Afro-Caribbean families were explored from a problem-based perspective primarily as a consequence of the various family structures

that have increased fathers' physical absence. Unfortunately, the title of Clarke's (1956, 1999) seminal ethnography on families and households in Jamaican communities, *My mother Who Fathered Me: A Study of the Families in Three Selected Communities of Jamaica*, conjured up negative images of Jamaican fathers by the title, ' '. However, this primary focus of the ethnographic work was on family arrangements and functioning. Importantly, the study revealed that only 19% of children in the households studied lived with their mothers alone, compared to 58% of children who lived with both parents, 4% with fathers and stepmothers, 5% with fathers alone, and 13% with mothers and stepfathers. Thus, 67% of the children lived with their biological fathers. Thus, the title of the book was not insightful as it misrepresented the findings by presenting a deficit perspective (Clarke, 1956, 1999).

In many cases where biological fathers did not live with their children, social fathers were present as 13% of the children lived with their stepfathers. Similarly, the remaining 19% who lived with only their mothers may have had other males such as mothers' romantic partners, male relatives or friends acting as social fathers, arrangements that were not formally assessed (Clarke, 1957, 1999). Therefore, the roles of social fathers need further exploration. Also, the biological fathers could have been involved in significant ways although they were non-residential. Thus, both social and biological fathering are important in attempts to examine the effects of fatherlessness in the Afro-Caribbean context. These issues were explored in the cultural, economic, and political contexts.

Cultural, economic, and political contexts. The macrosystem has been influencing father absence as a result of cultural, economic, and political factors. For cultural factors, paternity and motherhood, and religiosity were explored. There has been a cultural practice in which the status of manhood and womanhood are earned based on impregnation and conception

(Chevannes, 2001). In Jamaica, males have developed an important distinction regarding paternity that is based on the use of language. According to Brown and Chevannes (2001), fathers believed that they “get” children or “have” children. To “get” children is considered the announcement of manhood in which there is no focus on caring for children. Conversely, to “have” children focuses on the need to maintain and care for their children. Thus, this attitude towards paternity to prove manhood has been facilitating father absence.

The importance placed on pregnancy as an expression of womanhood (Chevannes, 2001) has resulted in a cultural practice in which grandmothers, grandfathers, and childless aunts perform an integral role in childcare (Chamberlain, 2003). Also, there used to be a tradition of community parenting as any adult had the right to reprimand or praise a child and later inform the child’s parents (Fox, 1999). Moreover, families with resources often foster non-kin children in various circumstances (Chamberlain, 2003). Thus, these factors may have facilitated father absence as children were often cared for by relatives, fictive kin, or friends.

Religiosity is a major cultural influence as a significant number of persons expressed a religious affiliation. For example, in the Jamaican census of 2011, 76% of the population reported a religious affiliation or denominational association (Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 2012), and in a recent study, 50% of males reported that they were a part of a church, which they attended at least once each month. Moreover, the majority of the formal religious organizations place an emphasis on family values. However, men who were not a part of the church community were more likely to have children and not be involved in their lives (Anderson, 2009). Thus, father absence is more likely when men are not being influenced by religious communities.

As it relates to economic factors, the conditions have been austere for Afro-Caribbean people from the post-slavery period, so poverty is a major issue that may influence fatherlessness (Leo-Rhynie & Brown, 2013). In 2014, the Human Development Index (HDI) for the Caribbean and Latin America was 0.75, and 14% of the population was undernourished (linked to poverty and deprivation) (United Nations Development Programme, 2015). More specifically, data for Jamaica in 2015 revealed that the unemployment rate was at 10% for adults and 33% for youths aged 15-24 (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2016). Moreover, in 2010, 22% of children lived in poverty (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2014).

With challenging economic circumstances, fathers often found it difficult to support their children financially. Brown and Chevannes (2001) found that the economic provider role was central to the roles that resident and nonresident fathers in their families. Thus, for fathers to have the right to be the heads of their families, provide guidance for children, and be the ultimate disciplinarians, they had to be providing financially. Primarily due to economic challenges, however, children of transitory relationships (i.e., children who were born in earlier multiple relationships) were likely to be neglected (Bailey, Wynter, Lee, & Jackson, 2001). Specifically, women did not consider nurturing activities substitutes for financial contributions, and men did not value these activities if the primary role of economic provider was unfulfilled (Brown & Chevannes, 2001). Thus, some fathers articulated the view that “you win some, and you lose some” as they concluded that it was unlikely that they would be able to fulfil responsibilities for all their children (Brown, Newland, Anderson, & Chevannes, 1995).

The economic challenges often resulted in unique family dynamics as fathers frequently migrated in search of better opportunities. This further affected the relationship of fathers with their children (Leo-Rhynie & Brown, 2013). For example, in the latter part of the 19th and early

20th centuries, many Jamaican men migrated to Central America to work on large construction projects including the Panama Canal and the trans-Isthmain railway. Also, many men moved to Cuba as labourers for the expanding sugar production (Glennie & Chappell, 2010). When fathers migrated during this period, they usually left the women and children behind. However, when fathers alone migrated in later waves of migration to the United Kingdom, United States, and Canada, the intention was for their families to join them through a process that usually took several years. In many instances, mothers and/or children were unable to join fathers at a later date as anticipated (see Crawford-Brown & Rattray, 2001). For example, sometime fathers started new relationships due to the long time that it took to travel on ships to the United Kingdom and made connection with family members. At other times, immigration laws changed, or the process was inordinately long, which changed the dynamics in family relationships. Importantly, migration often resulted in instability, frustration, and discriminatory practices which impacted fathers at the personal level (Pizarro & Villa, 2005). This may have negatively affected the relationships that fathers had with their children from their country of origin. Therefore, migration contributed to the imbalance in the ratio of men and women, multiple partner fertility as women shared the available males, and social fathering. Also, biological fatherlessness may have resulted due to a lack of connection with fathers who migrated.

Educational attainment is a political issue associated with economic challenges. According to United Nations Development Programme (2015), in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2014, the expected years of education was 14 years with a mean of 8.2 years (people ages 25 and older). More specifically, the expected years of education in Jamaica was 12.4 years. At the same time, illiteracy was at 8% with gross tertiary enrollment at 28% and more females (72%) than males have been receiving training as professionals, senior officials, and

technicians (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2016). Consequently, the relationship between education and economics continues to affect families in the Caribbean due to the association between education and poverty reduction. Thus, there will be economic challenges for persons with low educational attainment as appropriate education and skill are associated with good jobs and a better quality of life (United Nations Development Programme, 2015).

Generally, males from poor backgrounds and low educational attainments were more likely to become fathers when they were young (Anderson, 2009). These fathers tended to subscribe to the traditional view of male dominance, including the acceptance of the belief that paternity was necessary to prove manhood (Anderson, 2009; Brown et al., 1995). This often led to multiple fertility of males with several partners (Anderson, 2009) and their inability to fulfil their financial obligations to their children (Brown & Chevannes, 2001). In sum, cultural practices, economic challenges, migration, and educational attainment are significant macro level issues that have been contributing to fatherlessness in Afro-Caribbean families.

Systemic issues that affect family functioning. Although there are several family arrangements such as nuclear marital unions, nuclear common-law, and visiting unions, female-headed households are of significant interest given the influence that they have on fatherlessness. Data showed that female-headed households have been a predominant feature of Afro-Caribbean household compositions. For example, in 2010, these households accounted for 47% of the households in Jamaica (Planning Institute of Jamaica & Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 2012). In comparison to male-headed households, these households were often larger in size without a resident partner and included a higher number of children, adult females, and the elderly. They consumed less food compared to male-headed households, and 56% of these families were dependent on remittances and family systems for support in 2010 (Planning Institute of Jamaica,

2014). Thus, the extended family performed an active role in supporting the development of children.

The extended family frequently assumes the parenting role in cases where the biological parents were unavailable or unable based on circumstances created by issues such as migration and early parenthood. Specifically, grandmothers, grandfathers, and childless aunts played an integral role in childcare. Although this mitigates some of the negative effects of a lack biological father support (Chamberlain, 2003), it contributed to father absence. For example, negative attitudes in the relationships of fathers with their children's maternal family members may negatively affect their active involvement (Anderson, 2009).

The extended family is linked to the role of social fathers. Grandfathers, uncles, and cousins often support children's development as they serve as father figures (Chamberlain, 2003). Moreover, single mothers are often involved in other romantic or social relationships, and thus, there are visiting males who act as father figures (Chevannes, 1993). In addition, mature males in the religious community may serve as father figures. For example, fathers who were church members have been found to have higher fathering values (Anderson, 2009), which may result in them serving as social fathers. Thus, there may not be "real" single mothers in Afro-Caribbean families (see also Edin & Nelson, 2013).

Another issue in the family that influences fatherlessness is the socialization of boys. Chavannes (2001) found four important factors in Afro-Caribbean males' socialization based on studies conducted in Jamaica, Guyana, and Dominica. First, girls were socialized to be soft and warm whereas boys were socialized to take on a tough personality. Hence, there was a softness-toughness dichotomy which operated as a biological script for guiding the development of females and males.

Second, females were socialized to stay indoors or in the confines of the home, but males were expected to go outside of the confines of the home. Moreover, a sign of manhood was being able to go outside of the confines of the home without censure. Outside the home, the street or the corner was important for the final stages of male socialization through ownership and identification with a specific site. The street corner also facilitated male bonding and sexual identity through interactions with peers.

Third, manhood was acquired through sexual activity. Culturally, males were expected to engage in sexual activity at an early age through casual sex or the various forms of conjugal bonding. More importantly, impregnation was the way a young male announced his claim to manhood, and a man was privileged to engage in several approved forms of sexual relationships, including casual, multiple partners, and promiscuousness. These acts represented what it meant to be a real man. Thus, early sexual expression was often covertly encouraged by mothers as they were anxious to confirm that their sons were heterosexual, and fathers overtly encouraged their sons' sexual activity (Brown & Chevannes, 2001).

Fourth, the man was seen as the provider. His role was to provide food, clothing, education, and shelter for his spouse. When separation occurred, the expectation was that he would provide food, clothing, pay education expenses, and take care of accidental costs for the children of the previous unions (Chavannes, 2001). Consequently, men did not always accept paternity in the context of a lack of financial resources, multiple relationships, and early childbearing. In other cases, some fathers were often unable to fulfil their financial responsibilities which created tension in the relationship between them and the children's mothers (Anderson, 2009).

To summarize, the bioecological perspective is a meaningful framework for assessing the bidirectional influences of the individual and the environment on each other. According to this perspective, the various contexts of individuals' lives including the historical, economic, and political have significant influences on development. The historical context of Afro-Caribbean fathers is situated in slavery which created family structures and attitudes towards male–female relationships that have continued into contemporary society. Specifically, the aftermath of slavery is characterized by family contexts that have included a large proportion of female-headed households. The absence of fathers from their children's lives is based on many factors such as paternity solely to prove manhood, economic challenges, low educational attainment, migration, multiple partner fertility, refusal to accept paternity, and extended family support. However, other males such as grandfathers, uncles, and mothers' romantic partners may operate as social fathers (Anderson, 2009). Thus, the role of biological and/or social fathers is complex and requires the treatment of fathering and fatherlessness as a continuum.

Continuum of Fathering and Fatherlessness

Palkovitz (1997) used several categories to capture or reflect the ways in which fathers may be involved in their children's lives. Due to the many areas in which fathers may participate in their children's lives, he suggested that fathering should not be viewed as a dichotomy but as existing on a series of multiple continua from noninvolvement to involvement which include low, moderate, and high levels. This conceptualization focuses on the biological father and encompasses the behavioural, affective, and cognitive domains of fathering. Thus, the scope of Palkovitz's (1997) construct should be broadened to include social fathers who have been instrumental to how children experienced being fathered, especially for Afro-Caribbean families.

As the opposite of fathering, fatherlessness (noninvolvement of fathers) has its own complexities. Biological and/or social fatherlessness can range from very low to extremely high. For example, children who do not have any knowledge and/or connection to a biological father physically, cognitively, and affectively would be experiencing high levels of biological fatherlessness. Also, fathers who do not feel any sense of connection to their children physically, cognitively, and affectively may believe that they are significantly contributing to their children's sense of biological fatherlessness. However, this state is not static as the relationship between biological fathers and their children may go through transformations over time. Moreover, when biological fathers are absent, the potential role of social fathers makes it difficult to conclude that a child is fatherless. Thus, a child may be fatherless in many ways and to different degrees (Sinkkonen & Keinänen, 2008).

Therefore, the conceptualization of fatherlessness as a continuum is based on the premise that it is possible for children to maintain relationships with fathers or father-figures who are physically absent as well as experience being fathered in various ways by multiple fathers. Relationships with a father or father figures who are absent may be illustrated with continuous bonds theory (Stroebe & Schut, 2005). This theory was developed to explain how individuals cope with bereavement by using various strategies, such as holding on to positive memories, but it may be extended to children who can have relationships with their fathers or father figures who are no longer actively involved in their lives as the lack of relationships or aspects of the relationships represent losses. Thus, the experiences of individuals should be investigated to ascertain the levels and forms of fatherlessness that they may have encountered. These nuances may be addressed from a contextualist perspective while acknowledging the bidirectionality of influences.

Theoretical Framework

Despite the complexity of fathering and fatherlessness, children's own experiences with both nonresident fathers and social fathers have not been explored using a retrospective approach (Jayakody & Kalil, 2002). To accomplish this, the bioecological perspective (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) can facilitate attention to individuals and their contexts over time. Consideration of the ecological contexts will facilitate a greater understanding of fathering or the lack thereof in specific contexts. Moreover, the biological aspect of the perspective will facilitate greater cultural sensitivity to individual differences.

Purpose of the Study

The current study explored fathering and fatherlessness among Afro-Caribbean fathers, and Afro-Jamaican fathers in particular. Although there is a prevailing ideology of Afro-Caribbean fathers as absent, Afro-Caribbean fathers' experiences and perspectives on their own histories of being fathered by biological and/or social fathers and the impact on their development and attitude towards fathering are underresearched. At the same time, researchers often focus on Afro-Caribbean fathers with little attention to their ecological context as the environment is often narrowly conceptualized as inner-city, urban, or rural (Anderson, 2009). However, researchers should acknowledge the multiple systems within which Afro-Caribbean family members live and interact, including households, extended family, fictive kin, friends, and religious and larger community (Boyd-Franklin, 2003). Thus, the bioecological contexts of fathers need further exploration to gain a richer and deeper understanding of fathering and fatherlessness in Afro-Caribbean families.

The traditional conceptualization of absent fathers in Afro-Caribbean families is not reflective of important nuances such as the role of social fathers and the supports that the

predominantly female-headed households, a longstanding family structure, receive from extended family network and/or social fathers. Also, due to relationship dynamics, biological and/or social fathers may be involved in children's lives to varying degrees over time, and children may be connected to their biological and/or social fathers in complex ways. Importantly, the physical presence of fathers does not necessarily indicate that they are cognitively and affectively involved, nor does their physical absence indicate that they are cognitively and affectively non-involved. Thus, fathers' own experiences of biological and/or social fathering and fatherlessness and the influences on their own approach to fathering required further exploration.

The study also examined the complex family environments in which children were nurtured. Attention was on how the predominantly female-headed household structure of Afro-Caribbean families impacted the development of males and their approach to fathering. Also, fathers who were not involved with their biological children for many reasons were explicitly examined, including the various reasons and barriers that fathers experienced at various levels of the systems. Lastly, there was particular focus on fatherlessness and the lack of fathering.

The primary questions of the present study were guided by theoretical ideas that may replicate, extend, and challenge previous studies (Boyatzis, 1998) as these theoretical perspectives have not been significantly explored in the Caribbean context. Also, the exploratory nature of the study allowed for new ideas to emerge from the data (Joffe, 2012).

Research Questions

The study was guided by four primary questions including (a) how do fathers construct their experiences of being fathered by their biological and/or social fathers? (b) how do fathers construct their fathering identity as biological and social fathers? (c) how do fathers make sense

of their involvement or non-involvement in their children's development? and (d) what are fathers' perspectives on the notion of fatherlessness?

Chapter Two: Methods

Thematic Analysis Methodology

The current study used a qualitative methodology as it is suitable for exploring the ways in which individuals make sense of the world and their experiences (Willig, 2013). A qualitative approach also aims to obtain comprehensive and complex interpretations of the phenomena that are located socially and historically (Joffe, 2012). According to Crotty (1998), the theoretical framework that guides qualitative investigation should encompass epistemology (e.g., constructivism), theoretical perspective (e.g., social constructionist perspective), methodology (e.g., thematic analysis), and methods (e.g., interview and questionnaire).

The variety of qualitative methodologies can be incorporated into two groups (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The first group encompasses methodologies that are guided by a particular epistemological framework. Within the second group, the methodologies are not guided by any epistemological perspective and may be compatible with diverse epistemological approaches. Thematic analysis (TA), the specific methodology that guided the current study, may be used with diverse epistemological perspectives due to its theoretical flexibility.

Thematic analysis has recently been recognized as a methodology that can be used on its own (Joffe, 2012). Scholars have acknowledged that TA is applicable in attempts to recognize, analyze, and document patterns or themes within a dataset. Also, the dataset can be organized, described, and interpreted (based on the research questions) using the proposed guidelines for analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Moreover, TA is appropriate for examining research questions that are based on diverse epistemological perspectives, but it is regarded as particularly suitable for exploring questions such as how individuals conceptualize or think about certain social phenomena (Willig, 2013). Thus, thematic methodology was appropriate for the current study on

Afro-Caribbean fathers' perspectives on being fathered and how they made sense of their fathering experiences.

Although TA is theoretically flexible, the assumptions or epistemology of the researcher should be explicit (Holloway & Todres, 2003). The importance of making one's epistemology explicit supports the view that qualitative research should include epistemology in its theoretical framework (Crotty, 1998). Importantly, the epistemological approach of the researcher may be addressed in connection with the research question(s) (Willig, 2013).

The four major questions of the present study were influenced by several assumptions. One assumption is that fathers are active agents who construct meanings that influence how they parent their biological and/or social children. It is also assumed that the sociocultural contexts of fathers affect their perspectives on fatherhood. Another assumption is that the ecological systems (e.g., family, peers, and neighbourhoods) in which fathers live both influence and are influenced by fathers. Finally, fathers and the researcher can co-construct fathers' views on fathering and fatherlessness. These assumptions are consistent with a constructivism/social constructionism epistemology.

Whereas constructivism is the belief that individuals' perceptions affect their interpretation which, in turn, influence how they relate to the world, social constructionism (an extension of constructivism) is the perspective that the contexts in which individuals live influence their perceptions (Nichols, 2006). Two of the fundamental tenets of constructivism are: (a) knowledge is actively constructed by the knower (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998), and (b) knowledge is adaptive to the knower's ordered experiential world, based on social interactions (Cherryholmes, 1993). With the inclusion of social constructionism, emphasis was given to the social construction of knowledge based on three assumptions: (a) taken-for-granted knowledge

should be approached from a critical perspective, (b) understanding of the world and the categories and concepts that are utilized are both historically and culturally specific, and (c) social processes are responsible for sustaining knowledge as daily social interactions construct shared knowledge (Burr, 1995). Generally, knowledge is considered relative as there are multiple subjective realities, but it is possible for a researcher to access the individuals' realities.

The attempt to understand and analyze fathering or a lack thereof in Afro-Caribbean families was regarded as a sense-making undertaking, as reality was viewed as constructed in the context of culture and situations (Falkheimer & Heide, 2006). Thus, the social constructionist perspective was used as the guiding theory. Also, the bioecological contexts of the individuals' development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) were regarded as critical in attempts to gain a better understanding of the issues explored.

Data were collected using semi-structured interviews. According to Hays and Singh (2011), semi-structured interviews are a form of interviewing that uses an interview protocol. This provides the interviewee with more control in the structure and process of the interview after the start of the interview than is the case of structured interviews. Also, semi-structured interviewing, as compared with structured interviewing, allows the researcher to probe for deeper understanding of the participants' perspective of the phenomena. Semi-structured interviews also facilitate a perspective that is unique to each participant's experiences. However, one disadvantage of semi-structured interviews is that the data collection experiences are different for each participant, but the inclusion of the voices of as many participants as necessary to present a deeper understanding of the phenomena compensates. This form of interviewing is also regarded as most culturally appropriate (Esterberg, 2002). Importantly, the semi-structured interview is

considered a suitable method of data collection for TA, useful for generating materials that may be analyzed for content and meaning (Willig, 2013).

