The Effects of Precarious Employment on Immigrant Chinese Canadian Fathers with Children in Middle Childhood

by

Zhiyu Weng

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ABSTRACT

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Zhiyu Weng  
Advisor: Dr. Susan Chuang  
University of Guelph, 2014

Given the prevalence of visible minority immigrants, especially Chinese workers, in precarious employment (PE), and the primacy of fathers’ economic provision role, the goals of this study were to explore: (1) immigrant Canadian Chinese fathers’ perception of their familial roles and involvement with their school-aged children; (2) the effects of their employment on fathering; and (3) their strategies to improve employment and meet work-family needs.

Participants were eight immigrant Chinese Canadian fathers in PE. Semi-structured interviews were used in thematic analysis. It was found that parents closely coordinated in their daily family functioning. Mothers are also important income source. The findings revealed that besides actual tasks such as chores and childcare, fatherhood is also a “state of mind” and a “way of being”.

Cognitive strategies were used to understand their experience and optimize their work and family lives such as turning challenges into teaching moments and designing a self-sustainable career path.
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**Introduction**

Precarious employment (PE) refers to jobs that are insecure, most often with an absence or low level of benefits, and regulatory protection, as well as inadequate wages (Cranford, Vosko, & Zukewich, 2003). With technological advances and globalization, businesses are able to look to other parts of the world to purchase goods and services at a much lower cost, resulting in businesses under ever more pressure to be competitive and contain labour costs (Kalleberg, 2012). The pressure to stay competitive also deteriorates the human qualities embedded in employer-employee relationships, with diminished commitment and responsibility. The commodified employment relationship demotes both the psychological and financial sense of security and control that are important for the well-being of workers and their families (Lewchuk, Clarke, & De Wolff, 2011). Although PE affects the Canadian labour market as a whole, historically disadvantaged groups such as visible minority immigrants, are especially vulnerable (Das Gupta, 2006).

The targeted racial discrimination of Chinese immigrants in the past two centuries has forced thousands of Chinese fathers and husbands to live separated from their families while taking part in Canada’s nation building (Li, 1998). Today, over a million Chinese live in Canada as permanent residents (Statistics Canada, 2013a), many of those are overrepresented in PE despite their overall higher levels of education in comparison to other ethnicities. Additionally, the primacy many fathers, including Chinese fathers, place on their breadwinner role emphasizes the importance of understanding PE and fathering among the Canadian immigrant population. Yet, there is a dearth of research that has explored this line of inquiry. Thus, the main purpose of the present study was to gain a better understanding of the precarious work experience of Chinese immigrant fathers in Canada and how this affects their role as fathers.
Precarious Employment

The Canadian labour market is increasingly characterized by a high prevalence of job insecurity, low wages, and limited benefits and statutory entitlements that place individuals at higher risk of socio-economic and health disadvantages (Vosko, 2006). These features of modern employment describes the concept of precarious employment (PE) that defines workers’ economic, legal, and psychosocial status (Cranford et al., 2003; Lewchuk et al., 2011). Other known terms include atypical work, alternative work arrangements, non-traditional/non-standard employment, and contingent work (Quinlan & Mayhew, 1999; Tompa, Scott-Marshall, Dolinschi, Trevithick & Bhattacharyya, 2007). Many argue that the term precarious employment is more accurate at encompassing the various marginalizing features of precarious employment than terms like non-standard employment or contingent work (Cranford et al., 2003; Vosko, 2011). The former overemphasizes the dichotomy of standard and non-standard work (Rodgers, 1989; Quinlan & Mayhew, 1999), and the latter suggests short-term contract work only (Polivka & Nardone, 1989). Related research on the working poor, welfare recipients, vulnerable workers and marginalized workers have also contributed to the understanding of this concept (Fleury & Fortin, 2006; Fudge, Tucker & Vosko, 2002; Saunders, 2006).