Participants

Sampling and sample size. The study was guided by purposive sampling as the inclusion criteria were determined before the commencement of data collection to ensure information-rich cases of the phenomena. Specifically, both criterion sampling and snowball sampling were employed (Hays & Singh, 2011). Participants were selected based on the following criteria: (a) Afro-Jamaican fathers between 25 and 40 years old, (b) living in the Kingston and St. Andrew metropolitan areas of Jamaica, and (c) the biological father of at least one child in middle childhood (between the ages of 5 and 12 years old; Collins, Madsen, Susman-Stillman, 2002). The age range for fathers was chosen to facilitate the exploration of the views of fathers with children in middle childhood to ensure that the fathers had sufficient fathering experiences. Also, males who are biological fathers of children in middle childhood should be able to reflect on their life histories in relation to their experiences of being fathered (or a lack of thereof) and their own personal experiences of fathering. These fathers are likely to have social children which allows for the simultaneous exploration of biological and social fathering. The sample size was based on the TA paradigm and tradition which emphasized that a substantial number of interviews are required (Joffe, 2012).

Demographics. The participants were 24 Afro-Jamaican fathers, between 27 to 37 years old ($M = 33.71$, $SD = 3.36$) (see Table 1 for demographics). Their identified child in middle childhood ranged from 6 to 12 years ($M = 9.08$ years, $SD = 1.72$ years). Of these children, 13 were males (54.20%) and 11 (45.80%) were females. The number of biological children that the fathers had ranged from 1 to 4 ($M = 2.46$, $SD = 1.10$). Six of the fathers (25.00%) had one child,

six fathers (25.00%) had two children, seven fathers (29.20%) had three children, and five fathers (20.80%) had four children. A majority of the fathers, (20, 83.30%) reported that they were living with at least one of their biological children.

A number of fathers reported that they had social children, as thirteen fathers (54.20%) viewed themselves as social fathers. Ten fathers (41.7%) did not believe that they were social fathers and one father (4.20%) was not sure if he was a social father. The number of social children ranged from zero to 23 ($M = 1.92$, $SD = 4.70$). Eighteen fathers (75%) did not live with any social children, five fathers (20.80%) lived with one social child, and one father (4.20%) lived with two social children.

Regarding relationship status, 11 fathers reported that they were married (45.80%), three were in common-law relationships (12.50%), seven were single (29.20%), two were divorced (8.30%), and one was separated (4.20%). All of the fathers reported that they were religious; 23 fathers (95.83%) and one father (4.17%) identified as Christians and Rastafarian, respectively. Only one father (4.17%) did not attend religious meetings, as 12 fathers (50%) attended weekly, three fathers (12.5%) attended twice monthly, and eight fathers (33.30%) attended on special occasions.

More than half of the fathers (15) lived in inner-city or low-income communities (62.50%) and nine fathers (37.50%) lived in middle-class communities. All of the participants reported that they were born in Jamaica: 15 fathers (62.50%) indicated that they were born in Kingston, and one father (4.20%) was born in St. Andrew. The remaining eight fathers (33.33%) were born in seven other parishes across rural Jamaica.

For their current living arrangements, 50.00% of fathers (12) reported renting an apartment/house, 12.50% (3) owned their house, 4.20% (1) leased his house, 16.70% (4) were

living with family or friends and did not pay rent, and 16.70% (4) had other living arrangements (i.e., living with friend, spouse's family house, housing provided by place of employment, and family land but separate house).

The number of persons living in households (including fathers) ranged from 1 to 7 ($M = 3.96$, $SD = 1.63$). With respect to the identified child, eight (41.33%) lived in nuclear families, five (20.83%) in extended families, five (20.83%) in single-father families, one (4.20%) in another family arrangement with father, and five (20.83%) did not live with their fathers. The highest level of education in the household, excluding the fathers' education, ranged from less than grade 7 to graduate professional degree. Specifically, four (16.70%) of the households had less than grade 7 education; five (20.80%) had grade 7-9 education; six (25.00%) had grade 10-13 education, three (12.50%) had some college; one (4.20%) had college diploma or associate degree; two (8.30%) had university degree; two (8.30%) had graduate professional degree, and one (4.20%) of the fathers lived alone. Fathers' highest level of education ranged from grade 7-9 to graduate professional degree in which three (12.50%) had grade 7-9 education; eight (33.33%) had grade 10-13 education; five (20.80%) had some college education; two (8.30%) had college diploma or associate degree; three (12.50%) had college or university degree; and three (12.50%) had graduate professional degree.

For income, three (12.50%) of the fathers had no income, and three (12.50%) earned below the minimum wage of \$2,976 (CAD) per annum. Apart from the three fathers who were unemployed, 21 fathers (87.50%) had a range of occupations from labourer to university lecturer. Of employed fathers, 18 (75%) had one job; two (8.30%) had two jobs; and one (4.20%) had three jobs. Also, 18 (75%) of fathers who were employed worked full-time, one (4.20%) worked part-time, and two (8.20%) worked both part-time and full-time. Overall, the SES of the fathers

using income, education, and occupation indicated that 11 (45.83%) were in the lower-class and 13 (54.17%) were in the middle-class.

Procedures

Recruitment. Approval for the study was received from the Office of Research, University of Guelph (see Appendix A). The participants were recruited from the urban area of Kingston and St. Andrew, Jamaica. I emailed letters of explanation and promotional flyers to stakeholders such as community leaders, business operators, school principals, and religious leaders which explained the purposes of the study, benefits of the study, inclusion criteria, and ethical considerations (see Appendix B and C). Stakeholders announced the study in meetings and sent the information to persons in their network. Flyers were also placed on notice boards for interested persons to contact me. Potential participants either initiated contact with me by e-mail, text message, or telephone call or I contacted participants who indicated their interest through the stakeholders and consented to be contacted. The stakeholders informed me about potential participants through either email, telephone, or text message. Also, fathers who participated in the study recruited other fathers (snowballing).

When participants were initially contacted, they were screened to ensure that they met the inclusion criteria. Next, I explained that the purposes of the study were: (a) to explore fathering and fatherlessness among Afro-Caribbean fathers, (b) examine the roles of social fathers and extended family supports in Afro-Caribbean families, and (c) to better understand the structures and processes of Afro-Caribbean families. Overall, the aim of the study was to gain greater insights into fathers' experiences growing up with or without their biological fathers and how they fathered biological and social children. Participants were also informed that there were benefits associated with the study such as an opportunity to reflect on fathering, help to challenge

or change the deficit literature on Black fathers, and advance the knowledge of Black fathering among researchers. However, the risk involved was that fathers could possibly have difficult memories and upsetting emotions. They were also informed that their participation was voluntary, and they could withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences.

Participants were further informed that the time commitment was one to two hours for the semi-structured interview and as an appreciation for participating in the interview, each participant would be given a cash amount of \$1,000 JMD (\$10 CAD). I informed the participants that the interviews would be voice recorded and then transcribed verbatim. All identifying information would be removed from quotations and fathers would be given pseudonyms. Then, the participants and I agreed on a time and place for the interview. Finally, I made arrangements for the participants to receive the consent forms and the demographic questionnaires (see Appendices D and E). Participants also had the option of reviewing and completing the forms with me on the day of the interview.

Demographic questionnaire. Participants completed the questionnaire either independently or with my assistance that took about 20 minutes. The questionnaire included their name, age, number of biological children, number of social children, religion, residential status with children, family structure, marital status, educational attainment, occupation, employment status, part-time or full-time employment, income, and ages of children. An identification number (ID) was assigned to each participant.

Semi-structured interview. Individual interviews were conducted either at the participants' workplace (10); home (9); and other locations such as office, street, and park (5). The interviews were digitally recorded ($M = 95.13$ minutes, $SD = 19.19$, ranged from 68 to 145

minutes), and undergraduate research assistants, a professional transcription company, or myself subsequently transcribed the interviews verbatim. I used the interview protocol to explore fathers' views on fathering and fatherlessness (see Appendix F). Participants were asked the questions in the same order, but the I used participants' response as the basis for probing where necessary (e.g., What do you mean by X?, Can you give me an example?, Anything else?). Fathers were asked about their: (a) childhood experiences with their biological and/or social fathers (e.g., "Can you describe the roles and responsibilities of the men who cared for you up to the age of 12? Can you give me some examples?"; Questions 1-3), (b) fathering experiences with biological and social children (e.g., What are your roles and responsibilities in the family?"; Questions 4-8), and (c) perspectives on fatherlessness ("How would you define fatherlessness?"; Question 9). The questions allowed me to explore the fathers' experiences of being fathered by biological and/or social fathers, their experiences of biological and social fathering, and their views on fatherlessness.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis can be used to recognize and organize the patterns in both the content and meaning of qualitative data (Willig, 2013). In a high-quality TA, themes are patterns of meaning that are identified in a dataset and facilitate analysis as they describe the bulk of the data (Joffe, 2012). In addition, themes represent important constellations in the dataset that address aspects of the research question(s) that are identified in a dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Moreover, the meaning of a theme should be based on the epistemology and research questions that underpin the study. In the current study, the identified themes represented the fathers' conceptualizations of fathering and their enactment of fathering or a lack thereof.

Furthermore, themes were identified both deductively (theoretical ideas based on the literature) and inductively (derived from the raw data). Although some scholars advocate selecting one approach for any given analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), other scholars have argued that both should be utilized (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Joffe, 2012). Whereas theoretically identified themes allow the researcher to replicate, extend, or refute previous studies (Boyatzis, 1998), themes identified inductively allow the investigator to include themes that naturally occur in the dataset which is one of the hallmarks of qualitative studies (Joffe, 2012). Thus, the dataset was approached with knowledge of previous studies and an openness to new concepts that were data driven.

Although there are several useful guidelines for conducting TA, the various aspects of the process are emphasized in the step-by-step recommendations of several scholars (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Joffe, 2012). In this study, some of these guidelines were combined. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), TA is an iterative and recursive process with procedures to ensure that the method of analysis is rigorously applied to the data. Therefore, eight sequential steps were utilized in this study. First, I became familiar with the data corpus through immersion by actively reading the transcripts several times (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This process was active as I sought to gain a good knowledge of the depth and breadth of the dataset with attention to meanings and patterns. Also, I took notes and marked ideas for coding as a part of the development of a codebook, which formed the conceptual tool that was used to categorize, understand, and interpret the dataset (Joffe, 2012).

Second, codes were generated based on ideas from extensive reading of the data corpus and theoretical ideas (Joffe, 2012). This list of codes was comprised with notes on what made the ideas interesting (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Also, the list of codes was presented in a frame with

the name of each code, definition of what should be classified under each code, and examples of materials that should be a part of each code. The initial codes generated were: (a) being father and fathering (21 codes), (b) reasons for meeting or not meeting expectations (23 codes), (c) fatherlessness (11 codes), and (d) challenges and barriers (34 codes). Moreover, the codes generated were applied to the entire dataset (Joffe, 2012). Also, special consideration was given to perspectives that departed from the dominant views (Braun & Clarke, 2006). At the same time, there was openness to adjustment of the coding frame in order to be consistent with qualitative investigation (Willig, 2013).

Third, to facilitate dependability, the coding frame was tested for its applicability to the data corpus. To accomplish this in a rigorous manner, I coded five (20.83%) of the transcripts and an independent coder (graduate or undergraduate research assistant) tested the codes on the segments that I identified. Disagreements were resolved through negotiation whereby I agreed with the research assistant or conversely.

Fourth, the entire dataset was coded using the coding frame. The data was coded or categorized with the use of MAXQDA software. This facilitated more accurate coding of the data and ease of comparison. Also, it was easier to examine patterns of codes and linkages between codes as well as sequences and co-occurrences (Joffe, 2012).

Fifth, themes were generated by examining the codes. This included sorting codes into potential themes and collating codes to identify themes that represented the data on a broader level both inductively and deductively (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). For being fathered and fathering, a theoretical framework was used to explore the codes for major themes. This generated three major themes that aligned with theoretical ideas, and one major theme was generated inductively. Finally, subthemes were further utilized to categorize the coded segments.

Regarding fatherlessness, themes were generated inductively as there was no theoretical framework from previous research. Ideas were also generated based on limitations in the literature regarding the phenomenon. After refining the codes and themes, five major themes were used to represent the data.

With attention to challenges and barriers, seven major themes were used to categorize the 34 codes that were initially generated. After refinement of codes and labelling of the themes, the initial themes were regarded as reflective of the dataset.

In exploring the reasons for non-involvement of fathers, theoretical ideas were used to generate four codes based on determinants of father involvement in the literature. The data mapped onto these codes, and the codes were then refined into themes.

Sixth, the themes and subthemes were revised based on support provided by the data and the context of extracts. Finally, themes and subthemes were decided based on internal coherence and consistency and how well they represented the dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Seventh, the identified themes were named and defined. Thus, themes were refined and assigned names that were concise and effective in allowing the reader to have an immediate sense of what the particular theme addressed. Also, the themes were defined so that the essence of each theme was presented as well as the aspects of the data that each theme represented and its meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In the final stage, the aim was to produce a report that represented the bulk of the data. Analysis was grounded in the data with the use of data extracts. Thus, the final analysis and write-up included sufficient evidence of the themes within the dataset. Moreover, thick-descriptions of themes supported by quotations were used to establish rigour based on confirmability (Rice & Ezzy, 1999). Themes also supported the arguments in relation to the

research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thus, careful attention was given to nuances in high frequency themes and differences in contextual influences (Joffe, 2012).

Rigour and Trustworthiness

Consistent with qualitative methodology, standards for establishing trustworthiness and rigour were employed. According to Hays and Singh (2011), the trustworthiness of qualitative research can be judged on the basis of five components of rigour. More specifically, credibility, dependability, transferability, confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and authenticity (Guba & Lincoln, 1989) are regarded as appropriate steps to maximize rigour. Rigour is the basis on which the researcher demonstrates integrity and competence.

Credibility. The credibility or believability of the study was established by ensuring that the data represented the participants' views. Lincoln (1995) suggested a number of strategies such as qualitative interviewing, peer debriefing, and audit trail. In the current study, credibility was based on my training and experience in conducting interviews. I also listened to the recordings and checked all the transcriptions. In addition, an audit trail was kept of the research process and procedures such as demographic data, coding frames, and intercoder agreement. For intercoder agreement (Campbell, Quincy, Osserman, & Pedersen, 2013), I coded five of the transcriptions and highlighted each coding segment. Next, I removed my codes and either the graduate or my undergraduate research assistant coded the segments. Then we discussed the codes and after negotiated agreement, we achieved 92% to 100% agreement. Finally, credibility was enhanced through reflexivity as I engaged in memoing my interpretations of the data based on my experiences of being fathered and fathering in the Jamaican context. Moreover, consultation with the advisory committee and peers ensured that the fathers' perspectives were

presented. Also, semi-structured interviews were conducted which allowed me to ask clarifying and probing questions to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' perspectives.

Dependability. The dependability of the study was based on the documentation that showed that I took steps to ensure that similar findings were linked to similar studies. Also, I ensured that members of the advisory committee agreed on the evidence presented in support of the themes. Moreover, a process of auditing was utilized to establish that the process of research was logical with traceable and well documented procedures. The audit trail included data, methods, decisions, and end products such as coding frames and coded segments, and themes in MAXQDA software.

Transferability. In the context of qualitative research, transferability refers to the generalizability of inquiry with respect to case-to-case transfer (Tobin & Begley, 2004). This was accomplished by providing detailed description of the research process. Also, I took steps to ensure that middle-class and lower-class fathers were meaningfully represented in the study (Seale & Silverman, 1997). Finally, selection of participants was based on inclusion criteria.

Confirmability. Establishing that the findings genuinely reflect the perspectives of the participants in the study is referred to as confirmability. This was demonstrated through thick description whereby a behaviour or occurrence was placed within the context of important factors such as individual (e.g., psychological and affective) and socioeconomic (e.g., cultural practices). Also, a reflexivity statement was provided, and data extracts were used to support the analysis of participants' views. Furthermore, my emic perspective was held in check by the etic view of my advisor. Thus, attempts were made to establish that the data and interpretations of findings were not my own imagination.

Authenticity. According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), authenticity is demonstrated by showing a range of different realities (fairness). This is regarded as a theoretical issue (Hays & Singh, 2011). Ontological authenticity was demonstrated by representing the participants' perspectives authentically so that the audience can get a rich understanding of the participants' understanding of the nature of the phenomenon. Specifically, deviant cases were analyzed and MAXQDA software was used to assist with data analysis so that occurrences of cases were systematically represented (Seale & Silverman, 1997).

Chapter Three: Results

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 24 fathers. Specifically, four areas were explored including: (a) construction of biological and social fathering and fathering identity, (b) fathers' involvement with their own children and reasons for non-involvement, (c) challenges or barriers in fathering, and (d) fathers' construction of fatherlessness. To protect the fathers' identities, pseudonyms were used.

Construction of Biological and/or Social Fathering and Fathering Identity

The fathers were asked to discuss their experiences of being fathered by biological and/or social fathers and their experiences as biological and social fathers. Of the 24 fathers, only 10 regarded their biological fathers as one of their primary caregivers when they were children. However, 16 of fathers indicated that their fathers were involved when they were children. In their construction of social fathering, 21 fathers reported on eight types of social fathers. The types of men included: stepfather (9 fathers), uncle (7), church leader (4), friend (4), grandfather (3), mentor (1), uncle-in-law (1), and church member (1). Fifteen fathers experienced social fathering before they were 13 years old. Of the remaining fathers, social fathering started during adolescents (3) and adulthood (3), and three reported that they did not have any social fathers. With reference to their own fathering, 17 of the fathers revealed that they were both biological and social fathers.

In reflecting on their experiences of being fathered and as fathers, these fathers described various experiences that encompassed four involvement domains that represented major themes, including: (a) behavioural involvement, (b) affective involvement, (c) cognitive involvement, and (d) spiritual involvement. In the behavioural domain, fathers discussed the observable and quantifiable behaviours of being fathered that included 11 subthemes: (a) accessibility, (b) teaching and guiding, (c) taking care of needs, (d) showing interest, (e) communicating with

children, (f) monitoring, (g) protecting, (h) child-related activities, (i) general engagement, (j) errands, and (k) leadership. However, leadership was not discussed as a role in their construction of social fathering. Affective involvement was described as the love, warmth, and affection that they experienced as children as well as showed their children. Cognitive involvement was constructed as the philosophy that guided their fathers' thought processes towards them when they were children and their own psychological support of their children. For spiritual involvement, the focus was on the impartation of religious principles and/or traditions by their own fathers and as the spiritual support that they afforded their own children and/or family. Collectively, the four domains were the major themes that mapped the salience of roles and responsibilities that fathers constructed in their experiences of being fathered and as fathers (see Table 2).

There were similarities and differences in themes that the fathers discussed in their experience of being fathered and as fathers (see Table 3). First, the similarities in the themes that the fathers reflected on ranged from 22.22% to 80.00%. Specifically, there was convergence on 12 themes and/or subthemes including: (a) taking care of needs (20), (b) teaching/guiding (14), (c) affective involvement (13), (d) availability (10), (e) showing interest (9), (f) child-related activities, (g) protection (5), (h) communicating with child (3), (i) general engagement (2), (j) monitoring (2), (k) leadership (1), and (l) cognitive involvement (1). None of the fathers converged on two of the themes, errands (only for being fathered) and spiritual involvement (for both being fathered and fathering by fathers in different families). Second, there were differences in the themes as the fathers either did not mention some themes in both their experience of being fathered and as fathers or they added new themes. Specifically, 22 fathers did not mention some themes that they discussed in their experience of being fathered when they reflected on their own

fathering. Conversely, 16 fathers included themes that they did not discuss as a part of being fathered when they focused on themselves as fathers.

Behavioural involvement. In the behavioural domain, the fathers focused on the presence of their fathers in their lives and the various activities in which they were involved, both directly and/or indirectly, in ensuring their growth and development. The findings on being fathered by biological and social fathers and the fathers' own fathering experiences are discussed collectively (see Table 2).

Accessibility. The fathers described the accessibility of their fathers as well as being accessible to their children as a prominent feature of fathering. Twenty-three fathers valued accessibility with their biological fathers, of which 14 fathers with their social fathers. In reference to themselves as fathers, 12 emphasized accessibility to their own children. Regarding their biological fathers, accessibility referred to physical presence as it was necessary for developing meaningful relationships. As Kevin explained: "I wanted my father to be around me; stand up and around at all times. Live with my mother even now..." (single (S), lower class (LC), 1 biological child (BC)). Kevin's emphasis was on continuous presence which was a prerequisite for fathering.

Presence was possible even when fathers were non-residential. To justify his claim of non-residential fathering, Adams used his own parenting experiences in complex situations. He outlined that he had three children with three mothers and was currently living with only one of his children. At the same time, he was present in the life of his son who was not living with him. Thus, he had expected that his father would have been there although he did not live with him. He stated: "Be there, you don't have to live in my house to be there. No, because I don't live with my son now, but I am still there" (Married (M), LC, 3 BC, 4 social children (SC)).

However, one father discussed paternity identity as a prerequisite for accessibility. Paternal identity refers to the knowledge of one's biological father and how it affected identity and/or sense of belonging. Sam, who did not meet his father until he was 17 years old, reflected on his experiences. He stated that paternity identity was essential to his understanding of himself. Consequently, he could not move on successfully in constructing his identity as there were aspects about himself that he could not resolve. He emphasized:

That I am identifiable with something, with an image with my dad...an identity, to kind of connect myself with a root, so to speak than just to be existing in limbo. I said okay, I'm here, but who am I really? Who am I to emulate? What is my connection? (M, middle class (MC), 1 BC, 5 SC)

With attention to their experiences of social fathering, the fathers emphasized that it was important for social fathers to be accessible. The accessibility of social fathers, especially when biological fathers were not available, attenuated the negative effects of father absence. Being accessible meant that social fathers treated them like their sons. When this happened, fathers did not feel that they were at a disadvantage. Lloyd described the positive benefits of social fathers as he did not grow up with his biological father, yet he did not lack anything. His grandfather gave him what he was looking for in a father. Also, his maternal uncle was like a second father to him. He stated: "...I was definitely looking for that [being present] from him [biological father] but I did not get it from him, but I did not miss out on all of that same way because I had my grandfather around to fill that gap." Speaking of his uncle, he said: "He was there for me in so many different ways. He was definitely like a second father to me" (M, LC, 1 BC, 1 SC).

However, being accessible was not sufficient. Fathers needed to participate in their lives in meaningful ways. As Ricky described, passive presence was not appreciated. He remarked:

“He [biological father] does not really help like to wash, clean, cook, and anything. You just see him around and that’s it” (S, LC, 4 BC, 3 SC). Thus, being accessible provided the foundation for other levels of involvement.

With attention to their own fathering, the fathers focused on the ways in which they attempted to be physically present in their children’s lives. When they were present, they were able to contribute to their children’s lives in various ways. Peter reflected on how his desire to be there for his children influenced his decision on marriage and commitment to one partner. He remarked:

So, hence the move for me to get married and to keep one partner that we can all [live together], so they can all grow up knowing their father and not be the type of children to say that my father lives over there and I live here. He only comes around once a week. I’m there all the time. They grow and see me. (M, LC, 2 BC)

However, there were times when fathers were challenged in their attempts to be present despite their desire to be accessible to their children. One father narrated the difficulties that he encountered, specifically, having conflicts in the community where his child resided. Ricky said: “No physical presence or anything like that because I can’t really go over Sea Town, so only if she comes over here because a newborn... [I can’t go over Sea Town because] I had to disrespect somebody over there” (S, LC, 4 BC, 3 SC).

Another father discussed the challenges that he encountered in being there physically because of distance and the lack of resources. He said:

Because when I was in a better job I could go there back and forth, but I cannot go there because if I go there I won’t be maintaining my children here in Kingston as I would

have to use all the money that I would have to maintain my children here in Kingston.

(Mark, M, LC, 4 BC, 1 SC)

Teaching and guiding. For teaching and guiding, the focus was on the direct and indirect ways in which their fathers socialized, educated, or trained them when they were young. This theme also included the strategies that the fathers currently used to socialize their own children. The role of teaching and guiding was linked to their biological fathers (19), social fathers (20), and their own fathering (13). Fathers regarded their fathers as role models who facilitated the acquisition of knowledge and skills as well as provided appropriate guidance. With attention to biological fathers, their role in teaching and guiding was important in preparing them for life and to become good fathers. One father who did not grow up with his father and had a stepfather who did not play a major role in his life, explained: “I wanted somebody to look up to, to teach me, and to guide me along the way. Because one day I would have become a father so therefore I wanted to know what’s it...” (Adams, M, LC, 3 BC, 4 SC). Similarly, Moses who grew with his maternal uncle who treated him like a son stated:

I think that that is the role of a father...to guide them, and show them, let them know about life. Teach them about life experience, and put them on the right path, right. So, they can learn from you, as a father. (S, MC, 2 BC)

For social fathering, teaching and guiding was most salient in fathers’ construction of the roles and responsibilities of their social fathers. This focused on the provision of guidance that helped them to understand right from wrong and teaching that facilitated their holistic development. Teaching and guiding was even more crucial when biological fathers were not actively involved. Omar contrasted his experiences with his stepfather and grandfather. He regarded his stepfather as a bad role model as he recalled a bad experience in which he struck his

stepfather very hard. Specifically, his stepfather was sharpening a machete and threatening to chop his mother with it. He voiced the following: “My stepfather and I could not get along. I ended up knocking him out one of the times” (common-law, (CL), LC, 2 BC). However, he had a positive relationship with his grandfather who taught and guided him, which served as a positive force in his life. He stated:

He is a disciplined man. He taught me things that I would never forget sometimes. He taught me how to attire myself, upkeep myself. How to deal with people, have manners to people, you know. So, those things are great things. Those responsibilities I look on as great things because maybe if he was not there to teach me, I probably would be dead by now. Maybe I would be lost. I would have grown wild and vile. I swear. (CL, LC, 2 BC)

As fathers, they emphasized the various approaches that they used to strengthen their children’s social competence and personal growth. These approaches were in the areas of: (a) offering academic support, (b) providing informational support, (c) disciplining, (d) instilling values, (e) encouraging personal development, and (f) facilitating the development of life skills.

Offering academic support. Offering academic support focused on the ways in which some fathers (6) facilitated their children’s academic achievement. For example, some fathers read to their children, taught them subjects like mathematics and drawing, and offered general assistance with homework. Daniel explained: “Reading to the children, teaching things like drawing or math or anything that Kate is unable to or she feels that I am better able to teach” (M, MC, 4 BC). Similarly, Clive emphasized the importance of giving priority to academics. He remarked: “Pressure them on the book work just the same... Yeah, make sure that their book work is done; make sure that they are in their books. Sit down with them and read with them” (S, LC, 1 BC).

Providing informational support. Providing informational support focused on the attempts of the fathers (6) to facilitate a positive life course for their children by providing relevant or meaningful information. The fathers wanted to ensure that their children were engaged in activities that would have positive influence on them such as the kind of music or movies. The fathers also talked about experiences and lessons to prevent their children from making similar mistakes. Also, fathers provided correction where necessary. Gary remarked: “I tried to make her know that certain music and movies are not for her. Certain things are for adults, so stick to children things. I have to make her understand what is what” (S, LC, 3 BC). Clive further explained: “Anywhere you got mash up and made an error came into your thing you are going to try to guide them that the same thing doesn’t reach them; they do not end up in the same path” (S, LC, 1 BC).

Disciplining. Disciplining referred to the utilization of consequences for teaching or training. Three fathers emphasized the role that they played as disciplinarians. For one father, it was important to set rules with consequences that were consistently implemented. Barry explained:

So, whenever I am disciplining him I tell him why, right. And, anytime I promised him punishment based on whatever task that he did that I warned him before. I told him why... Even if it is days after, I carried it out because I want him to understand that when I talk to him I mean exactly what I say. The discipline that I provide is somewhat different from that of his mother... Some issues that she may experience I don’t experience those things because he knows that my rules are different. And, he actually said...daddy I know how to behave when I come to your house. I know your rules... (divorced (D), MC, 1 BC 1 SC)

Instilling values. Instilling values encompassed the social expectations that the fathers were seeking to help their children to meet. Following social convention was important for two fathers as they wanted to ensure that their children were practicing important values. Curtis emphasized the importance of traditional values. He said: “Yeah, teach them a lot of things especially respect for adults, to listen [obedience], and not to tell lie [honesty and integrity]” (CL, LC, 4 BC, 3 SC).

Also, responsibility was a value that was instilled by one father who believed that it was important in preparing his child for future parenting. Clive said:

Teach him about responsibility. If it is even an animal or something for which he has to care. So, you see when he gets big and get a child, he would have already known about that...how to take care of things. (S, LC, 1 BC)

Encouraging personal development. The focus was on the efforts of fathers to help their children to master aspects of their personal lives. One father mentioned that he taught his child to be responsible for his belief(s) and action(s) that could have personal consequences. Clive remarked: “You see me, proper hygiene and those things, self-esteem and all of those things” (S, LC, 1 BC).

Facilitating the development of life skills. Facilitating the development of life skills focused on the skills that the fathers assisted their children to master so that they would be able to meaningfully go through life. One father articulated the importance of helping his child to develop problem-solving and decision-making skills. He believed that these skills would empower his child to avoid consequences that could result from the child’s failure to operate based on social conventions. Also, it was important to facilitate the development of his child’s ability to postpone gratification. Clive explained:

So, you teach him, show him the right from the wrong, and if he does this, this is what is going to happen and if he does not do it what is going to happen. Show him that he has choices, not always but in certain things he has choices. In certain things, he is not going to have any choice. Teach him what is pressure; that is the first thing you teach him.

What is pressure, severe pressure I am talking too, I am not talking any pressure. Teach him things to have and when he does not have to do without. That is a mental thing. As we would call it, you have to learn how to hold out. So, when you have it you have and when you don't have it you do without it and work to get it back. (S, LC, 1 BC)

Taking care of needs. For taking care of needs, the emphasis was on what their fathers did directly to them to meet their physical needs. Also, the ways in which they provided for their own children and/or families' needs was emphasized. With reference to biological fathers, fathers were regarded as responsible for the physical wellbeing of the family. This included taking care of present needs (19) and anticipated needs (4). In contrast, for social fathers, 11 fathers only focused on present needs as there was no concern about them making preparations for their future. However, regarding their own fathering, 21 fathers focused on their provision of instrumental support for both present and future needs of their children and/or families. For biological fathers, the fathers believed that their fathers were responsible for ensuring that they had a good quality of life so that they would not have difficulties later in their lives. First, their fathers were responsible for providing, especially financially. For example, Eaton, who grew up with both parents, explained: "My father was there but his main thing was anything I needed physically was there..." (M, MC, 3 BC). Daniel also remarked that the main role of his father was to provide. He said: "So, he [my father] was also the primary breadwinner" (M, MC, 4 BC). In contrast, Omar, who did not grow up with his father, described how he was disappointed in

not receiving financial support from his father even to pay for his high school external examinations. He stated:

At one time, when I was in high school just little before [I had to do my exams], one of my aunts, his sister, brought me to him one time when I was about 15 or 16 just as I was about to do CXC [Caribbean Examination Council]. And when I went there you hear what the man told me, “he can’t take up what he can’t manage.” (CL, LC, 2 BC)

Second, biological fathers were viewed as responsible for planning for their future needs when they were children. This was to ensure that they had a good start in life and to mitigate negative outcomes. Thus, the preparations that these fathers experienced as children became the foundation for their future success. For example, Barry explained that not growing up with his father and living with relatives who treated him badly (e.g., attended school barefooted and hustled [itinerant vending to get food]), made him conclude that he needed an active father to give him a good start. He provided the following commentary:

I wish if...I had parents or a father who could have provided a start for me, you understand, so that I don’t have to come and struggle and all of that – some sort of preparation you know would have been put in place and so forth. (D, MC, 1 BC, 1 SC)

With attention to social fathers, these fathers discussed how their social fathers were responsible for their daily needs, not on making preparations for the future. For example, Lloyd who grew up with his grandfather, stated: “His responsibility was to provide for me in terms of food, clothing, and shelter” (M, LC, 1 BC, 1 SC). Similarly, Wayne who also was raised by his stepfather remarked: “He took care of us very well. He was the one who clothed me, provided food, everything. Always provided lunch money to go to school and all of that...great stepdad” (S, LC, 2 BC, 2 SC).

As fathers, providing for their children included resources to attend school, food, clothing, shelter, health insurance, and paying the bills. They regarded themselves as ultimately responsible for providing financially. Earl explained: “As you know a man provides, the breadwinner. Even if he gets help from his spouse, but he feels that a man should provide.” (M, MC, 2 BC, 2 SC). Peter further explained that his father did not care for him, so he is following the example of his mother as he attempted to provide for his children. He said:

Well, I am the sole provider now, you know. The same type of role that my mother used to play when I was growing up I am now playing that. Trying to be that father I never had to my children who I never had for myself, yes.” (M, LC, 2 BC)

Showing interest. Showing interest referred to fathers’ perspectives on the interest that their fathers showed in their growth and development during childhood. It also included the deliberate efforts of the fathers to support the growth and development of their own children. Showing interest was related to both biological (13), social (8), and their own fathering (13). The interests that the participants’ fathers showed in their wellbeing were revealed in various ways such as being good supporters of their childhood activities. Pele said: “When I had match [competitive soccer games] he was there watching and supporting me” (CL, LC, 3 BC). Also, their fathers showed interest by behaving in ways that reflected genuine concern for their wellbeing even when, in hindsight, their fathers did not meet all the criteria of good fathering. Bryan explained: “He’s a concerned father. Wasn’t the best father, but I mean you know? So, you know I guess, he tried his best...” (M, MC, 3 BC, 1 SC). However, some fathers bemoaned that their biological fathers did not show any interest in their lives. For example, Ricky stated:

Somebody to ask you what’s going on or if you are alright. What happened today? I am not talking about someone who is questioning you to get to know your business, but

someone who is questioning out of concern... Nobody was doing that for me, so I was looking for that from my father.” (S, LC, 4 BC, 3 SC)

When social fathers showed interest, the fathers felt as if they received the treatment that sons would have gotten from their biological fathers. Thus, they expected their social fathers to show vested interest in their welfare. Barry stated such expectation: “They have my interest at heart” (D, MC, 1 BC, 1 SC). Also, when there was genuine interest, fathers equated the treatment that they received as that of “real” sons. Moses described such an experience: “He treated me like I am his son. I mean, I never feel like he was my uncle. I feel he was my father, alright” (S, MC, 2 BC).

With attention to their own fathering, the fathers focused on the role that they played in supporting their children. Nine fathers regarded themselves as persons who offered general support. One father said: “I support them whenever needed” (Moses, S, MC, 2 BC). Another father remarked: “I have to be showing my care and support, you know what I mean, with them” (Mark, M, LC, 4 BC, 1 SC). Two fathers mentioned the support that they offered to the mothers of their children. They supported the mothers of their children by either assisting them so that they could have some personal time without concerns about childcare duties or encouraging them. Daniel said: “Anything that can be done that needs to be done. Giving mommy a break when she can...” (M, MC, 4 BC). Two fathers discussed the support that they provided to ensure the physical health of their children. Pete explained:

Alright, my roles and responsibilities in this child’s life are to be very supportive because he was born very premature you have to be careful with him, right. So, you have to give him special formula, and make sure that he gets his special formula. The doctors told us to be extremely cautious; please don’t let him drop because his body can’t take that

impact. Always make sure that, very cautious with him right as he gets a little cold I make sure that he goes to the doctor. (separated (SD), MC, 3 BC)

Finally, two fathers focused on the provision of social support. In offering social support, the fathers wanted to ensure that their children had a social life that promoted their growth and development. David explained: “Yeah, to provide that social support that he needs to let him understand that being a man is more than just being...” (M, MC, 2 BC, 1 SC).

Communicating with children. The focus of communicating with children centered around the conversations that the fathers had with their own fathers when they were children, as well as how the fathers conversed with their own children. Focusing on being fathered (10), the conversations were remembered as deliberate whereby their fathers took the time to sit and talk with them. In this context that facilitated bidirectional communication, they felt comfortable to talk about whatever they wanted to be transparent about. Additionally, they were opened to their fathers’ correction and guidance. Wayne commented: “He could talk to me if I did something wrong. Maybe he could be there to say don’t do that you know or something” (S, LC, 2 BC, 2 SC). Ricky explained further:

I expected like somebody to talk to me just like how both of us are here talking. I am talking to you about these things without knowing you. This is how I would have loved to be able to open up to my father. (S, LC, 4 BC, 3 SC)

Moreover, the fathers maintained that their fathers should have also discussed the trajectories of their own lives. This was an important part of preparing them for the future. For example, Adams remarked: “To talk to me about certain changes that he made in his life” (M, LC, 3 BC, 4 SC).

Similarly, conversations with social fathers (5) were crucial, as they implied a sense of being loved. For example, when correction took the form of a conversation rather than

punishment, including corporal punishment, fathers felt more comfortable in the relationships based on the undertone of love that it communicated. Lloyd described such an experience:

Even when I do things that were wrong at times, instead of bullying me down in talking to me, he showed me the right from wrong so that I can understand. Instead of beating me, even though I get beaten as well. However, instead of beating me all the times he would talk to me so that I could understand that what I was doing was wrong...he was preparing me to go out there on my own, so I looked at that as love, you understand me. (M, LC, 1 BC, 1 SC)

When the fathers (6) discussed communication as a role in their own fathering, they focused on the content of the conversations that encompassed general information about what was happening in their children's lives as well as their children's thoughts, how they are doing in school, and reasoning with them about life. One father noted that his conversation with his son has helped him to understand his child much better. Barry said:

I use every opportunity that I actually get to talk to him to find out what is going on, how is he, what he is thinking about, and all of that. And one thing that I realize is that sometimes people can misunderstand my son because he's kind of outspoken, right. (D, MC, 1 BC, 1 SC)

Also, fathers who did not live with their children utilized technologies to maintain contact. One nonresident father discussed how he facilitated conversation with his child in order to be a part of his life although he did not live with him. He remarked that he facilitated conversations with his child that he did not have with his own father. He said:

So, I still try to keep in his life as much as I can even though he is not living with me now. I try to call, talk to him...ask him question that I didn't get from my dad such as

what he wants to be. Whatever he says he wants to be I encourage him. I ask him, “do you know what it takes to be...” It takes hard work and stuff like that. (Adams, M, LC, 3 BC 4 SC)

Monitoring. The general focus of monitoring was on academic monitoring. Six fathers mentioned monitoring as a role performed by their biological fathers, one father talked about it regarding his social father, and three fathers discussed monitoring as one of the roles in their own fathering. For biological fathering, their role in ensuring academic success was important. More specifically, when the fathers knew that their fathers were checking on their progress, they were motivated to maintain a high standard. Earl explained:

He would ensure that I give a report at the end of the year. He would be interested in...my average and how much I was placed in the class and so forth. So, he took an interest also in my academic life as well... (M, MC, 2 BC, 2 SC)

Mark also reflected on his expectation that he expected his father to play in his life academically. He remarked: “Go to school and help with the schoolwork and make sure that the children grow up educated” (M, LC, 5 BC, 1 SC).

However, in one instance, both academic and general monitoring were absent. In that situation, the father classified his experience as the lack of parental guidance, which translated to minimal supervision. Barry contended: “We could do anything that we wanted, overall” (D, MC, 1 BC, 1 SC).

For social fathering, one father focused on the approaches that his social father fathers (uncles) utilized to monitor his academic development. He stated: “They made sure everything was on track...they checked my homework” (English, S, MC, 3 BC).