Precarious employment is not a new phenomenon in the western world. Workers in the 19th and first half of the 20th century were often hired at factory gates and store fronts for various periods of time (Quinlan, Mayhew, & Bohle, 2001). By the early 1950s, PE had been markedly reduced through efforts to promote job stability and to regulate labour terms and conditions (Cranford et al., 2003; Fuller & Vosko, 2008; Scott-Marshall & Tompa, 2011). Subsequently, the standard employment relationship (SER) model emerged as the dominant form of employment where a worker expects to work indefinitely, full-time, at the employer’s premises with a wage and extended benefits adequate to support a family, cover unexpected expenses, and with a
sufficient pension to retire (Cranford et al., 2003; Lewchuk et al., 2013; Vosko, 1997). It was on the basis of this prototype that labour laws and policies were developed.

Historically, however, visible minorities and women have always worked and lived precariously (Satzewich, 1989, 1993). Due to declining immigration from preferred white European countries and the need for economic expansion, Canada opened its door to racialized immigrants during the 1950s. Today, immigration source mainly came from Asia (Aiken, 2007; Thobani, 2000). These post-war immigrants, as well as racialized workers in the previous century, had rarely been included in SER or unions (Das Gupta, 2006). In some cases such as the Knights labour, an earlier union, all trades and races were included except the Chinese workers for fear of their competitive edge such as lower wages for the same jobs. The perceived competitiveness ironically stemmed in part from the suppression of the number of Chinese women coming to Canada to prevent reproducing such competitive labour (Satzewich, 1993). In the meantime, women around the world worked in unpaid domestic work and child rearing (i.e., unpaid social reproduction). Beginning in the 1970s, women started to make educational gains and increased their share in the paid labour force, albeit mostly outside of SER. However, the technological advances, globalization, and pressure for market competitiveness since the mid-1970s and 1980s have contributed to the permeation of PE to the entire labour market (Fortin, Green, Lemieux, Milligan & Riddell, 2012; Vidal & Tigges, 2009; Vosko, 2008). This has been found in a number of European countries, the United States (US), Canada, and Australia (Lewchuk et al., 2011).

In Canada, full-time work is no longer a secure method to provide for oneself and one’s family. One in three low-income children had a parent who worked full-time all year in 2008. About 35% of all jobs before the recession in 2008 were part-time, temporary, or self-employed
(Campaign 2000, 2010). Between 2008 and 2012, the share of adult workers between the working ages of 25 and 54 in temporary jobs (part-time and full-time) increased by over 39% (Statistics Canada, 2013b). This period also saw an increase of 63% in the number of involuntary part-timers, those who would like to work a full-time job, but who could not secure one. Discouraged workers, those who wanted to work, but were no longer actively seeking a job because they believed no suitable work was available, increased by 34% (Statistics Canada, 2013c). The rate of solo self-employment, an employment status highly vulnerable to low income and limited regulatory protections, increased by almost 45% from 1989 to 2007 (Vosko, MacDonald, & Campbell, 2009).

Moreover, Canada’s income inequality at both the individual and family levels, has risen substantially in the past few decades (Fortin et al., 2012). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2011) attributed Canada’s rising income inequality to a widening gap between market employment income and ineffective income redistribution through taxes and benefit transfers. Low-wage work is increasingly temporary and part-time, with a 15% reduction in annual work hours since the 1980s, 10% more than the loss of high-wage workers’ hours. During this period, the richest Canadians saved 33% more federal marginal income tax from 43% in 1981 to 29% in 2010 (OECD, 2011). Their income source surprisingly relied more on wages than on business income as their counterparts did in the earlier years (Yalnizyan, 2010). Thus, from 1980 to 2007, the share of all taxable income held by the top 1% wage earners increased from 8% to 13%. In fact, Canada has been ranked lower than most of the OECD countries in combating income inequality with tax-benefits redistribution (OECD, 2011), a deterioration from a 70% poverty reduction rate in the mid-1990s, when it was doing as well as the Nordic countries, to 40% today (Yalnizyan, 2010).
Taking into consideration these social economic changes, scholars have been gaining greater understanding of the nature and scope of PE. Many believe that PE is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, shaped by employment status (paid employment or self-employment), employment forms (i.e., part-time, full-time, temporary, permanent), dimensions (i.e., income, duration, benefits, regulatory protection and control), social contexts (i.e., occupations, industries, sectors), and social locations (i.e., gender, age, single parent status, disabilities, race, and immigration status) (Vosko, 2006). Differently situated workers on certain social locations such as visible minorities and immigrants are more prevalently represented in precarious employment than others.

**Dimensions of Precarious Employment**

Cranford and Vosko’s (2006) conceptual mapping dimensions provides a structure for understanding the nature of PE and factors shaping the prevalence of PE in the Canadian context. The mapping of PE dimensions originated from Rodgers (1989) who was influential in the field. Whereas earlier researchers focused on the forms of employment to identify precarious jobs, many full-time permanent jobs were low paid and lacked annual increases. Thus, Rodgers conceptualized four critical dimensions of PE: (1) the degree of certainty of continued employment, a dimension for the risk of job loss; (2) income, for gauging the monetary adequacy of a job even if it is full-time permanent; (3) regulatory protection, referring to workers’ rights to legislative regulations and protection which can be indicated by firm size (smaller firms less than 20 employees being exempted from certain employment standards such as equal pay); and (4) control over labour process, referring to the control workers have over aspects of work such as conditions and the pace of work, indicated by union memberships (Rodgers, 1989).
However, an overlooked aspect of this model was social wage, defined as the various discretionary employer-sponsored benefits such as extended vision, dental, and drug benefits, life and disability insurance, paid leaves, pension plans etc.. Cranford and Vosko (2006) recognized that social wage is important for delineating employment precarity, as it is predominantly absent in more insecure forms of employment and directly impacts on the living standards of individual workers and their families (Lewchuk et al., 2013). Therefore, they modernized Rodgers’ work by including social wage as a dimension of its own. Regulatory protection and control, the two previously separate dimensions, were combined into one because of overlapping indicators such as firm size and union membership. Together they represent relations to unions and labour related law and policy. The final four dimensions proposed by Cranford and Vosko (2006) are: (1) income; (2) social wage; (3) regulatory protection and control; and (4) degree of certainty for continuing work. These dimensions will be further explored, including recent findings on PE, its prevalent forms, and its social, economic, and health consequences (e.g., the interplay of disparity and workers’ social locations and employment contexts). Additionally, researchers have paid substantial attention to the health risks of PE and proposed that health risks are an important dimension of PE. Moving from a traditional occupational health and safety focus on physical injuries and hazardous environments, research is increasingly aware of the psychosocial impacts PE has on workers’ health.

**Income**

Income is believed to be a critical, if not the most critical, dimension of precarious employment (Cranford & Vosko, 2006). Its significance relates to the concept of poverty. Earnings from employment comprise the most important source of income for many, whereas other sources include business investment income and government income assistance programs
such as Employment Insurance (EI) and social assistance. Low earnings from either low wage
jobs or insufficient hours significantly contribute to the rate of poverty.

However, where the poverty line should fall is intrinsically a value judgment and a social
consensus that is not agreed upon (Fellegi, 1997). Statistics Canada (2012a) uses three measures
to gauge low income: Low-Income Cut-Offs (LICOs), the Low Income Measure (LIM) and the
Market Basket Measure (MBM). LICOs are average income thresholds below which a family
will likely spend a larger percentage of its income on the necessities of food, shelter and
clothing, adjusted for family size and location. The LIM represents half of the median adjusted
household income, suitable for international comparison. These two measures are relative
measures because they use a national household average and median as cut-off lines. The MBM
is an absolute, or rather minimum measure, calculated based on the relative estimation of a
household’s expenditures on a predetermined basket of goods and services for maintaining a
modest living standard. Opponents to absolute measures of poverty tend to stress the issue of
social exclusion: that individuals use social norms as a reference for acceptable living standards
(Statistics Canada, 2012a).

Relative to full-time permanent employment, temporary or part-time workers were more
likely to make lower hourly wages and annual earnings (Kapsalis & Tourigny, 2005). In a study
using various standards for low income, full-time permanent employees were at a lower risk for
all of them, especially poverty income, than employees in part-time permanent, full-time
temporary, and part-time temporary employment (Cranford & Vosko, 2006). These findings
were consistent with other studies that showed a median annual income of full-time permanent
employees that was three to five times higher than any of the four major categories of temporary
employment in Canada including contract, seasonal, temporary agency, and casual jobs (Fuller & Vosko, 2008).