In discussing their own fathering, two fathers mentioned their keen interest in ensuring that children were progressing well in school. Mark said: “I try to stick with him and go to his school as well...” (M, LC, 4 BC, 1 SC). Also, one father mentioned that he monitored his child to ensure that things were going according to expectations. Bryan stated: “[My role is] to glean over them and ensure that everything is on par as expected” (M, MC, 3 BC, 1 SC).

Protecting. Protecting referred to the various ways in which the fathers’ fathers protected them as children by ensuring that their environment was safe and secure and served as their defenders. It also encompassed how the fathers shielded their own children from negative influences and defended them. Five fathers mentioned this subtheme regarding biological fathers, two fathers about social fathers, and eight fathers regarding their own parenting. In ensuring safety and security, biological fathers were responsible for making the fathers’ home environment safe and providing a sense of security when they were children. For example, Pete, whose father died when he was four years old and he grew with his mother in the inner city, wished that his father was there to provide safety and security. This was regarded as important especially in his community that often experienced flare-ups of violence. He remarked:

Somebody to ensure that some security is there, you understand what I mean. Mean that, you know, as a youth growing up in a household with your mother, she might fall asleep, so you want a man in the house to ensure that the house is locked up and safe. I wish he was there to do all those things. (S, MC, 3 BC)

For the quality of security, fathers were required to protect their children without focusing on themselves. The fathers believed that their fathers should view children and families as their pride and be willing to defend without reservation. Sam explained:

To defend them to the point of death because his family is his pride and you defend your pride like a lion to the point of death. So, I think a father has to be willing to defend his family to the point of death. Also, being willing to die for his family. (M, MC, 1 BC, 4 SC)

This sense of security and reassurance gave them confidence that they were being supported.

Similarly, when speaking of social fathers' role to provide safety and security, Barry noted that this was lacking in his relationship with his social father. He said:

I just - I wouldn't say - if you're putting care in terms of showing, giving you the security, I was not given that security and reassurance that, you know, a normal child would get. To say, "boy I am there for you" and whatever – I never got that from them. (D, MC, 1 BC, 1 SC)

In discussing their own role as protectors, the fathers discussed their responsibility for keeping their families safe and secure. This included providing a safe environment, ensuring that they were protected from the negative influences of society, and making sure that there was a feeling of safety and security. Sam remarked: "Providing a safe environment for them..." (M, MC, 1 BC, 5 SC). Bryan further commented:

Ensure that I protect her from all, everything that is there (in the society) especially in this time because it's so open now. They have to deal with so many things in these times in comparison to back in the days. (M, MC, 3 BC, 1 SC).

Child-related activities. Child-related activities refers to activities that were done in the home to ensure the children's health and wellbeing and/or growth and development. Four fathers discussed this subtheme regarding biological fathers, three fathers about social fathers, and 10 fathers as a part of their own fathering. Focusing on biological fathers, the emphasis was on

activities that they did with their fathers during childhood. Barry recalled his father preparing meals. He said: “My father would cook from time to time. I would eat from time to time when I get the chance to see him.” (D, MC, 1 BC, 1 SC). In contrast, Moses reflected on how his father did not perform chores in the home. He emphasized: “So, he was missing in my life, when he should have been there to ensure that I get up in the morning, going to school, shoes were clean, uniform ironed...” (S, MC, 2 BC).

Similarly, fathers also discussed the ways in which their social fathers cared for them by preparing meals, grooming them, or preparing their clothes. Sam reflected: “They knew I had a huge appetite when I was younger, so they cooked for me, a lot” (M, MC, 1 BC, 5 SC). In reflecting on grooming activities, English said: “So my uncle was a barber. He was everything so for my hair to cut each week my uncle did it” (S, MC, 3 BC).

In contrast to being fathered, the fathers discussed their involvement in the area of caregiving in their own role as fathers. The fathers mentioned that they were involved in parenting activities to facilitate the growth and development of their children from they were very babies. Specifically, they were involved in bathing, giving medication, and grooming. In this sense, caregiving was not gendered. English remarked: “Every single thing...for a mother and a father” (S, MC, 3 BC). Daniel further explained: “[I am involved in] babysitting, they say I should not say babysitting when it is your own children, all the works (M, MC, 4 BC). As it relates to other activities that were done inside of the home in caring for their children, the fathers were involved in housework, cooking, repairing things, and washing. English said: “Every little thing I do for them, every single thing such as wash, cook, clean, everything” (S, MC, 3 BC).

General engagement. General engagement referred to activities in which the participants and their fathers engaged in for fun or to complete tasks. Also, various ways in which the fathers were engaged with their own children were discussed. Fathers focused on general engagement with their biological fathers (3) social fathers (4), and in their own role as fathers (3). In referring to his biological father, Daniel said: “We had time together...playing games...” (M, MC, 4 BC). However, Omar described not having the experience of sharing in activities with his father. He recalled the desire that he possessed:

Yeah, you know after I heard everybody who lived with his or her daddy...told me that he or she will be doing this or doing that with his or her daddy, I said wow! I would love that to happen... (CL, LC, 2 BC)

When fathers focused on their social fathers, they recalled activities that they did with their social fathers. These included being taken to specific places for recreation, playing games, or completing tasks together. Peter described completing a task with his uncle. He stated: “I helped him to sort out his stuff because he would bring back stuff [from overseas] to sell...” (M, LC, 2 BC).

As fathers, they discussed the ways in which they engaged with their children in activities such as playing game, making jokes, and going out together. These activities created positive emotions which strengthened the father-child relationships. Omar said: “You have to come in and...run a little joke on somebody...” (CL, LC, 2 BC). Similarly, Wayne remarked: “Try to take her out every now and then to make her happy” (S, LC, 2 BC, 2 SC).

Errands. For errands, the emphasis was on chores that their fathers and they did outside of the home. Three fathers, four fathers, and one father spoke about the errands performed by their biological fathers, social fathers, and as a father, respectively. For both biological and social

fathers, the focus was on the transportation that their fathers provided in taking them to places such as school or games. Focusing on biological fathers, Daniel said: “Oh yes, my dad picked us up from school. Dad was the main person who picked us up from school, and carried us either to his workplace or home” (M, MC, 4 BC). Similarly, English also recalled the role of his social fathers in performing errands.

As a father, English discussed how he also engaged in similar behaviours. He said: “So, I make it my point of duty before work in the mornings I pick up all children...I carry them to school...pickup [them up from school]” (S, MC, 3 BC).

Leadership. Leadership referred to the responsibility that the fathers embraced for the direction of their families which the fathers discussed regarding biological fathering (3) and as fathers (7). None of the participants discussed this theme in relation to their social fathers. With attention to biological fathers, leadership focused on having a vision and making decisions in the interest of the family. Also, there was the expectation that fathers would make appropriate preparation and direct the affairs of the family. In this regard, fathers operated as head of the family. David remarked: “Leader in terms of being the head of the household, directing the affairs of the family – the direction that the family takes – and managing everything including finances and discipline” (M, MC, 2 BC, 1 SC). Reflecting on the responsibility for making decisions and having a vision. Daniel said:

He made the decisions about where we should move and relocated because we had to relocate several times. And, he would make the decision about which location. He was the one that had the vision for the family about a farm, operating a farm. So, he made the decision. (M, MC, 4 BC).

Regarding their own fathering, leadership encompassed having a vision for the family and ensuring that the family remained together and work to achieve the intended outcomes. Also, the fathers believed that they were the heads of their households with the responsibility to oversee the affairs of the family. Earl said: “Make sure that everything is going according to the path that you want it to take” (M, MC, 2 BC, 2 SC). Similarly, Sam remarked: “To grow them, to grow my family from one level to the next level of life” (M, MC, 1 BC, 5 SC).

Affective involvement. Affective involvement was an important aspect of the fathers’ relationships with their fathers that facilitated their development as well as their children’s development. Affective involvement refers to the expression of positive emotions, feelings, warmth, and affection that the fathers have for their children experienced in being fathered as well as what their own children experienced in their interaction with them. This dimension of involvement created strong relational foundations. Generally, the emotional connection resulted in fathers feeling supported in various areas of their development.

Affective involvement was demonstrated by the fathers’ fathers in various ways, including the demonstration of love, warmth, and affection. Fathers reflected on the importance of affectionate relationships with their biological fathers (13), social fathers (9), and in their own fathering (11). Regarding their biological fathers, affective involvement was associated with being emotionally supportive, affectionate, and expressing emotions. Specifically, emotional support was linked to building courage, affection, and to not being abusive. Dane recalled that his father showed affection by vocalizing his love for him. He said: “He fulfilled everything that you would expect in terms...son I love you he was never afraid to show that side of him” (M, MC, 3 BC, 23 SC).

Furthermore, some fathers noted that their fathers did not display physical affection towards them and justified this as a part of their personality. However, they believed that they showed love in other ways. Jonny explained:

To be honest with you, I don't think I've ever gotten a serious hug from my father because of the type of person he was, which I honestly understood. The type of person he was, quiet and laid back. He showed his love, but not in that way – in terms of the emotional part of it. He wasn't that type of emotional person. (D, LC, 1 BC)

Similarly, the importance of being affectionate and emotionally supportive was discussed regarding their social fathers. One father spoke about the lack of affection that he experienced. When speaking of his social father, he said: “He was physically abusive. That's one. Ignorant and all of that, quick temper you know so I know that about him. He was very abusive...” (Adams, M, LC, 3 BC, 4 CB). Another father noted that he wanted more warmth and emotional support from his uncles as his biological father was not present during his childhood due to his incarceration. He associated them with fear instead of emotional support in his reflection:

Well, for them I just saw authority and fear. I expected a little more warmth, a little more, yeah. I didn't get that so much. I knew that they loved me. I expected warmth, I expected some form of emotional support and I didn't really get that much. (Dane, M, MC, 3 BC, 23 SC)

As fathers, they discussed the use of positive words as a means of emotional support such as commending, praising, stating their love, and offering encouragement. This involved their attempt to understand the situations that children were going through and assisting them. Moses explained: “If there is a situation that she is having, I have to try and relate to it and help her where that is concerned” (S, MC, 2 BC). Similarly, Dane tried to build a very close relationship

with his child that was very supportive. He said: “Friend, I don’t want to say confidant but friend leave it at a friend, just daddy” (M, MC, 3 BC, 23 SC).

They also discussed the positive emotions that they openly displayed to children. One father emphasized that he showed physical affection to his children by hugging them. He said: “You have to come in and sometimes and bus (give) a little hug to somebody and run a little joke on somebody” (Omar, LC, 2 BC).

Two fathers mentioned providing moral support in which they showed public sympathy to their wife and/or children due to external challenges. Dane remarked that he provided, “moral support” (M, MC, 3 BC, 23 SC) and Bryan said that he, “provided for his wife and children moral [support]” (M, MC, 3 BC, 1 SC).

Cognitive involvement. In the cognitive domain of involvement, attention was on the ways in which their fathers were cognitively present throughout their lives. It was the mental aspect that made fathers thankful for the ways in which their fathers focused on their wellbeing. Also, the fathers discussed their own cognitive involvement with their children as they engaged with them mentally or had conscious thoughts about them.

Two fathers mentioned this subtheme in relation to biological fathering, one father regarding social fathering, and four fathers about their own fathering. For biological fathers, attention was given to their fathers’ philosophical stance of prioritizing their children above their own needs. This philosophy suggested that the fathers believed that they were in the conscious contemplations of their fathers. In explaining, one father spoke about the sacrificial nature of his father to stay with him even when his mother left and lived overseas. This has motivated him to stay with his own children as he experienced the sacrificial nature of his father. He said:

But I think the main thing is that he is very devoted to his children, very sacrificial. So, for me I saw that as a model. For me, my children have to be with me. I am with them. I am not leaving them. (Eaton, M, MC, 3 BC)

Similarly, one father noted that his social father, uncle, who took care of him had to make a lot of sacrifices. It was a firm commitment that he had to make to prioritize his needs as a child growing up above his own needs. He explained: “So if he wanted to go out...he had a life for himself...he had to make the commitment not to constantly be going out but to spend time with me at home” (Moses, S, LC, 2 BC).

In their role as fathers, the fathers discussed that they provided psychological support that positively affected their children’s and/or spouse’s ability to think, feel, and demonstrate appropriate behaviours. Bryan mentioned his role in providing mental support (M, MC, 3 BC, 1 SC) and Sam emphasized “psychological” support (M, MC, BC 1, 5 SC). Also, reasoning with their children was an important strategy in the provision of mental support. Gary remarked: “So, I tried to give him what I can give him and reason with him about certain things on a father and child level to let him understand certain things” (S, LC, 3 BC). Similarly, Omar mentioned reasoning with his children as an important part of his role in caring for them. He said: “You have to come in and more time...hold a little reason” (CL, LC, 2 BC).

Spiritual involvement. The spiritual involvement of the fathers’ fathers was regarded as a part of the ways in which their values and attitudes were influenced when they were children. Their fathers also assisted them in developing a religious or spiritual identity. Thus, spiritual involvement was important for their holistic development.

Spiritual involvement refers to the religious aspects of family life. It encompassed the various ways in which their spiritual direction and/or that of their families was facilitated.

Spiritual involvement focused primarily on the impartation of Christian principles. However, not many fathers referred to the spiritual involvement of their fathers or their spiritual involvement with their children. More specifically, one father mentioned this about biological fathering, one regarding social fathering, and three as a part of their own fathering. In those instances, the focus was placed on spiritual leadership and/or training. Whereas spiritual leadership encompassed decision regarding place of worship and going to Church together, spiritual training centered on ensuring that they engaged in practices and/or religious traditions and training. With attention to his biological father, Daniel explained: “He also made the spiritual decisions about when we had worship, where we went to church...” (M, MC, 4 BC). In reflecting on his expectation, he emphasized: “I would have expected that...we continued the family devotion especially on Sabbath where my father would lead out and we would read something spiritual or he would explain something either from the Bible storybook or from the Bible” (M, MC, 4 BC). Similarly, in association with his social father, Lloyd stated: “They tried their best to teach me the right things and even grow me up in the church as that is one of the most important things that I got from my grandfather...to grow me up in the church... (M, LC, 1 BC, 1 SC).

With attention to their own fathering, the fathers focused on the assistance that they provided in helping their children and/or family to experience balance in their lives through a connection with God. The fathers emphasized the spiritual support that they gave to their children and/or families. David said: “Same as before...supportive in terms of...spiritual wellbeing...” (M, MC, 2 BC, 1 SC).

Fathers’ Involvement with Their Own Children and Reasons for Non-involvement

When queried about their involvement with their children from birth, 23 fathers indicated that they were always involved in the lives of their firstborn. For fathers with other children, 15,

10, and three fathers stated that they were always involved with their second, third, and fourth child, respectively. In contrast, for non-involvement, one father was not always involved with his first child, three with their second child, two with their third child, and one with his fourth child. The fathers who were not always involved provided reasons that generated four themes: (a) paternity related issues, (b) issues with child's mother, (c) issues with the law, and (d) physical distance.

Paternity-related issues. Paternity-related issues referred to the doubts that fathers (3) had about the paternity of the children or the failure of their children's mother to acknowledge their paternal rights. Specifically, two fathers mentioned that they were not involved as they had doubts about the paternity of the children. Their concern was based on the context of the relationship with the children's mother as well as their negative perceptions of the mothers' sexual behaviours. Ricky explained:

No [I was not involved] as I told you because he came too fast. He came right behind Tim...[two months apart]. And, because I was running up and down again [dealing with issues involving police] I was not following it up as I did not believe that the child was mine knowing the type of person who the mother is. Yeah, the type of person she is I was not trusting that the child was mine anyway. So, I am not going to say I was playing [my role] 100% in his life, straight up. (S, LC, BC 4, SC 3)

In contrast, one father discussed the experience of not being assigned paternity although he believed that the child was his. He wanted to play his role in his child's life, so he challenged the mother through the courts and was able to have his name on the child's birth certificate. He recounted:

As I told you before, when the baby was born I was not included in her life because the mother excluded me. So, until I found out from the court, she was about four or five years old, I...made the change and from there until now. (Pete, SD, MC, BC 3)

Issues with the children's mothers. Issues with the children's mothers referred to the ways in which the relationship between fathers and mothers affected the fathers' involvement. For two fathers, their involvement was affected by the attitudes of the children's mothers. At times, the mother of the child was disrespectful which resulted in one father choosing to withdraw. Ricky reasoned:

Sometimes for three or four days [I don't call] and she makes it look like a one month. So, whenever, she calls me, and she starts to say dutty bwoy (dirty boy) you this and you that; this is because I can't talk certain things, you know. And, right here as much as you see me laughing it boils me [stirs up anger in me] to even hear, you pussy hole. I can't curse so much bad words in front of you still, a respect. Yeah, but she styles the thing certain way and when she styles me certain way that causes me not to be too [involved].
(S, LC, 4 BC, 3 SC)

Another father explained the challenges that he faced in his relationship with his child's mother because of her mentality. She was accusing him of being involved with other women, but he claimed that she was the one who was cheating on him. The issue led to domestic violence and separation. Also, he was charged with one incident of physical assault (striking her on the face) and spent one month in jail. English chronicled his experiences after finding out that his child's mother was cheating on him:

I can't understand how you are cursing me about having other woman every day...only to know that you are the one keeping man with me...Now when I saw that we had a fight

because she got offensive and those things, and she give me two...box...but I mean my reflex I gave her about two box and she went and called police...so I decided to just maintain my child... The next court date she poked me in my eye in court... The judge threatened to lock her up and I said your Honour please I am begging you... I am not pressing charges and I am telling you point blank that if you should lock her up now it is going to be bad for the child. (S, MC, 3 BC)

Issues with the law. The emphasis of issues with the law was on how the legal system impacted father involvement. Two fathers mentioned challenges with the legal system. For one father, he was like a fugitive when his child was born. He had to be hiding from police because they claimed that he was involved in a lot of shootings. Ricky said:

I was running up and down from police those times because of a lot of shootings that they said I was involved in. Yeah, I had to stay over Sea Town and started working over there. I was there until that happened [the girl got pregnant]. (S, LC, 4 BC, 3 SC)

One father also explained that he hit his child's mother in her face which led to him being charged and placed in jail. He emphasized that he was not involved in his child's life for six months leading up to the time of the interview.

Physical distance. This theme referred to the impact that geographical distance had on the involvement of two fathers in their children's lives. For one father, the physical distance was complicated by a lack of resources. His lack of resources affected his ability to support his child financially, visit his child, or maintain communication by phone. Ricky remarked:

As I told you, most times it is because of the distance between us and those things. I don't have the time to go and visit her or anything like that. And, sometimes I don't have any credit on my phone to call or anything like that, so when she does not hear from me for a

period of time, three or four days, she [mother] makes it look like a one month. (S, LC, 4 BC, 3 SC)

Similarly, Bryan explained that the distance prevented him from being as involved. He provided monetary support, but he was unable to operate like a father to his child. He said: “I wasn’t involved since birth because her mother and I were apart, and they were living in a different parish. But, monetary I was there but not as a father...” (M, MC, 3 BC, 1 SC).

Challenges or Barriers in Fathering

When the fathers were asked to reflect on the challenges or barriers that they encountered as biological and social fathers, they mentioned many factors. As biological fathers, they discussed seven themes and 15 fathers mentioned five of the themes regarding social fathering: (a) lack of resources (15 bio, 3 social), (b) child-related issues (13, 9), (c) partner-related issues (9, 1), time constraints (8), work-related issues (8), environmental challenges (6, 4), and cognitive pressures (5, 2). In this section, I discuss these challenges or barriers in order of salience from the perspective of biological fathering.