Precarious employment may have a sticking effect that has implications for persistent low income. When a worker accepts a precarious job, transitioning out of this type of job becomes difficult. A substantial proportion of Canadian workers in temporary employment (25% to 33%) have worked for their employers for more than two or three years (Fuller & Vosko, 2008). This is consistent with findings from Australia, Japan, US, and European countries (Clarke et al., 2007; Louie, 2006; Standing, 2011; Yu, 2012). Studies of immigrants reported that early employment precarity in the integration process may have a negative long-term impact on income (Goldring & Landolt, 2011). Those in temporary jobs are much more likely to become unemployed, drop out of the labour force, or start another temporary position than to become permanent employed (Fuller, 2011; Kapsalis & Tourigny, 2005). Thus, workers receive reduced earnings for years (Standing, 2011).

In addition to placing the workers at higher risk of income insecurity due to lower earnings, the insecure nature of many temporary and/or part-time jobs also impacts the workers when they become unemployed. For example, temporary and part-time workers tend to have unstable, varied, and insufficient hours, which in turn, makes it difficult to qualify for EI when they become unemployed (Campaign 2000, 2012; Cranford et al., 2003; Galarneau, 2010; Smirl & Fernandez, 2013). This happens even after they have been paying into EI for years (Marshall, 2003; Saunders, 2003). For example, only 14% of permanent part-timers and 16% of temporary part-timers in 2001 were eligible for EI versus 41% of permanent full-timers. In total, only one in two workers who lost their jobs received EI between 2008 and 2009. Workers who cannot sustain living from EI and/or other sources of income such as savings and household income
have to turn to other more punitive and demoralizing income assistance programs. Not surprisingly, provinces with the least unemployed workers accessing EI had the biggest increase in social assistance caseloads during the period of 2008 and 2009 (Statistics Canada, 2010). Research on the Canadian working poor also demonstrated the frequently exchanging and overlapping nature of social assistance recipients and workers in PE (Fleury & Fortin, 2006). For example, whereas 75% of social assistance recipients exited social assistance within 12 months either because they found employment or got more hours, 33% of them returned within one year and 50% within five years. For many of them, the need to return to social assistance related to the precarious nature of the employment and earning they obtained (Lightman, Mitchell, & Herd, 2004).

**Social Wage**

Social wage (benefits) is an integral part of work remuneration that completes the “wage” concept. There is a wide range of social wage components from standard extended health insurance (medical, hospital, nursing, vision, drug or dental benefits), retirement and pension plans, life and disability insurance, accident benefits, paid sickness and other leaves, to maternity/paternity top-up (Ontario Ministry of Labour, 2012). Marshall (2003) found a positive relationship between high wage jobs and full benefits, concluding that “the better the job, the better the benefit package” (p. 12). She also found a bundle effect between the extended medical, dental, and life and disability insurance. When an employee has one of them, he or she is likely to have the other two (Marshall, 2003).

In contrast, 70% to 90% of temporary jobs provided no access to any of the extended health insurance benefits, or a pension plan, and four in 10 of all self-employed individuals have no insurance of any kind (Akyeampong & Sussman, 2003; Fuller & Vosko, 2008). In a study of
the Canadian working poor (those who worked at least 900 hours a year but earned low-income), half of them had no dental insurance. The participants reported poorer dental/oral health as well as an inability to pay. About 15% of the working poor in this study reported previous social assistance, which provides dental care, and they reported better dental health than the subgroup that were never on social assistance, suggesting more precarious health status for low income workers (Fleury & Fortin, 2006). The caution of “the precarity trap” describes this situation (Standing, 2011).

Social wage benefits have profound repercussions on workers’ economic well-being during the working years as well as in retirement (Semyonov, Lewin-Epstein, & Bridges, 2011). For example, extended medical insurance provides significant health benefits and savings for those workers who are covered, and their families (Lewchuk et al., 2013). Life and disability insurance buffers workers from unexpected expenses from unfortunate life events. Insufficient savings due to low earnings and/or having to pay for medical expenses, coupled with a lack of pension, impact workers’ income security in old age (Law Commission of Ontario, 2012). Therefore, income disparity from employment has been greatly understated by conventional measures of monetary rewards (Standing, 2011).

**Regulatory Protection and Control**

Union coverage protects workers’ interests with collective bargaining power. It has a positive influence over wage levels and annual increases, access to non-wage benefits, and control over various aspects of labour processes and conditions such as accessing legislative rights. For example, Statistics Canada (2009) showed that 89% of unionized workers in 2005 had access to non-wage benefits versus 69% of non-unionized workers. The average hourly wage gap between these two groups was $4.53 in 2007 (Statistics Canada, 2009). Furthermore, the
presence of a union has been shown to benefit the wages of non-unionized workers in respective industries because these workers were able to use union wage rates to negotiate better wages (Fortin et al., 2012). Lastly, the union especially benefits workers in temporary employment. The hourly wage gap between unionized and non-unionized permanent positions was $4.47 in 2012, whereas this gap among temporary positions increased to $7.85 (Statistics Canada, 2013d).

However, unionization has been declining since the 1980s. Research estimated that union coverage decline contributed to 15% of Canada’s growing income inequality during the 1980s and 1990s (Card, Lemieux, & Riddell, 2004). From 1981 to 2012, unionization rate declined to 30% from 38% (Statistics Canada, 2013e), and the speed has accelerated. In the ten year period from 1997 to 2007, there was a 2% decline from 34% to 32% of all Canadian employees who had union representation. In 2012, the coverage was 30% (Statistics Canada, 2007), a further 2% decrease in five years from 2007 (Statistics Canada, 2013e). While there was a growth of 26% in new job entrants, only 17% had union coverage (Statistics Canada, 2007). These numbers suggest that the declining rate for the whole labour force affects more new job entrants in recent years than their previous cohorts. In Canada, it is estimated that the top two groups of new job entrants are school leavers and new immigrants at a ratio of 4 to 1, followed by workers who re-enter job markets (Kustec, 2012). Thus, it is not surprising that youth and new immigrants are less likely to have union coverage, and are overrepresented in PE (Das Gupta, 2006) and in the Canadian working poor population (Stapleton, Murphy, & Xing, 2012).

**Degree of Certainty**

Consistent with past studies, employment forms still structure insecurity in significant ways (Cranford & Vosko, 2006). The degree of precariousness increases from full-time permanent to full-time temporary, part-time permanent and to part-time temporary employment.
along the dimensions of income, social wage, regulatory protection and control, and certainty (Cranford et al., 2003; Cranford & Vosko, 2006). However, the conditions of contemporary permanent full-time employment are also deteriorating. For example, compared with permanent part-timers, permanent full-time employees were more likely to experience low tenure and transition in and out of work, an indication of their job contingency. Compared with the other three employment forms, permanent full-time employees were more likely to experience layoffs. Nearly 70% of permanent full-time employees were not covered by a union, which increased their levels of precariousness (Cranford & Vosko, 2006).

**The Health Risks**

Work is an important determinant of health (Marmot, Friel, Bell, Houweling, & Taylor, 2008). Workers who experience precarity on dimensions of income, social wage, regulatory protection, and job certainty are at higher risk of compromised health and well-being. Research has recommended health as another dimension of PE because of this negative consequence on the workers in PE (Vosko, 2006). The negative health impacts from PE include income-related health disparity, physical risks such as injuries and environmental toxins, and an emerging trend of psychosocial risks at work that negatively impacts workers’ lives. The relationship between lower income and worse health has been well-established. Low income has a negative impact on health through the direct effects of poorer living standards such as housing, nutrition, and health maintenance, the emotional and social perception of their circumstances and relative disadvantages, and the physiological effects of the perceptions (Lynch, Smith, & House, 2000; Marmot & Wilkinson, 2001). Research has suggested that in developed countries such as Canada where absolute income (income received) is higher, health and subjective well-being are more closely associated with relative income (income received in comparison to societal income)
(Kawachi & Kennedy, 1999; Lynch et al., 2000; Marmot & Wilkinson, 2001). For example, compared to the poorest 10%, the richest 10% of Canadians lived, on average, six years longer and 12 more years in good health. This gap decreased as income increased (McIntosh, 2009; McIntosh, Fines, Wilkins, & Wolfson, 2009). Furthermore, in an international study of over 70 countries, relative income played a much larger role than absolute income in contributing to one’s subjective well-being (Ball & Chernova, 2008). Lastly, when earnings are persistently low and stagnant, workers reported poorer general and daily functional health (Scott-Marshall & Tompa, 2011).