Lack of resources. Lack of resources focused on the shortage of financial and physical resources that the fathers needed to fulfil their responsibility to provide for their family and meet other expectations. As biological fathers, a majority of them indicated that inadequate finances posed a challenge or barrier in their attempts do some things for their children and/or families. With insufficient finances, they were unable to fulfil the desires that they had for their children, and they were frustrated. One father reflected on such an experience: “Sometimes I take that really hard. To be honest because sometimes there are things that I want to do, and sometimes there are things that they need and financially I can’t provide those things for them” (Earl, M,

MC, 2 BC, 2 SC). Similarly, Omar discussed his financial instability and the decision that he made to continue to care for his children. He remarked:

Yeah, the financial part it is not always up there. It is not always up; that is the main challenge. And, because if I did not care it wouldn't bother me. I would have just said what's the sense. I can't be bothered with this and go about my business. But, because I care I have to just live with it. I have to just deal with it. It does not make any sense for me to run away from the responsibility. (CL, LC, 2 BC)

As social fathers (3), the economic struggles made situations difficult. For example, being unable to own a car made it physically challenging to engage with social children in certain activities. Also, it was difficult for the fathers to assist their social children financially when they were struggling to make ends meet in caring for their own biological children. English remarked: "The struggle is real, the struggle is real, the struggle is real. The economic crisis, I am telling you it is real. It is so real" (S, MC, 3 BC). Sam also commented: "The car [not owning a car] is a major barrier. It is a barrier all around" (M, MC, 1 BC, 5 SC).

Child-related issues. Child-related issues focused on factors associated with the children that made fathering difficult. Thirteen fathers discussed child-related issues as a challenge that they experienced as biological fathers, including children's characteristics (9) and development (9). For child characteristics, the fathers mentioned children's personalities, actions, and thought processes. For example, one father explained how the personality of his child negatively affected the father-child relationship. Sam said:

He can be very inquisitive. He is very inquisitive. Personality? He has a very hard personality like myself. So, I tell you we have the clashes because he always thinks that

he has every reason to do whatever he does. I have to make sense for him. (M, MC, 1 BC, 5 SC)

Focusing on issues related to development, a few fathers (2) reflected on concerns associated with their children' physical health, emotional well-being, disability, and academic difficulties. To illustrate, one father discussed how the illness of his child affected his lifestyle and employment as a father who was parenting alone. He remarked:

She is a sickler so one of the challenges that I face is her illness. There are times when I have to be up with her the entire night when she is sick just to ensure that she is okay.

There are times when I have to be away from work for a couple days just to stay with her to ensure that she is okay. (Moses, S, MC, 2 BC)

With attention to social fathering (9), they also mentioned factors associated with child characteristics and development. The issues with child characteristics focused on changes in children as they develop, as well as their lack of appreciation. Mark explained: "When they are 13 or 14 years old, they have some ways and attitudes" (M, LC, 4 BC, 1 SC). Similarly, Adams remarked: "Well children being disrespectful, they don't appreciate what you have done" (M, LC, 3 BC, 4 SC). In contrast, for one father, his challenge was the academic progress of the child. He said: "I don't have any challenge; it is just that sometimes he is probably slow with his schoolwork. That is the only challenge that I really have with him" (Lloyd, M, MC, 1 BC, 1 SC).

Partner-related issues. Partner-related issues referred to relational issues between the fathers (9) and the mothers that negatively affected the level of father involvement. First, some fathers (5) perceived the mothers as antagonistic and controlling to the extent of limiting their rights to parent their children. Pete explained:

Regarding this child, it is just his mother sometimes she makes her mouth rule her. But other than that, I don't have any barriers. She just wants to do things her way at times.

She does not give me any chance to make me do what I want to do. (Pete, SD, MC, 3 BC)

Similarly, Barry discussed the challenge that he encountered as he was not consulted whenever the child's mother was making decisions regarding the child although she expected him to take care of the associated costs. Also, he was unable to communicate with the child's mother in the best interest of the child. He remarked:

For me, the barrier based on my current situation is that communicating with his mother in his best interest is difficult. She just does anything that she feels like, whenever she wants to, and then just ask me for the money for it. (D, MC, 1 BC, 1 SC)

Second, sharing parental responsibilities when the fathers and children's mothers did not live with their children was difficult. Three fathers reported that at times, there were significant differences in parenting values that made co-parenting difficult. Mosses remarked: "I face opposition from her mother because she looks at things one way and I look at things another. How to grow the child and what is right and what is wrong" (S, MC, 2 BC). Also, one father mentioned that it was challenging to share parental responsibilities due to the insecurity of the spouse of his child's mother. The mother's spouse was concerned that he might become sexually involved with her. Adams reasoned:

The next thing you know sometimes with my child Chris I have a challenge when it comes on to his mother and the guy that she lives with because sometimes it causes problem for me to see my child as they feel that being an ex-spouse it may cause problem...They feel like when I come around to see my child I might get involved with the mother, so they will try to put up a barrier. (M, LC, 3 BC, 4 SC)

With attention to social fathering, one father reflected on the difficulties that were encountered with a little girl that he informally adopted. Due to complexities in his marriage, it was difficult for him to be more involved in the child's life. More specifically, he had a daughter when he temporarily separated before they got married and his daughter was now living with them. Bryan remarked:

The one that I adopted, when I measure it and look how much I can really do, it is not really much. It has been really challenging because I have to stand back as I don't want to cause any problems in my marriage because we're just going to a better place with Joy [stepdaughter to my wife and my wife is now accepting of her] and I don't want to go back to that thing [bring another child into the marriage]. We are not really over a certain hurdle [healing of the broken relationship and the birth of Joy]. (Bryan, M, MC, 3 BC, 1 SC)

Time constraints. Time constraints focused on the demands that were placed on the fathers' time that affected the amount of time spent with their children. The fathers (8) mentioned that they did not have enough time to spend with their children. Earl said:

"Sometimes time because sometimes after I leave work probably around this time and go home, at times I am tired because the job drains me physically, emotionally, and psychologically" (M, MC, 2 BC, 2 SC). Also, the need for income resulted in the fathers working long hours which affected their desire to spend more time with their children. English remarked:

One of my major challenges is time. I wish I did not have to work eight hours a day, but because of the money I have to work. However, I wish I did not have to work eight hours a day. So, time [is the challenge], especially spending time. If I am able to find an extra

two hours for him per day, I would get him exactly where I want him [how I want him to be]. (S, MC, 3 BC)

In contrast, one father reasoned that the issue was not insufficient time; instead, it was his failure to make time. He was of the view that individuals generally found the time to do whatever they regarded as important. Eaton explained:

Time sometimes, time in terms of, sometimes I don't make the time because I don't believe that I don't have the time. If you understand the real priorities in life you must [set aside the time]. There is time, so sometimes I myself might get too busy with responsibilities, ministry responsibilities and work responsibilities. (M, MC, 3 BC)

Work-related issues. For work-related issues, the fathers (8) focused on how their employment or a lack of employment negatively affected their involvement with their children. When they were employed, the demands of the job often kept them away from their children. For example, shift work or working for several hours limited interaction with their children. Peter said: "I am not spending the time that I want to because when I leave work I leave work late in the nights. When I reach home, they are already sleeping because they go to bed by 7 p.m." (M, LC, 2 BC). Similarly, Gary reflected on how the nature of his job negatively affected his time with his children because it was impractical for him to take a day off from work. He explained:

So, I cannot spend the time that I would want to spend with them because of work on so on. It is not like I can take a day because the money is going to be short, and what they are supposed to get is going to be affected. (S, LC, BC 3)

Environmental challenges. Environmental challenges focused on the challenges that the fathers had which were associated with where they resided. For biological fathering (6), they emphasized that there were societal expectations that placed undue pressures on fathers. For

example, what was regarded as a sign of success by society could lead to a lack of priority in relation to one's children. Daniel remarked:

While society would expect me to have my own house, a car and so on, to do so I need to get more money because even the job that I have cannot support that and that requires me to use my time to get part-time jobs or two jobs. If I do that it means less time to spend with the family, less time to do housework, less time that the children will see me, less time to meet the parenting expectations or goals that I set for myself. (M, MC, 4 BC)

Similarly, Pete explained that individuals sometimes tried to dictate how he should parent his child. He said: "When people try to intervene...they want to tell you what to do, how to grow your child" (SD, MC, 3 BC).

As social fathers, the fathers (4) focused on the challenges that they had in building trust with stakeholders such as the parents of their social children. This was related to the changing societal values. One father explained: "Building trust and getting the parents or the guardians to trust that have I the children's best interest at heart" (Dane, M, MC, 3 BC, 23 SC). Also, the changing societal values made it challenging for fathers to guide their social children. For one father, there was a conflict between societal values and those that he wanted to instill in his children. David said:

Competing with society as we live in a world that is far different from when I was a child growing up, social media and technology, all of these things. We live in a world where everything is ready made and ready expected, so very little value is there for effort and time. Also, very little, less time is there for appreciating some things. (M, MC, 2 BC, 1 SC)

Cognitive pressures. Cognitive pressures referred to the mental stress that the fathers experienced when they were unable to meet the demands to provide for their children and/or families. Also, the fathers' assessment of their effectiveness as parents was emphasized. When biological fathers (5) did not know how they were going to provide for the needs of their children and/or families, they were affected cognitively as they struggled to deal with negative thoughts and tried to remain positive. Wayne explained:

Your head hurt you. You think all type of things. You think about where you are going to get it from. But as a father, you have to try to remain positive and stay put. When she is around, and I don't have anything to give her, sometimes I sit and think a lot of things. Where am I going to get this or where am I going to get that to give her. And it is not nice. (S, LC, 2 BC, 2 LC)

Similarly, Curtis reflected on how a lack of resources caused mental pressure for him. However, he was resolute in his commitment to overcome the barriers. He said:

My head pressures... It pressures my brain. It causes me to worry because I can't get it for them. And, I am wondering why I can't get it for them and things not better. Also, why life is not much easier for me and those things sometimes. So far, I am trying my best to not face too many barriers. I am trying my best to make it better. I am trying my best to break down all the barriers. (CL, LC, 4 BC, 3 SC)

In their assessment of their fathering, the fathers (2) mentioned that it was mentally challenging as they were unable to decide on how to deal with certain issues or topics such as sexual intercourse. One father said:

But I'm having challenges even probably to have discussions sometimes. I am even wondering how to approach sexual discussion with him. I am wondering if I really need

to do that. I think that is something I would have to do, something I should do, and something that I'm wrapping my head around. But, that is something that has been a challenge for me and I am trying to find ways to approach it. (Bryan, M, MC, 3 BC, 1 SC)

With attention to social fathering, the fathers focused on their thoughts regarding the provision of financial support. For one father, although he worked hard to provide, it was stressful because it was inadequate to meet the demands. English said: "So it gets so stressful at times and just like I told you, I work so hard for the money but when it comes, that's it (S, MC, 3 BC). Another father discussed his thoughts regarding biological fathers who were alive but not involved in their children's lives. He contended that his thoughts and feeling even in offering more assistance would be positive if he knew that the children's biological fathers were not alive. Curtis said:

My greatest challenge is that it is burning [upsetting emotionally] to know that they are out there [alive]. So, sometimes I don't really want to hold back [my assistance] but maybe if the fathers were not there I would put out more effort. Even more effort although I said I treat them as my own. But, maybe if I knew that the fathers were not alive then...I would do even more. (CL, LC, 4 BC, 3 BC)

Fathers' Construction of Fatherlessness

To explore fathers' construction of fatherlessness, the fathers were asked to define fatherlessness. In their definitions, 17 fathers focused on both biological and social fathering, five fathers mentioned only biological fathering, and two fathers did not indicate any specific focus. They emphasized the quality of the father-child relationships and levels of father involvement. The definitions and explanations that the fathers provided generated five themes:

(a) absence of fathering, (b) physical absence, (c) inadequate fathering, (d) separation from biological father, and (e) detachment from father. These themes positioned fatherlessness as opposite to fathering.

Absence of fathering. According to these fathers, the absence of fathering, whether biological or social, referred to a lack of engagement of fathers in their children's lives. For some fathers, there was a complete absence of fathering from biological and social fathers. Almost all of the fathers (23) described fatherlessness as the absence of fathering. One way in which fatherlessness was conceptualized focused on the complete lack of support or interest of biological fathers in their children's lives. This meant that biological fathers were not providing any form of care. For example, Clive concluded: "The man is not taking care of his child in any way. That is fatherlessness one hundred percent" (S, BC 1, CL).

Moreover, fathers could be present physically; however, they were not fulfilling their responsibilities. Thus, fatherlessness was viewed as biological fathers' abandonment of their roles and responsibilities even with physical presence. Two fathers explained:

A father who is there and not taking care of his youth; that is fatherlessness. It is not a youth whose father died that is fatherless; it is a man who is not taking caring of his youth. That is the child who is fatherless, and that is my understanding of fatherlessness.

(Pele, CL, BC 3, LC)

Because if a father is not doing what he is supposed to do for his child, that is fatherlessness. Since the father is not doing what he is supposed to do; he is not playing the role as he is not doing anything that he is supposed to do based on the responsibility. He is not standing up to his responsibility towards the youth; that is fatherlessness just the same. (Clive, S, BC 1, CL)

Lack of care also encompassed not growing up with a biological father or only living with one's mother. One father explained that he is a good example of fatherlessness as his father was not involved in his life for seventeen years. He developed an affinity to his mother and would support her more than his father in the future. Also, he concluded that it was difficult growing up without a father and encouraged fathers to be there for their children. Kevin reflected:

I did not have any father for nearly seventeen years. I want to tell you the honest truth. From when I was born, my father left, and he did not come back to see me until I was 18-years-old... I went through it; no minding [fathering]. It was my mother [that I got everything from]. That is why I said if I am successful and own a property like that big public building I will give him a room like the size of this car and my mother everything else... Fatherless, seriously, it is really hard to not have a father, and I would like to encourage all of the fathers to just stick around their children. (S, BC 1, LC)

The fathers also referred to fatherlessness as a lack of active fathering. This lack of fathering was described as encompassing four domains of fathering, including: (a) behavioural, (b) cognitive, (c) affective, and (c) spiritual. Being in existence alone was not regarded as fathering; it required active engagement. For example, Bryan concluded: "So, fatherlessness is not being there physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually" (M, BC 3 SC 1, MC). Similarly, Dane reasoned that fatherlessness is the absence of a fathers in several of the domains at once. However, not all domains needed to be present for a child to experience fathering. He asserted:

Fatherlessness is the absence of a child's biological father in the following ways: emotionally, financially, psychologically, spiritually. And if there is five that I listed, and

the father is absent in three or four of those areas at once. So, a man might not be playing his role financially but somehow emotionally and otherwise he is there. (M, BC 3, SC 23, MC)

Another form of absent fathering was emphasized by the mother being alone with no support from any male figures for the child. In this context, there is no male support or influence in their lives. Mark affirmed: “The child does not have a father or a stepfather. There is no father or stepfather nor guidance from a male to guide him, and he would even say that is his father because of how he treats him” (M, BC 4, SC 1, LC). Another father said: “Fatherlessness is when you don’t have a father figure neither the biological or whatever father. There is no father figure in your life; that’s fatherlessness” (Adams, M, BC 3, SC 4, LC).

To explain the difference between a complete lack of fathering and the impact of social fathering, one father explained that with the absence of his biological father his needs were met by his social father. Although he experienced a lack of biological fathering, he did not experience fatherlessness as he accepted his grandfather as his father. Omar reasoned:

My father was not there, but I had a male figure who was there for me to look up to, to be my role model. So, I don’t know about that [fatherlessness]. I don’t know what to tell you about fatherlessness as I would have had to experience it. I did not miss my father even though I have mine. No, I did not miss him. I told you that I had my daddy [grandfather]; daddy was there with me all the way. He taught me everything; he taught me how to tie my shoelace, tie my necktie, and buckle my belt. I don’t want any daddy again; he is my daddy. I never miss him [biological father]. (CL, BC 2, LC)

Therefore, fatherlessness is when there is the absence of a male figure that a child can regard as his or her father. Thus, the absence of both biological and social father is a prerequisite in

conceptualizing fatherlessness. As Moses remarked: “No existence of a father, no existence of a father figure, no existence of someone who you can relate to” (S, BC 2, MC). Similarly, David said: “Not having a role model, not having a father, not having a father first, not having a father figure second (M, BC 2, SC 1, MC).

Physical absence. Fatherlessness as physical absence referred to the unavailability of fathers to respond to their children’s needs. These fathers are not physically present in the homes of their children, and they do not maintain meaningful contact with them. Seven fathers defined fatherlessness in terms of the physical absence of a child’s biological father. One father said: “Fatherlessness is when a daddy is just not around to play his role” (English, S, BC 3, MC). Another father expanded that when a father is physically absent, the child may not even know his or her father. Curtis remarked: “He does not know his father; he has never seen a man and said this my father” (Curtis, CL, BC 4, SC 3, LC).

Inadequate fathering. Inadequate fathering focused on fathers being involved but the level of involvement is inadequate to a degree that causes the child to be fatherless (six fathers). Their primary focus was the inadequacies in the behavioural and cognitive domains. Focusing on the behavioural domain, fathers mentioned that only providing economically does not represent the fulfilment of the roles and responsibilities of fathers. In order to prevent children from being fatherless, biological and/or social fathers need to be doing more than providing. Two fathers explained:

But you have a man who is around and is even giving the mother of the child money a few times for the child, and he is not seeing the child, that is fatherlessness as well. Because giving the child money and the child does not even get to see you and spend time with you does not really make much difference. (Clive, S, BC 1, LC)

Because sometimes you have a father who is sending the money...The father just sends money and barrel [receiving money and barrel, which refers to a “care package” or goods shipped to the family from overseas]. Yes, the monetary value is there, and the food is there, but you are not offering any support or any guidance to your children. That is also fatherlessness. (Earl, M, BC 2, SC 2, MC)

In the cognitive domain, inadequate fathering focused on the mental disengagement of fathers. It was insufficient to only be present in the home of children. According to Earl: “You are there but your mind is somewhere, so you are not functional in your home” (M, BC 2, SC 2, MC). Also, when fathers do not have meaningful contemplations about their children, their children were regarded as fatherless. Bryan put forward the view that fatherlessness includes: “a father who is not thinking about the child’s well-being” (M, BC 3, SC 1, MC).

Separation from biological father. Separation from biological father focused on biological fathers who were separated from their children. The separation could be permanent or for an extended period (four fathers). They conceptualized biological fatherlessness as permanent when fathers were separated from their children by death. For example, Gary indicated that: “Sometimes it can be that the child’s father is dead” (S, BC 3, LC). Alternatively, fathers could be separated from their children for extended periods due to circumstances. For instance, fathers could be separated from their children because they are incarcerated, or they live far apart without the ability to communicate. When a father is “gone to prison” (Gary, S, BC 3, LC), the father may be unable to maintain contact with his children. Similarly, Daniel explained that separation by distance may negatively affect father–child interactions and results in fatherlessness. He said: “The father is separated from them by distance, great distance, and does

not have any means of communicating with them or does not communicate with them” (M, BC 4, MC).

Detachment from father. Detachment from father examined fatherlessness from the perspective of the child who is being fathered. The child determines if he or she is fatherless based on the internalization of the treatment received from biological and/or social fathers. One father cautioned that it is not only the observable things that should be taken into consideration in determining fatherlessness, but the child’s views on his or her experience of fathering. Thus, the one experiencing fathering or the lack thereof is important in helping us to ascertain his or her experience of fatherlessness. Clive concluded: “Fatherlessness can take many different forms because you can think that you are fathering the child the right way; however, the child does not have it that way” (S, BC 1, LC).

To summarize, fathers discussed fatherlessness with attention to both biological and social fathers. They believed that it was possible for children to be biologically fatherless while at the same time engaged in social fathering. Thus, the child should not be regarded as fatherless. Also, the state of fatherlessness may change over time as children may either connect with their fathers at different points in their lives or have social fathers who enter their lives and attenuate the effects of not having interactions with their biological fathers. Fathers also declared that children’s own perspectives on being fathered were important to determine the extent of fatherlessness being experienced. The conceptualization of fatherlessness is multi-dimensional, including the absence of fathering, physical absence of biological fathers, inadequate fathering, separation from biological father, and detachment from fathers by children.

Chapter Four: Discussion

The present study contributes to the understanding of fatherlessness and fathering in cultural contexts. Specifically, the study explored Afro-Jamaican fathers' experiences and perspectives on fatherlessness and fathering from a bioecological perspective (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). The current study challenges the fathering literature which tends to oversimplify fathering (Palkovitz, 2007). The present findings revealed that fatherlessness is complex and requires a broader and more complex perspective of fathering across multiple generations in order to capture these nuances. Also, the study provides a theoretical contribution to the understanding of fathering in cultural contexts as it generated a spiritual domain in addition to the behavioural, affective, and cognitive domains (Palkovitz, 1997). These findings were based on fathers' retrospective accounts of being fathered as well as their own fathering experiences, which challenged the stereotype of Afro-Jamaican fathers as absent and uninvolved. Specifically, I discuss the ways in which fathers conceptualized fatherlessness as a complex phenomenon, followed by a discussion of features of fathering which may be regarded as universal (Tamis-LeMonda, 2015). Next, a sociocultural perspective is discussed followed by an exploration of the barriers and challenges, as well as intergenerational transmission of fathering. Lastly, the limitations of the study, future directions, and implications and conclusions are discussed.

Challenging Fatherlessness

The present study provides new insights into the phenomenon of fatherlessness. In the literature, when researchers conceptualized fatherlessness, they focused on the physical absence of biological fathers primarily in the home (Bachman, Coley, & Chase-Lansdale, 2009; DeBell, 2008; Edin & Nelson, 2013) and used terms such as fatherless family, father absence, and fatherlessness (see McLanahan et al., 2013). As a result, the primary research focus has been

placed on the physical location of biological fathers namely whether they lived with their children (Culpin et al., 2013; Shenk et al., 2013). Given the focus on the residential status of biological fathers, researchers utilized family constellation as a proxy to define fatherlessness (Boutwell & Beaver, 2010; Francesconi, Jenkins, & Siedler, 2010). Accordingly, fatherlessness was measured by comparing family types such as two-parent to single-parent families (see McLanahan et al., 2013) which obscures the complexities of coparenting networks of nonresident biological fathers (Fagan, Levine, Kaufman, & Hammar, 2016). For example, multiple partner fertility often creates unique dynamics that impact father–child relationships (Edin & Nelson, 2013). In the present study, however, the Afro-Jamaican fathers did not focus on family structure in their conceptualization of fatherlessness. From the perspective of these Afro-Jamaican fathers, fatherhood was defined by patterns of contact rather than whether the father was residential. Since many nonresident fathers were involved in their children’s lives, these children cannot be properly described as “fatherless.”

Beyond dichotomies: Toward a more nuanced view of father involvement among nonresident fathers. The focus on nonresident fathering tends to be unacknowledged in the field of fatherlessness, especially for ethnic minority families. Specifically, simplistic yes/no questions such as whether the father lives at home would determine whether the researcher would label the child as fatherless. Thus, in many cases additional questions about nonresident father involvement would not be pursued. However, family systems may be more complex. For example, nonresident biological fathers may be involved but the parents have chosen not to report paternity in order for mothers to receive full welfare benefits. This is a deliberate effort to facilitate fathers’ support to be given directly to the mothers and their children as in some States, a portion of fathers’ contributions is allocated to the government (Achatz, McAllum, &

Corporation for Public/Private Ventures, 1994). Consequently, the high prevalence of female-headed households in some contexts may not reflect a “fatherless home.” The segmented research agendas have reinforced the stereotype that minority fathers such as African American and Afro-Caribbean are absent and uninvolved (McCready et al., 2013). In the present study, however, the perspectives of these Afro-Jamaican fathers supported the changing views of nonresident fatherhood, reflecting the influence of the sociocultural context.

According to Mincy, Miller, and De la Cruz Toledo (2016), even though the prevalence of nonresident fatherhood has increased, a significant number of nonresident biological fathers were found to be in contact with their children during infancy (King, Harris, & Heard, 2004), toddlerhood (Cabrera et al., 2008), early childhood (King et al., 2004), and adolescence (Hawkins, Amato, & King, 2007). Many children, therefore, maintained relationships with their nonresident biological fathers who continued to be involved with them, although often in complex parenting networks (Fagan et al., 2016). Thus, there are several conceptual limitations to this oversimplified conceptualization and operationalization of fatherlessness. One advance of the present study is the discovery of the reasons for variations in father involvement as well as men’s own understanding of the reasons for their involvement or lack of involvement.

These Afro-Jamaican fathers emphasized that fathers may be nonresidential for many reasons. Consequently, a lack of attention to the reasons for fatherlessness is a major conceptual limitation as different causes such as death, relationship dynamics, and divorce (East & O'Brien, 2006) will each affect children in unique ways (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; Levitt & Cici-Gokaltun, 2011). Thus, the various reasons for father absence and the history of relationships between fathers and their children will influence their quality of relationships and types of involvement in the future when the father is no longer in residence (Kuczynski & DeMol, 2015).

Moreover, continuous bonds theory supports the proposition that meaningful relationships are possible without physical presence (Stroebe & Schut, 2005). For example, individuals may continue to have transformed relationships with their deceased loved ones such as holding on to memories as a natural process of dealing with the loss. This view is also applicable when fathers are physically absent or nonresidential (e.g., living in a different household or even a different country).

Both biological and social fathers are important. Given the present findings, fatherlessness should not be based only on the non-involvement of biological fathers as children have relationships with other males. Thus, it is conceptually limiting to define fatherlessness solely in terms of biological fatherhood to the exclusion of the contribution of other men who serve as social fathers who are often in residence with the child's biological mother (Flood, 2003; Tamis-LeMonda & Cabrera, 1999). Fathering includes the involvement of both biological and social fathers as men are interacting with children in various relational contexts such as nonresident biological fathering, nonwedlock fathering, and stepfathering. At the same time, fathering is in flux due to complexities (e.g., shifting patterns of male–female relationships) (Mott, 1990) and the influences of bioecological factors. For example, fathering is sensitive to the bidirectional interactions of the macrosystem (e.g., impact of employment policy on income), the microsystem (e.g., conflict between parents due to inadequate resources) and the psychological resources of fathers (e.g., fathers feeling inadequate and lacking motivation to be involved because they do not have the financial resources) (see Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Fathering is, therefore, dynamic and fluid as it is responsive to changes over time (McLanahan et al., 2013). Consequently, children may experience transactional fatherlessness as both biological and/or social fathers may be involved at various parts and times of their lives in complex ways as

time progresses (e.g., intermittent father involvement). The present findings support this perspective.

As fathers and being fathered, the findings found that significant contributions of social fathering to children's development. For example, one father said: "I was...looking for that [being present] from him [biological father] but I did not get it from him, but I did not miss out on all of that...because I had my grandfather around to fill that gap" (Lloyd, M, LC, 1 BC, 1 SC). Similarly, Moses concluded: "He treated me like I am his son. I mean, I never feel like he was my uncle. I feel he was my father, alright" (S, MC, 2 BC). Furthermore, as biological and social fathers, these fathers did not make any distinction in how they fathered their children. As an example, one father reasoned: "...I treat them as my own" (Curtis, CL, LC, 4 BC, 3 SC).

These Afro-Jamaican fathers revealed that the inclusion of social fathers resulted in more complexities in fathering and that assigning the label of "fatherless children" is not reflective of many current Afro-Jamaican fathers and families. However, the positive contributions of father figures such as residential social fathers have been under-researched, especially in minority families (Bzostek, 2008). Rather, researchers tend to label children as fatherless without acknowledging social fathers, resulting in stereotyping of children as fatherless or minimizing the significance of the role of social fathers. For example, in a recent ethnographic study of 110 lower-class inner-city fathers in the United States, Edin and Nelson (2013) remarked that biological fathers who terminated tenuous relationships with their children's mothers left many children fatherless, although there was evidence of social fathering. Also, the bonds that social fathers developed with their social children were referred to as pseudoparental or surrogate parents. These terminologies are misleading and offensive as children may experience biological fatherlessness but are not fatherless socially.

These fathers indicated that there were different patterns of contact with their nonresident biological fathers. For example, one father reported that his biological father left after he was born and did not return until he was 18-years-old. In contrast, another father explained that he spent time at his father's house for weekend and holidays.

There was also intermittent fathering. Due to various circumstances, the involvement of nonresident biological fathers was unpredictable. For example, one father remarked: "I would eat from time to time when I get the chance to see him" (Barry, D, MC, 1 BC, 1 SC).

Sinkkonen and Keinänen (2008) acknowledged that the conceptualization of fatherlessness is problematic; however, researchers continue to oversimplify the phenomenon (e.g., Edin & Nelson, 2013). To explicitly address these issues, the current study explored fatherlessness from Afro-Jamaican fathers' perspectives. These fathers defined fatherlessness as the absence of male figures from their children's lives. Overwhelmingly, these fathers constructed fatherlessness with attention to both biological and social fathers. This definition is more insightful than the limited focus on the physical absence of biological fathers that has dominated the literature (e.g., Bachman et al., 2009; Culpin et al., 2013; DeBell, 2008; Edin & Nelson, 2013).

In operationalizing the phenomenon, these fathers discussed the quality of biological and/or social fathering. The quality of fathering was assessed with attention to the behavioural, affective, and cognitive domains (Palkovitz, 1997), as well as the spiritual domain of fathering. Within this framework, fatherlessness was multidimensional and defined as being the opposite of fathering. The dimensions included forms such as a complete absence of biological and social fathering, a lack of active fathering, the physical absence of biological fathers, inadequate fathering (e.g., only providing economically), and separation from biological father (i.e.,

temporary separation such as incarceration). Given the various forms of fatherlessness that were articulated, these fathers' perspectives suggest that there is a continuum of fatherlessness, including inadequate fathering.

Children's perspectives on fatherhood. In the present study, these fathers recognized the importance of children's perspectives in how they are fathered. In this regard, the subjective position of children is important as they may not miss their biological fathers due to effective social fathering. It is also possible that they may not feel any attachment to their biological fathers even though they live in the same house. Thus, the labelling of children as fatherless even with evidence that they benefit from nonresident biological fathering (Adamsons & Johnson, 2013; Cabrera et al., 2008; Coates & Phares, 2014; Fagan et al., 2016) and social fathering (Bzostek, 2008) is unfortunate as there is also a lack of attention to children's perspectives. For example, children may internalize their experiences of being fathered in various ways such as identifying social fathers as their primary fathers (Coley, 2003). Collectively, these conceptual limitations revealed that the intricacies of fatherlessness need greater attention.

Based on these fathers' perspectives, there needs to be caution when assigning the label of fatherlessness as children's experiences of being fathered should also be taken into consideration. For example, some fathers presented the view that it was possible for them to believe that they were engaging in appropriate fathering, but their children may not interpret it in the same way. Consequently, the fathers concluded that they could be involved but their children may have been subjectively detached from them and regarded themselves as fatherless. Thus, fatherlessness is an enigmatic phenomenon.

Cross-Cultural Features of Fathering

The present study contributes the understanding of common features of fathering across cultures. Researchers have found that the international literature on fathering has been diverse in quality and quantity of fathering and father involvement across cultures (Shwalb et al., 2013). However, there are conceptual and operational variations (Palkovitz, 1997; Pleck, 2010) that create significant challenges in synthesizing the findings within and across cultures and in identifying common features. Notwithstanding this variability, attention to fathering in diverse cultures has revealed some similar features across cultures (Roopnarine, 2015). According to Tamis-LeMonda (2015), factors such as fathers' care and action regarding the well-being of their children and families may be regarded as shared aspects of fathering in various communities. The contributions of the fathers in the present study map onto these common features.

Cultural similarities across fathers. For these Afro-Jamaican fathers, fathering encompassed common features which are consistent with the father involvement literature. Lamb et al.'s (1987) tripartite construct of father involvement, which is the most widely used model (Fagan, 2014). Also, Lamb et al. (1987) did not intend for the focus to be only on behaviours but to include determinants of father involvement such as motivation, skills, supports, and institutional factors. However, scholars have recognized some limitations to the model as it only focused on behavioural interactions of fathers with their children in the home (Chuang, 2013; Palkovitz, 1997). To address these limitations, Palkovitz (1997) proposed a broader conceptualization of father involvement, extending the behavioural domain to encompass affective and cognitive domains. Collectively, these domains may be generalized across various sociocultural contexts while recognizing that fathering cannot be essentialized (Pleck &

Masciadrelli, 2004). The fathers in the present study also discussed these aspects of involvement (e.g., playing, being there, encouraging, and thinking about the welfare of children).

Engagement. Of the components of father involvement, researchers have primarily studied engagement (Pleck, 2012). Researchers found that fathers engaged or interacted with their children from infancy (Biachi, Robinson, & Milkie, 2006; Shannon, Tamis-LeMonda, & Cabrera, 2006) to adolescence (Ibrahim, Somers, Luecken, Fabricius, & Cookston, 2017). The interactions of fathers with their children across developmental stages have been found in many cultures such as Britain (Flouri, 2005), China (Chuang, 2013), North America (Tamis-LeMonda, Shannon, Cabrera, & Lamb, 2004), and Mexico (Cowan, Cowan, Pruett, Pruett, & Wong, 2009) (also, see Chuang & Tamis-LeMonda, 2009, 2013). Also, researchers have found that with variations in family forms and advanced communication technologies, even transnational fathers can be actively engaged with their children (see Parke & Cookston, in press).

In the current study, Afro-Jamaican fathers also revealed that they engaged with their children in many ways such as playing games, making jokes, and going out together. Engagement with their children was often deliberate as they were striving to develop positive emotions in their children and to build their father–child relationship. As fathers continued to engage with their children, this enhanced the quality of their relationship. With attention to their own fathering, these fathers also indicated that both their biological and social fathers were engaged with them in a variety of activities (e.g., having fun). Thus, these findings of fathers across intergenerational father engagement with their children further support the proposition that this aspect of father involvement may be regarded as universal (Tamis-LeMonda, 2015).

Availability. Researchers have found that fathers' availability to their children is very important (Edin & Nelson, 2013; Lemay, Cashman, Elfenbein, & Felice, 2010; Ratele, Shefer, &

Clowes, 2012). However, there has been inadequate attention to availability as a construct (Pleck, 2010) which in turn has minimized the salience of availability. Also, the focus of availability on the presence of fathers in their homes (Pleck, 2012) has affected the exploration of other aspects of availability such as the fathers' meaning making, intentions, and motives. Although Lamb et al.'s (1987) conceptualization of accessibility was based on being in earshot distance of the child, the fathers in the current study revealed that as fathers and being fathered, availability included being accessible by various means such as cellular phones and social media. This is an important insight since it suggests that the concept of availability needs to be expanded to include means by which nonresident fathers can be available even at a distance. Similarly, Edin and Nelson (2013) found that fathers who were not living with their children were available through notes or phone or email. Thus, the current study contributes to a broader understanding of availability as these fathers indicated that being present meant that they were accessible to their children in various ways outside of the home (e.g., cellular phones).

Responsibility. The construct of responsibility has received limited attention (Carlson & Magnuson, 2011). According to Pleck (2012), there has been insufficient focus on responsibility due to the challenge that researchers encountered in conceptualizing empirical ways to measure responsibility. Also, the definition of responsibility was too narrow and restrictive, resulting in operational and methodological limitations. For example, Chuang (2013) found that this component was not applicable to Chinese fathers, which could be due to the limitations of the construct (i.e., fathers left alone to oversee children's care).

To address the concerns with the responsibility component, Pleck (2010) provided a revised conceptualization that encompassed social and material indirect care (activities for children, not with children) and process responsibility (ensuring that the various aspects of

involvement are provided). These expanded forms of responsibility were evident in the present study. More specifically, these fathers viewed “show interest” as a demonstration of being responsible for their children. The Jamaican fathers also reported that showing interest was characteristic of their own childhood experiences of being fathered. Showing interest included supporting activities, being concerned, and providing material support.

Affective and cognitive involvement. Extending the father involvement model (Lamb et al., 1987), affective and cognitive involvement based on Palkovitz’s (1997) conceptualization may be regarded as another cross-cultural aspect of fathering (Dubowitz et al., 2004). However, there is a dearth of studies on these aspects of involvement. This may be due to the difficulty that researchers experienced in assessing and operationalizing these phenomena, especially the cognitive component. However, it is possible to explore these involvement constructs through qualitative interviewing (Warren, 2001). The current study supports the utilization of this methodology as the Afro-Jamaican fathers discussed these aspects.

Affective involvement. Scholars have emphasized the importance of affective involvement (Fagan et al., 2014) but there is a paucity of studies in this area. The limited findings revealed that fathers have been affectionate towards their children (Bar-On & Scharf, 2016; Dolan, 2014; Hofferth & Goldscheider, 2010; Edin & Nelson, 2013). Also, fathers’ warmth and responsiveness contributed to the quality of father–child interactions (see Pleck, 2010).

As reported in the current study, the fathers provided insight into the process of how fathers created positive relationships with their children (e.g., praising, encouraging, hugging, and telling their children that they love them). Also, the findings underscore the importance of an affective dimension of involvement. Other findings from North American samples further

support the evidence that fathers are responsive and affectionate (Child Trends, 2006; Notaro & Volling, 1999), and that children benefit from the affective involvement of their fathers (Cabrera & Mitchell, 2009; Shannon, Tamis-LeMonda & Cabrera, 2006).

Cognitive involvement. According to Palkovitz (1997), cognitive involvement is an important domain of father involvement and the extant literature is replete with evidence that fathers impact children's cognitive development (see Parke & Cookston, in press). However, due to limited information on the cognitive domain of fathering (see Fagan, 2014), it is unclear how fathers promote children's cognitive development through their cognitive involvement such as reasoning, evaluating, planning, strategizing, and advocating (Palkovitz, 1997). It is possible that few researchers directly and explicitly explored the process as it requires a research design that explicitly investigates this domain through priming and probing. The current findings revealed that these fathers reflected on the ways in which they were cognitively present in their children's lives. As an example, one father indicated that reasoning with his child about certain things was very important. The manifestations of cognitive involvement included conscious thought regarding their children, giving priority to their needs above their own, and reasoning with them.

A Sociocultural Approach

The current study was one of the first to explore the concurrent influence of biological and social fathering across multiple generations and provided insights into the understanding of fathering in a cultural context. How fathers constructed the meaning and role of fathering has been culturalized based on sociocultural contexts which, in turn, influence children's development. This perspective is guided by the recognition that fathering is socially constructed (Højgaard, 1997) and sensitive to bioecological influences (Parke & Cookston, in press). Therefore, it is important to have greater insight into the cultural contexts in which fatherhood is

embedded (Chuang, 2009). In this regard, Bronfenbrenner and Morris's (2006) bioecological theory provides a useful framework for researchers to explore important systemic influences which are regarded as bidirectional.

For these Afro-Jamaican fathers, fathering included biological and/or social fathers in their experiences of being fathered and as fathers themselves which has been influenced by several systemic factors. According to Bronfenbrenner (1977), the macrosystem which includes culture, politics, and history is operationalized in the micro-, meso-, and exosystems. Of relevance to Afro-Jamaican families is the influence of slavery and its aftermath on fathering. These macrosystemic impacts on the microsystem included communal parenting, multiple partner fertility, economic difficulties, and dynamics in male–female relationships.

Communal parenting emerged due to the significant challenges that slavery and its aftermath created for families to raise their children. In this context, adult males were important in the socialization of children (Bush, 2010; Brown & Innis, 2005; Fox, 1999). Similarly, researchers found communal parenting in comparable ecological contexts such as African American families (Allen & Connor, 1997) and South African families (Ratele, Shefer, & Clowes, 2012). Within the Afro-Jamaican context, the fathers in the current study were exposed to social fathering in their communities which they have incorporated into their social construction of fathering and the enactment of fathering. For example, one father said: “I had lots of males in my life” (Daniel, M, MC, 4 BC). Thus, many individuals performed parental roles that contributed to the socialization of children (Parke, 2013).

Fathering was also influenced by multiple partner fertility which influenced the relationship dynamics among various partners, children of different partners and the fathers. For example, children often experienced simultaneous biological and social fathering (Anderson,

2009), in which a child has contact with a biological but nonresident father and contact with a resident social father who is the child's mother's current partner. This experience of various forms of fathering impacted the construction of fathering by men themselves and probably children as well. Also, multiple partner fertility created fluidity and dynamics in fathering whereby children experienced various levels of fathering with different men over time (Mincy & Pouncy, 2007). To illustrate, a child was conceived in a common-law relationship which subsequently ended, and the man started a romantic relationship with a female who also had a child. As time progressed, a child was conceived in this relationship. When this relationship was terminated, the man returned and eventually married his former common-law partner. For these fathers, exposure to these relationship dynamics may have influenced their perspective that fathering can be accomplished through being either a biological and/or social father. For example, one who experienced social fathering commented: "He was a great stepdad" (Wayne, S, LC, 2 BC, 2 SC).

In the current study, one of the most salient roles of biological fathers was economic provider. As an example, one father said: "As you know man provides, the breadwinner. Even if he gets help from his spouse, but you feel that as a man you should provide" (Earl, M, MC, 2 BC, 2 SC). Researchers have found, however, that economic difficulties also affected father involvement. For example, when nonresident fathers were unable to provide, it affected the ways in which they were involved with their children (Brown & Chevannes, 2001). Also, due to economic challenges, biological fathers sometimes migrated in search of better opportunities which often affected the support that they provided for their children who were left behind (see Crawford-Brown & Rattray, 2001). As a result, social fathers played an integral role. Thus, the

importance placed on the provider role of biological fathers and teaching and guiding of social fathers may have influenced these fathers' emphasis on biological and social fathering.

Finally, the context of male-female relationships influenced social fathering. More specifically, tenuous male–female relationships contributed to the instability of support for children over time. Based on the experiences of these fathers, social fathering played an important role in situations when biological fathering was inadequate or absent due to the dynamics in relationships between the biological parents. Also, social fathering often complemented biological fathering. Scholars have acknowledged that the dynamics in relationships based on diverse cultural values as well as family ideologies will continue to influence the roles of biological and social fathers in children's lives (Cabrera et al., 2000). Collectively, these factors have impacted contemporary fathers as fathering is enacted through biological and/or social fathers with unique cultural roles such as traditional, teaching/training, leadership, and spiritual.

Traditional role. Researchers have acknowledged that breadwinning is a traditional fathering role (McCready et al., 2013; Roer-Strier, Strier, Este, Shimoni, & Clark, 2005). Roopnarine (2015) found that providing was still a major aspect of how fathers defined fathering, especially in developing countries such as Brazil, Mexico, and Kenya. According to Christiansen and Palkovitz (2001), providing is multidimensional and encompasses human, social, and financial capital. Thus, providing is an important aspect of fathers' contribution to children's development, but the salience of various aspects is based on the cultural context. For example, fathers' role as economic provider was salient in families such as Chinese (Chuang, 2013), Sudanese (Este & Tachble, 2009), African American (Lin & McLanahan, 2007; Smeeding et al., 2011), and African Canadian/Caribbean (McCready et al., 2013).

In the current study, fathers reported that providing for children economically was significant. For example, one father in referring to his biological father remarked: “He was the breadwinner for the family. He just went out there to look it [earn money for the family]” (Pele, CL, LC, 3 BC). Researchers also found that the provider role was important in Afro-Jamaican families (Anderson, 2009; Bailey et al., 2001). One reason is that financial support is perceived as “good or responsible fathering” and thus, the lack thereof is translated as the abandonment of fathering (Roopnarine, 2013). Also, this role was found to be critical in the fathers’ place in their families (e.g., head of the family) (Brown & Chevannes, 2001). It is also possible that this role was salient for these fathers as it affected the quality of life that they were able to provide for their children due to financial limitations.

Protecting is another traditional role that is emphasized in ethnic cultures (Roschelle, 1997), which was also salient for the fathers in the current study. As an example, one father said: “I protect him” (Jonny, D, LC, 1 BC). The emphasis on parents as protectors of their children has its origin in African American parents’ racial socialization of their children (Hughes et al., 2006; Phinney & Chavira, 1995). Consequently, when researchers discussed protection, they tended to focus on parents’ use of proactive strategies (e.g., emphasis on themes such as racial and cultural pride, racial achievements, and ethnic heritage) and protective strategies (e.g., sharing information about the negative experiences of people of colour due to discrimination and oppression and how to cope) to prepare their children for bias (Stevenson, 1994). However, with attention to parental protection due to racial issues, researchers have not explicitly explored social location (identity based on factors such as type of work and dwelling) as a motive for fathers’ protection of their children. The present findings contribute to the importance of social location as a significant factor in Black fathers’ emphasis on their role as protectors of their

children. Specifically, social location influenced the fathers' social capital (Coleman, 1988), and, in turn, created risk factors for their involvement in their children's lives (Freeman, Newland, & Coyl, 2008), as well as their capacity to protect their children.

Another reason for the emphasis on protection in ethnic minority families is unsafe neighbourhoods. These neighbourhoods are often associated with violence and other social issues that cause safety and security concerns for parents (Edin & Nelson, 2013). As a result, protection is an important role of parents in caring for their children. As the current study reveals, it is not just neighborhood safety that is a concern. Afro-Jamaican fathers discussed protection with attention to concerns regarding factors such as safety within communities, but also negative influences of the internet, media, and communication technologies. Collectively, these factors influence the salience of protection in ethnic minority families such as African American (Dubowitz et al., 2004) and African Canadian/Caribbean (McCready et al., 2013).

Teaching/training role. Researchers found that fathers in ethnic families such as Chinese (Chuang, 2013), Canadian immigrant Sudanese (Este & Tachble, 2009), and African Canadian/Caribbean (McCready et al., 2013) emphasized their role as teachers. Similarly, the current study revealed that fathers discussed teaching as an important role. However, they also emphasized training which is similar to the concept of *guan* (training) in Asian cultures and its importance in preparing children for future success (e.g., see Chao, 1994; Stewart, Bond, Kennard, Ho, & Zaman, 2002). To illustrate, one father said: "I am supposed to build them, and I am supposed to train them" (Eaton, M, MC, 3 BC). Due to the deficit perspective that characterized studies on families, the role of fathers as trainers of their children has been insufficiently explored. Anderson (2009) was the first to acknowledge that Afro-Jamaican fathers also viewed themselves as trainers as is further supported by the present study. Unfortunately,

past researchers have tended to focus on negative aspects of Black fathering and fatherlessness. The present findings further support the literature regarding the role of Black fathers as trainers of their children to equip them for future success.

Leadership role. Brownson and Gilbert (2002) found that fathers (e.g., Caucasian, Asian American, African American, and Native American) reported that one of the discourses that they were mostly exposed to was reflective of traditional statements regarding fathers as strong and responsible family leaders. Thus, this affected fathers' understanding of their role as leaders of their families which has been traditionally expected in cultures such as Chinese (Hsiao, Klimidis, Minas, & Tan, 2006) and West African (Hill, 1999). Moreover, the role of fathers as leaders of their children would influence their involvement in various aspects of their children's lives.

Although fathers are expected to be the leaders of their families in some cultures, this role is not salient in the current literature on fathering. In this study, these fathers discussed leadership as a distinct aspect of fathering. Their attention to the leadership role in their families may be connected to the cultural perspective that men are the head of their families (Brown & Chevannes, 2001). It is also possible that the emphasis may be based on the religious Christian belief that a man should be the head of his household. For example, one father remarked: "Head of the family and fatherhood. Mean I am the one that sees to it that everything is how it should be" (Curtis, CL, LC, 4 BC, 3 SC).

Spiritual role. The findings of the current study provide empirical support for religion/spirituality to be included as a distinct domain of exploration in fathering in sociocultural context, extending Palkovitz's (1997) domains of father involvement. For these fathers, the impartation of religious principles that they experienced in being fathered and the spiritual support that they offered to their children and families. Religion is regarded as a primary

motivation for the values and principles that parents transmit to their children (Schwartz, 1992). Thus, spiritual involvement influenced values and attitudes, which affects various aspects of their children's lives and functioning.

Schwartz (1992) found that although spirituality did not serve as a motivation for the socialization of values across cultures, it was distinct in some cultures. Religion is important to African Americans from the period of slavery when it was used for psychological and spiritual advantage (Martin & Martin, 1978), serving as the guide for living and holding them together despite adversity. According to Newport (2006), religion is still important to African Americans as it was revealed in the 2006 Gallup report that most Non-Hispanic Black persons indicated that religion is important to them. Similarly, religion has historically been an important aspect of the lives of persons of African descent in the Caribbean (Wilmot, 1997). However, despite the importance of religion in some cultures and human functioning, religion has received limited attention for several decades in psychology research (Parke, 2001) as well as in clinical practices (Hathaway et al., (2004).

With the recent acknowledgement that spirituality should be explored in research (Parke, 2001), there has been attention on religion as a separate domain of development (Day, 2010). Religiosity encompasses adherence to practices, beliefs, and authority structures based on a particular religious tradition (Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2005). Researchers have found that it served as a motivation in some individuals' lives (Schwartz, 1992) and positively contributed to their functioning or well-being (Ysseldyk, Matheson, & Anisman, 2010).

Barriers to Fathering

Fathers across cultures confront challenges and barriers such as economic, psychological, and social factors (Tamis-LeMonda, 2015), but these barriers are culturalized. Researchers have

found that in cultural contexts where fathers are disadvantaged in many ways, their role as fathers is significantly affected (Edin & Nelson, 2013; Este & Tachble, 2009; Smeeding et al., 2011). Except for time constraint and work-related issues, these Afro-Jamaican fathers encountered similar issues, whether they were biological or social fathers. For example, all fathers viewed child-related issues, partner-related issues, environmental challenges, and cognitive pressures as barriers.

For time constraints and work-related issues, as biological fathers, these fathers emphasized how time constraints and work-related issues affected quality time with their children. Consequently, the fathers placed greater emphasis on their role as biological fathers. Thus, these Afro-Jamaican fathers believed that they should prioritize their time with their biological children. Similarly, Edin and Nelson (2013) found that spending quality time with biological children was salient in fathers' perspectives on what it meant to be a good father. Thus, for these Afro-Jamaican fathers, quality time was regarded as an obligation to build relationships with biological children. However, as social fathers, time constraint and work-related issues were not viewed as barriers or challenges. Thus, the extent to which fathers interpreted the necessity of spending quality time with biological and social children differed.

Economic barriers. For these fathers, economic barriers were salient, regardless of their social class. This is characteristic of individuals in developing countries such as Jamaica (United Nations Development Programme, 2015). The current study, therefore, reinforced the significant impact economics has on fathers' capacity to fulfil their responsibilities to their families. For example, with multiple partner fertility, fathers often do not have enough finances to support their nonresidential children. Moreover, the economic difficulties tended to be a catalyst for other challenges. For these Afro-Jamaican fathers, being unable to adequately provide affected

many aspects (e.g., spending quality, providing educational support) of their involvement with their children.

Social barriers. The current results revealed that social barriers such as child-related issues, partner-related issues, and environmental challenges, influenced father involvement. The current findings support the literature regarding the impact of child characteristics (Habib, 2012; Holmes & Huston, 2010; Lamb & Lewis, 2010; Parke & Cookston, in press) (e.g., “He has a very hard personality like myself”; Sam, M, MC, 1 BC, 5 SC), dynamics in parental dyad (Allen & Hawkins, 1999; Lin & McLanahan, 2007), and societal factors (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) on fathering. It also reinforces the perspective that fathering is sensitive to contextual factors (Cabrera et al., 2014).

Psychological barriers. Freeman et al. (2008) found that self-efficacy positively influenced father involvement despite other barriers to involvement. Thus, a lack of psychological resources significantly affects father involvement. For these Afro-Jamaican fathers, the psychological barrier focused on the cognitive pressures that they encountered. As an example, one father said: “Your head hurt you. You think all type of things. You think about where you are going to get it from. But as a father, you have to try to remain positive and stay put” (Wayne, S, LC, 2 BC, 2 SC). This cognitive pressure could affect their self-esteem, which, in turn, impacts their self-efficacy and psychological resources. For example, Edin and Nelson (2013) found that the fathers confronted mental challenge in providing and meeting the expectations of themselves as fathers, which negatively impacted fathers’ psychological resources.

Intergenerational Transmission of Fathering

The fathers in the current study revealed that there were continuity and discontinuity of fathering across multiple generations. In support of continuity, these fathers discussed all the themes across multiple generations. At the same time, evidence of discontinuity was revealed in comments such as “So, they can all grow up knowing their father and not be the type of children to say that my father lives over there and I live here.” Similarly, scholars have found that the intergenerational transmission of family heritage is selective, partial, and uncertain (Berteaux & Berteaux-Wiame, 1997; Bjørnholt, 2010). This pattern of intergenerational transmission is consistent with the bioecological perspective (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) and the understanding of development as encompassing equifinality and multifinality (Palkovitz, 2007). As a result, the intergenerational transmission of family heritage relies on an active process of appropriation and transformation by successive generations (Bjørnholt, 2010). Therefore, the findings of the present study further support the intergenerational complexities regarding the understanding of fathers’ involvement in their children’s socialization, as well as their outcomes.

Furthermore, the current study contributes to the literature on the intergenerational transmission of fathering as it is one of the first to explore the intergenerational transmission of fathering with attention to both biological and social fathers. Also, intergenerational transmission was ascertained through the processing of the retrospective account of these fathers regarding their own experiences of being fathered. These Afro-Jamaican fathers revealed that fathering changes over time based on contemporary realities, as well as fathers’ own experiences, motives, and expectations. As fathers and from being fathered, the fathers developed their own approach to fathering whereby they used unique ways to meet their own fathering goals, incorporating and excluding aspects of the ways that they were fathered as children. Thus, the present study

supports previous findings on the continuity and discontinuity of fathering based fathers' agency as well as the intersectionality of structural and cultural change (Brannen & Nilsen, 2006).

Limitations of the Study

There were some limitations of the current study, including: (a) sample size, (b) sampling procedures, (c) social desirability, (d) methodology, and (e) a lack of attention to important areas of the fathers' experiences.

Sample size. Although the sample size of 24 fathers was adequate for thematic analysis, it affected the generalizability of the findings. Also, the small sample was restricted to the Kingston and St. Andrew metropolitan areas of Jamaica. Thus, the study does not claim transferability (generalizability) to all Afro-Jamaican fathers.

Sampling procedures. Even though preselected criteria were used to select participants, there is the possibility of selection bias as fathers were recruited through their institutions and/or organizations or through snowballing. More specifically, the fathers may have been identified due to their involvement in their children's lives. As a result, uninvolved fathers who were unidentified may have chosen not to participate in the study. Thus, it is possible that the results do not reflect the diverse experiences of Afro-Jamaican fathers; rather, the views are reflective of a higher involvement sample (Edin & Nelson, 2013).

Social desirability. The literature has shown that fathers tend to underrate their involvement due to a lack of role centrality (Adamsons & Pasley, 2016). Notwithstanding, the fathers may have viewed themselves as good fathers due to a social desirability bias. The fathers may have chosen to focus on those aspects of fathering that they were proud of or redefined some aspects of fathering to assuage their cognitive dissonance with what they believed it meant to be a good father and their own behaviours (Edin & Nelson, 2013).

Methodology. As a part of the methodology of this study, single informants were used to explore fathers' experiences of fathering their biological and social children. The data was not triangulated which could have increased the credibility of the study. For example, other measures of fathering such as time diaries could be utilized or the fathers' claims about their role in their children's lives could have been compared with the mothers of the children and/or the children's perspectives. This would have strengthened the internal validity of the study. Thus, data triangulation would have strengthened the fathers' perspectives (Olson, 2004).

Retrospective approach. Another methodological limitation is the use of a retrospective approach. Specifically, the fathers were required to recall various aspects of their experiences of being fathered by biological and social fathers during their childhood. A retrospective approach is subject to challenges related to recall and a lack of salience, especially when talking to fathers about fathering. Thus, this approach may have affected the accuracy and/or adequacy of the perspectives that the fathers presented. For example, a lack of intergenerational transmission of fathering within family in the present study could be based on a lack of accurate recall and reporting. Also, the fathers could have interpreted their experiences in various ways as a sense making process.

A third limitation is the utilization of only a qualitative approach. A combined qualitative and quantitative approach would facilitate greater understanding of fathering. More specifically, theories and measures in the field could be used to generate information that would facilitate data triangulation. Also, it would contribute more to the field by confirming, extending, refuting, or challenging previous studies.

A lack of attention to important areas of the fathers' experiences. Due to the influence of contextual factors on fathering (Parke, 2002), researchers need to focus more

attention to the fathers' life-course. Focusing on their trajectories and major life transitions would have provided useful information on the context and history within which their fathering experiences were embedded (Edin & Nelson, 2013).

Another area that should receive more attention is social fathering as the focus was on biological fathers who may also be social fathers. This would have led to more comprehensive explanation of the contributions of social fathers to children's development.

A third area not explored was the fathers' expectations of themselves as fathers, whether they were meeting those expectations, and how they rated their involvement as well as their views of an ideal father. This would have possibly resulted in a greater level of salience of domains of fathering that may not have been highlighted in the fathers' own experiences.

Finally, the fathers were not primed regarding less salient aspects of fathering. Thus, it is possible that the fathers would have given more attention to the cognitive and spiritual domains of fathering if they were directly asked about these aspects. Alternatively, methodological triangulation whereby the fathers completed a survey of fathering inventory prior to the interview could have been employed, and the data could have been used to strengthen internal validity or credibility.

Future Directions

The current study supports the view that fathering should be studied with attention to context and history. In this regard, researchers should employ the bioecological perspective (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) to focus on the various influences on fathers, their partners, children, and other individuals (Fagan et al., 2016; Flouri, 2005; Parke & Cookston, in press). Attention to various contextual factors will further contribute to the ways in which fathers are

meaningfully contributing to the children's lives in ethnic minority families and a greater understanding of fathers across cultures.

Researchers should also examine the intersection and interplay of social and biological fathering. This could provide further evidence for the broader definition of fathering to encompass social fathers, as well as the conceptualization of fatherlessness to include both biological and social fathers to properly represent the complexities of the phenomenon. At the same time, scholars should be guided by the literature on father involvement while being sensitive to cultural variations (Palkovitz, 2007). This will allow researchers to focus on the various aspects of fathering and explore those aspects that may be less salient. Thus, fatherhood researchers should place emphasis on both theories of fathering as well as new ways of collecting data about fathering.

Future studies should employ a multimethod approach including both data and methodological triangulation. This would facilitate greater understanding of father involvement with attention to the centrality of historical, structural, economic, and relational issues (Edin & Nelson, 2013). Also, the claims made by fathers would be verified and confirm the nature of their involvement and level of involvement with residential and nonresidential biological children and social children.

This study did not explore how fathers responded to the barriers and challenges that they confronted. Examination of this aspect with attention to fathers in different situations would contribute to the development of strength-based intervention programs to assist fathers in the flight-fight dilemma that they often confronted in tenuous relationships with partners which often affected their involvement.

Finally, the findings of the current study may prove helpful to professionals engaged in working with families. Professionals support families in empowering fathers to be involved in their children's lives in multiple ways despite economic constraints. Also, mothers should be encouraged to foster involvement of social fathers, especially when biological fathers are absent.

Implications and Conclusions

This study contributes to the scholarship on fathering and fatherlessness by revealing the complexities and multidimensionality of these phenomena. It challenged the deficit perspective that dominates the literature on minority families, especially perspective of Afro-Jamaican fathers as absent and uninvolved. Thus, both media and scholars should highlight the positive ways in which Afro-Jamaican fathers are involved in their children's lives as fathers have been involved in complex ways in their children's lives for many generations.

The study also revealed that fatherlessness is complex. Thus, scholars should explore the phenomenon with attention to its multidimensionality. This suggests that the claim that fatherlessness is the cause for many social ills (Blankenhorn, 1995) should be re-examined. Also, caution should be exercised when assigning the label of fatherless as attention should not be based only on biological fathers or limited to residential fathers. Also, the myriad of channels of contact between nonresident fathers and their children needs to be more fully recognized

Finally, this strength-based or positive (even neutral) stance in exploring Black fathers contributes to the literature on generative fathering, which emphasizes the positive ways in which fathers are contributing to children's development (Allen & Connor, 1997). Thus, the present findings have led to more in-depth knowledge of the complexities and multidimensionality of fathering in Black families, and more broadly, ethnic minority fathers.

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Table 1

Demographics and Background Information

Variable	Variable subcategory	N	%	Mean (SD)
Age				33.71 (3.36)
Age of identified child				9.08 (1.72)
Sex of identified child	Male	13	54.20	
	Female	11	45.80	
Number of biological children				2.46 (1.10)
Number of social children				1.92 (4.70)
Marital status	Married	11	45.80	
	Common-law	3	12.50	
	Single	7	29.20	
	Divorced	2	8.30	
Ses	Middle class	13	54.17	
	Lower class	11	45.83	
Education	Grades 7-9	3	12.50	
	Grades 10-13	8	33.33	
	Some college	5	20.80	
	Diploma/associate degree	2	8.30	
	Degree	3	12.50	
	Graduate professional degree	3	12.50	
Community	Inner city	15	62.5	
	Residential	9	37.50	
Residential status	At least one biological child	20	83.30	
	At least one social child	6	25	
Employment status	Full-time	18	75	
	Part-time	1	4.20	
	Full-time & part-time	2	8.20	
	Unemployed	3	12.50	
Occupation	Professional	7	29.20	
	Sales/business	4	16	
	Trades/skills	4	16	
	Unskilled	4	16	
	Unemployed	3	12.50	
	Health	2	8.30	
Income	>\$2,976 per annum	3	12.50	
	<\$2,975 per annum	18	75	
	None	3	12.50	
Religion	Christianity	23	95.83	

Table 1 (continued)				
Variable	Variable subcategory	N	%	Mean (SD)
Housing arrangement	Rastafarian	1	4.17	
	Rented house/apartment	12	50	
	Own house	3	12.50	
	Friend/family property	4	16.70	
	Other	4	16.70	
Head of household	Father	21	87.50	
	Fathers' parent(s)	2	8.20	
	Friend	1	4.20	

Table 2

Themes and Subthemes in Experience of Biological and Social Fathering and Own Fathering

Theme	Subtheme	Salience of themes		
		Biological Father	Social Father	Fathering
Behavioral involvement	Accessibility	23	14	12
	Teaching and guiding	19	20	13
	Taking care of needs	19	11	21
	Showing interest	13	8	13
	Communicating with children	10	5	6
	Monitoring	6	1	3
	Protecting	5	2	8
	Child-related activities	4	3	10
	General engagement	3	4	3
	Errands	3	4	1
	Leadership	3		7
Affective involvement		13	9	11
Cognitive involvement		2	1	4
Spiritual involvement		1	1	3

Table 3

Conceptualization of Roles and Responsibilities being Fathered and as Fathers

Name	Being fathered	Fathering	Percentage similarity
Adams	Affective involvement		50%
	Availability	*	
	Communicating with child	*	
	Monitoring	Leadership	
	Showing interest	*	
	Teaching/guiding	Taking care of needs	
Barry	Affective involvement	*	30%
	Availability		
	Child-related activities		
	Communicating with child	*	
	Leadership		
	Monitoring		
	Protection		
	Showing interest		
	Taking care of needs		
	Teaching/guiding	*	
Bryan	Affective involvement	*	42.86%
	Availability	Leadership	
	Communicating with child	Protection	
	Monitoring	*	
	Showing interest	Spiritual involvement	
	Taking care of needs	*	
	Teaching/guiding	Cognitive involvement	
Clive	Availability	*	50%
	Showing interest		
	Taking care of needs		
	Teaching/guiding	*	
Curtis	Affective involvement	*	57.14%
	Availability	*	
	Leadership	*	
	Taking care of needs	*	
	Teaching/guiding	*	
		Child-related activities	
Dane	Affective involvement	*	80%
	Availability	*	
	Showing interest	Protection	
	Taking care of needs	*	
	Teaching/guiding	*	
Daniel	Availability		37.50%
	Errands		

Table 3 (continued)

Name	Being Fathered	Fathering	Percentage Similarity
David	General engagement	*	75%
	Leadership		
	Protection	Child-related activities	
	Spiritual involvement	Showing interest	
	Taking care of needs	*	
	Teaching/guiding	*	
	Affective involvement	*	
	Availability	*	
	Errands	Child-related activities	
	Leadership	Spiritual involvement	
Earl	Protection	*	57.14
	Showing interest	*	
	Taking care of needs	*	
	Teaching/guiding	*	
	Affective involvement	Child-related activities	
	Communicating with child	Availability	
	Monitoring	Leadership	
	Protection	*	
	Showing interest	*	
	Taking care of needs	*	
Eaton	Teaching/guiding	*	28.57%
	Affective involvement		
	Availability		
	Child-related activities	*	
	Cognitive involvement		
	Communicating with child		
	Monitoring		
	Teaching/guiding	*	
	Availability		
	Child-related activities	*	
English	Communicating with child	*	62.5%
	Errands	*	
	Monitoring		
	Showing interest	*	
	Taking care of needs	*	
	Teaching/guiding		
	Availability	*	
	Child-related activities	*	
	Communicating with child	*	
	Errands	*	
Gary	Monitoring		60%
	Showing interest	*	
	Taking care of needs	*	
	Teaching/guiding	*	
Jonny	Availability	Communicating with child	62.5%
	Affective involvement	Cognitive involvement	
	Availability	Affective involvement*	
		Monitoring	

Table 3 (continued)			
Name	Being Fathered	Fathering	Percentage Similarity
Kevin	Child-related activities	*	20%
	Cognitive involvement		
	Protection	*	
	Showing interest	*	
	Taking care of needs	*	
	Teaching/guiding		
	Availability		
Lloyd	Errands		22.22%
	Showing interest		
	Taking care of needs	Taking care of needs	
	Teaching/guiding		
	Affective involvement		
	Availability		
	Child-related activities		
Mark	Communicating with child		80%
	Errands		
	Showing interest		
	Spiritual involvement		
	Taking care of needs	*	
	Teaching/guiding	Leadership	
	Availability	*	
Moses	Monitoring	*	71.43%
	Showing interest	*	
	Taking care of needs	*	
	Teaching/guiding	Communicating with child	
	Affective involvement	*	
	Availability		
	Child-related activities	*	
Omar	Cognitive involvement		55.56%
	Monitoring		
	Showing interest	*	
	Taking care of needs	*	
	Teaching/guiding	*	
	Affective involvement	*	
	Availability	Cognitive involvement	
	Child-related activities	*	
	General engagement	*	
	Showing interest	*	
Pele	Taking care of needs	*	50%
	Teaching/guiding	Communicating with child	
	Errands	Leadership	
		Protection	
		Availability	

Table 3 (continued)

Name	Being Fathered	Fathering	Percentage Similarity
Pete	Showing interest		
	Taking care of needs	*	
	Teaching/guiding	*	
	Availability	*	66.67%
Peter	Cognitive involvement		
	Communicating with child	Showing interest	
	Protection	*	
	Taking care of needs	*	
Ricky	Teaching/guiding	*	
	Affective involvement	*	
	Availability	*	
	General engagement		
Sam	Showing interest		
	Taking care of needs	*	
	Teaching/guiding	*	
	Affective involvement	*	50%
Wayne	Availability		
	Child-related activities	*	
	Cognitive involvement	*	
	Communicating with child	Leadership	
Wayne	Errands	Spiritual involvement	
	Protection	*	
	Showing interest		
	Taking care of needs	*	
Wayne	Teaching/guiding		
	Affective involvement		16.67%
	Availability		
	Communicating with child		
Wayne	Showing interest	General engagement	
	Taking care of needs	*	
	Teaching/guiding		

Note. *Represents similarity of themes for being fathered and fathering

Appendix A

**RESEARCH ETHICS BOARDS**

*Certification of Ethical Acceptability of Research
Involving Human Participants*

APPROVAL PERIOD: February 10, 2016
EXPIRY DATE: February 10, 2017
REB: G
REB NUMBER: 16JA016
TYPE OF REVIEW: Delegated Type 1
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Chuang, Sue (schuang@uoguelph.ca)
DEPARTMENT: Family Relations & Applied Nutrition
SPONSOR(S): SSHRC Institutional Grants (SIG)
TITLE OF PROJECT: Ethnic Minority Parenting Study

The members of the University of Guelph Research Ethics Board have examined the protocol which describes the participation of the human participants in the above-named research project and considers the procedures, as described by the applicant, to conform to the University's ethical standards and the Tri-Council Policy Statement, 2nd Edition.

The REB requires that researchers:

- Adhere to the protocol as last reviewed and approved by the REB.
- Receive approval from the REB for any modifications before they can be implemented.
- Report any change in the source of funding.
- Report unexpected events or incidental findings to the REB as soon as possible with an indication of how these events affect, in the view of the Principal Investigator, the safety of the participants, and the continuation of the protocol.
- Are responsible for ascertaining and complying with all applicable legal and regulatory requirements with respect to consent and the protection of privacy of participants in the jurisdiction of the research project.

The Principal Investigator must:

- Ensure that the ethical guidelines and approvals of facilities or institutions involved in the research are obtained and filed with the REB prior to the initiation of any research protocols.
- Submit a Status Report to the REB upon completion of the project. If the research is a multi-year project, a status report must be submitted annually prior to the expiry date. Failure to submit an annual status report will lead to your study being suspended and potentially terminated.

The approval for this protocol terminates on the EXPIRY DATE, or the term of your appointment or employment at the University of Guelph whichever comes first.

Signature:

Date: February 10, 2016

L. Kuczynski
Chair, Research Ethics Board-General

Appendix B

Letter to Stakeholders

I'm emailing you to see if it's possible if you could help my doctoral student, David Green, recruit some fathers for his dissertation. I'm hoping that you can also help me (and Michael Coombs) with our study as well.

David is looking for Black fathers between the ages of 25 - 49 with biological children from 6 - 12 years of age. They don't necessarily have to be involved with their children. He will do an interview with them, they would fill out some questionnaires (total time, up to 2 hours). For their time, he will pay \$1,000 JMD cash.

For my study, I'm looking for Black fathers and mothers with 2- 4 year old children (both biological parents living together with child). They will do interviews and fill out some forms. Each person would be paid \$1,000 JMD each.

Appendix C

Ethnic Parenting Study

David Green
Susan Chuang
University of Guelph, Canada

In Canada:

We are looking for Chinese-Canadian and Black Jamaican-Canadian mothers AND fathers of young and middle childhood children (up to 12 years of age) to talk about various aspects of parenting and parent-child relationships. You do not have to be living with your child or be involved in his or her life. We are looking for one or both parents. We want to know what YOU think about parenting!!!

In China: We are looking for Chinese mothers AND fathers....

In Jamaica: We are looking for Black Jamaican mothers AND fathers....

Your participation would include an interview and filling out some questionnaires.

The time involved would be about one to two hours. Interviews will be conducted in your home.
For your participation, there is a cash gift of \$1000 (JMD).

We hope that you will join us in this exciting project.

If you are interested, please contact David Green at 876-401-4928 dgreen05@uoguelph.ca or

Susan Chuang at: 519-824-4120, ext. 58389/email: schuang@uoguelph.ca

REB #: 16JA016

Appendix D



CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

PROJECT TITLE: Ethnic Parenting

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Dr. Susan Chuang (Associate Professor) and David Green (doctoral student) from the Department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition at the University of Guelph.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Dr. Susan Chuang: Email: Schuang@uoguelph.ca or 519-824-4120, ext. 58389 or write to: Department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition, Macdonald Institute, University of Guelph, Guelph, ON N1G 2W1.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Mothers and Fathers: We are conducting a research project on ethnic families in Canada (i.e., Chinese Canadians, and Black Jamaican Canadians), China, and Jamaica. We are examining how parents (or guardians) view their roles and responsibilities in the family, the parenting practices, parent-child relationships (or the lack thereof), and parents' behaviours with young children (up to 12 years of age). We are also interested in your life course as a parent (whether biological or non-biological) and the influencing factors that have shaped your values and beliefs about parenting. We are also interested in examining parents who have children but are not involved in their children's lives. We are looking for one or both parents. Your participation will provide greater understanding into the everyday lives of families, with a particular focus on childhood.

All Participants: Involvement in this study is voluntary, so you may choose to participate or not. Also, if there are questions that you do not want to answer, you can decline without any consequences. Please feel free to ask questions about the research and I will be happy to explain anything in greater detail if you wish.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

Part 1: The involvement will include both parents (mothers, fathers or guardians). We will first mail out a packet of questionnaires which will be filled out before the scheduled interview. On the interview day, the trained research assistants will come to your home to conduct individual interviews with both parents. The interviews will be voice recorded to ensure accuracy of your

responses. It is expected that the interview will take about one to two hours. The questions will include your views on parenting roles and practices, and your relationships with your children. For publications, we may use your quotes verbatim with no identifying markers. For example, a Chinese Canadian mother stated, "...".

Questionnaires. The parents will receive a packet of questionnaires where each parent will individually fill out some questionnaires which will take about 20 minutes. The questions will focus on some background information (such as level of education, income, financial issues), parenting practices, and children's personality traits. For first-generation immigrants, there is an additional questionnaire that will ask about your cultural values, beliefs, and practices.

Face-to-Face Interview. The interview will be audiotaped and then transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy of your responses. This will take approximately one hour to one and a half hours of your time. The questions will include your views on parenting roles and practices, and early schooling. For publications, we may use your quotes verbatim with no identifying markers. For example, a Chinese Canadian mother stated, "...".

To assist with the information from the interview, we will also ask you to fill out a timeline (at the beginning of the interview with the research assistant) to focus on key aspects of your life (e.g., number of caregivers during your childhood, the birth of your child(ren), major life events (e.g., moving to a country, new employment opportunities). This will be placed on a piece of paper which will then help guide the interview questions.

This study is expected to take up to two hours.

This project is partly funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

The risks to you of participating in this study are minimal such as the time spent participating in the study. The questions that you will be asked are minimally intrusive. Also, some questions may cause discomfort (for example we are asking about potential conflicts with your partner/other biological parent). If you no longer wish to continue, you have the right to withdraw from the study, without penalty, at any time.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

The benefit of this research is to develop a better understanding of the parenting strategies and styles that parents use today. Little is known about how Canadian parents and parents in China and Jamaica view their parenting roles and their involvement in their children's lives at a young age.

PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

For the interview and questionnaires, each participant will receive cash of \$10 CAD (\$1,000 JAM).

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information will be kept confidential and only the research assistants and myself will know your identity. You will be assigned a number which will increase the likelihood of your confidentiality. Confidentiality will be broken if there is a suspicion of unlawful acts such as child abuse. We have the legal obligation to report any information to authorities to protect the health, life, or safety of you or a third party (e.g., your child). All the questionnaires, voice recordings, and interview transcripts will be placed in a locked filing cabinet in a secured locked room. Once the voice recording is transcribed, they will be deleted from the voice recorder and deleted on the encrypted computer (deleting the file and deleting the trash). So, your name will not appear in any publications and no one will know about your specific answers except my research staff and myself. All findings will be reported as a group, and not individually. Data will be kept for five years and then shredded.

There may be a chance that the interviewers and/or the research assistants who will transcribe the interviews may be known to you (acquaintances or friends).

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may exercise the option of removing your data from the study until one month after your participation. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise that warrant doing so.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

This project has been reviewed by the Research Ethics Board for compliance with federal guidelines for research involving human participants.

If you have any questions regarding your rights and welfare as a research participant in this study

(REB #16JA016), please contact: Director, Research Ethics; University of Guelph;

reb@uoguelph.ca; 519-824-4120 ext. 56606.

You do not waive any legal rights by agreeing to take part in this study.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

I have read the information provided for the study *Ethnic Parenting Study* described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Father's name (please print)

Mother's name (please print)

I am willing to be re-contacted for follow-up participation in 1 – 2 years. Yes No

I am willing to be re-contacted for follow-up participation in 1 – 2 years. Yes No

Signature

Signature

Date

Date

I HAVE RECEIVED \$10 (CAD) CASH FOR MY PARTICIPATION.

Father's name (please print)

Mother's name (please print)

Signature

Signature

Appendix E

Background Questionnaire

Below is a series of questions that will assist us in identifying and describing the fathers who are participating in this study. Your responses to the questions are **CONFIDENTIAL** and will **ONLY** be used for the purposes of this study. The researcher will assign an identification number to each father and all data will be used according to the identification number. Results will be reported in group form only.

ID: _____ (To be completed by researcher)

Name: _____ Date of Birth: ____Month ____ Year

Child (*6-12 years old*): Date of Birth: ____Month ____ Year

Full address: _____

Telephone number: _____ Email: _____

1. Sex of the child: Girl Boy
2. Marital Status: Married Common-law Single Divorced Separated
3. How many biological children do you have? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. How many children currently live with you? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. Are you currently a father/father figure to any non-biological children? Yes No
5. If yes, to how many children? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. How many of these children currently live with you? 1 2 3 4 5 6
7. Are you religious? Yes No Denomination/religion: _____
8. If yes, how often do you attend meetings? Weekly Two times/month Monthly
 On special occasions

	Person	Place of Birth	
		City/Parish	Country
9	You		
10	Your mother		
11	Your mother's mother		
12	Your mother's father		
13	Your father		
14	Your father's mother		
15	Your father's father		

Residential Information

10. What is your current living arrangement? (please check one):

- 1) Rent apartment/house
 2) Own house
 3) Lease house
 4) Live with family or friends and do not pay rent
 5) Live with family or friends and pay some rent
 6) Other housing arrangements (Specify): _____

11. Who is the head of your household? _____

12. For your current living arrangement, please provide the following information for each person who lives there on a **regular** basis:

Name:	Relationship to the child	Age	Sex	Education *(Use scale below)	If employed, job title
1. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

- * Educational Scale: 1) Less than 7th grade
 2) Secondary 7th, 8th, or 9th grade
 3) Secondary 10th, 11th, 12th, or 13th grade
 4) Some college (at least 1 year completed); or completed a specialized training
 5) College diploma
 6) Associate degree
 7) College or university degree (BA, BSc, etc.)
 8) Graduate professions degree (MA, MSc, Ph.D., MD, JD etc.)

Educational, Income, and Occupational Information

13. Please indicate the **HIGHEST** level of education that you completed, using the following Scale (please check one):

- 1) Less than 7th grade
- 2) Secondary 7th, 8th, or 9th grade
- 3) Secondary 10th, 11th, 12th, or 13th grade
- 4) Some college (at least 1 year completed); or completed a specialized training
- 5) College diploma/Associate degree
- 6) College or university degree (BA, BSc, etc.)
- 7) Graduate professions degree (MA, MSc, PhD, MD, JD etc.)

14. Please indicate the average income that you earned **each year**, using the following scale.

This information will **ONLY** be used to describe the fathers as a group (please check one):

- 1 = None
- 2 = Under \$268,000
- 3 = \$268,000 to \$299,999
- 4 = \$300,000 to \$499,999
- 5 = \$500,000 to \$699,999
- 6 = \$700,000 to \$899,999
- 7 = \$900,000 to \$1,099,999
- 8 = \$1,100,000 to \$1,299,999
- 9 = Over \$1,300,000

15. Please give your employment title and a brief description of the job:

Title: _____ Full time Part time

Number of jobs: 1 2 3 4 Number of hours/week: _____

Description: _____

Appendix F

Interview Protocol

Good day (Father's name), I am David Green a graduate student at the University of Guelph in Canada. Again, thank you for volunteering to participate in this study and for coming to the interview today.

At this point, let me remind you that your participation is voluntary, and you can stop at any time or choose not to answer any question without negative consequences. There are no right or wrong answers as individuals are different and I want to know/learn about your experiences growing up as well as your experiences as a father. Please feel free to take a break at any time. I want to accurately record everything that you will be saying, so I will be voice-recording this interview so that I will be able to transcribe every word later.

Is this OK?

Do you have any questions or concerns?

Alright, let's begin. (*Turn on recorder and state the date*)

Childhood Experiences with Biological and/or Social Fathers

1. Can you describe the roles and responsibilities of the primary caregivers who cared for you up to the age of 12? Can you give me some examples?
2. Can you describe the roles and responsibilities of the men who cared for you up to the age of 12? Can you give me some examples?
3. (If no biological father or inconsistently involved), were there any father figures in your life?

Explain

Fathering Experiences with Biological and Social Children

4. Have you always been involved in your child's life since birth until now? If not, why?

5. What are your roles and responsibilities in the family?
6. What challenges or barriers do you face as a father?
7. Are you a father to your social child the same way as to your biological child? Explain
8. What are your challenges and barriers as a social father?

Perspectives on Fatherlessness

9. How would you define fatherlessness?