In addition, earlier research concerned with the occupational health and safety (OHS) aspects of PE focused on traditional physical aspects of health such as exposure to toxic substances or physical injuries among different employment forms (Coopers, 1998; Lewchuk et al., 2011; Underhill & Quinlan, 2011). For example, employers are less likely to spend resources training temporary or part-time employees, or provide better working conditions to them, which contributes to a higher likelihood of sustaining injuries at work. In a review of these studies, over 80% found that OHS conditions worsened in less permanent employment (Quinlan et al., 2001).

However, as PE permeates all forms of employment, a new trend of psychosocial risk at work is emerging from job instability and job insecurity perceived by workers, including work intensification, stress, bullying and harassment, as well as discrimination and exclusion (Belin et al., 2011; Lippel, 2011; Stolk, Staetsky, Hassan, & Kim, 2012). As an example, workers in temporary or part-time employment are more likely to report discrimination such as being assigned more demanding tasks, or being excluded from team activities and conferences that offered opportunities to network with more permanent employees and skill building (Lewchuck et al., 2011). Job insecurity has been associated with a decline in functional health and general
health, mental health complaints and decline (depression and anxiety), self-rated health, and significantly higher mortality rates (Belin et al., 2011; Clarke et al., 2007; Lewchuck et al., 2011; Marmot et al., 2008; Scott-Marshall & Tompa, 2011). Moreover, jobs with low control but high work demand and jobs with temporary employment relationships have been associated with stress-related illness such as high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes (Chen, Smith & Mustard, 2010; Cheng, Kawachi, Coakley, Schwartz & Colditz, 2000; Lewchuck et al., 2011; Scott-Marshall & Tompa, 2011; Smith, Glazier, Lu & Mustard, 2012). Lastly, the consequences of being precarious employed, such as unemployment, intermittent employment, and underemployment, undermine workers’ mental health by decreasing their confidence, competence, self-esteem, social recognition, and social support (Ball & Chernova, 2008; Chen et al., 2010; Malenfant, 2007; McKee-Ryan & Harvey, 2011; Seifert, Messing, Riel, & Chatigny, 2007).

In addition to health risks, PE also contributes to socioeconomic inequality because the prevalence of PE is shaped by workers’ social contexts and locations (Noack & Vosko, 2012). For example, PE is most often held by workers in sales and service positions in accommodation, food services, and retail industries. These occupations and industries also have a larger proportion of temporary positions on a 24-7 schedule (Cranford & Vosko, 2006; Noack & Vosko, 2012). Moreover, compared with the private sector, equivalent positions in the public sector paid 12% higher wage, had higher coverage of registered pension plan (88% versus 24%) and more job security at 1 to 6 job loss ratio (Fraser Institute, 2013). Lastly, PE is overrepresented by groups with certain social demographic features, including youth, single parents, aboriginal people, people with less education, people with disabilities, visible minorities,
and immigrants (Block & Galabuzi, 2011; Cranford et al., 2003; Fleury & Fortin, 2006; Fuller & Vosko, 2008; Law Commission of Ontario, 2012; Louie et al., 2006).

The Socioeconomic Vulnerability of Immigrants in PE

Almost 7 million immigrants live in Canada in 2011, comprising 21% of the total Canadian population (Statistics Canada, 2012c). An alarming number of them experience employment difficulties and income inequality (Frenette & Morissette, 2003; Picot, Hou, & Coulombe, 2007; Reitz, Curtis, & Elrick, 2013). Their disparate access to well-paying, full-time permanent jobs despite a strong intention to work and credentials, comprises a salient socioeconomic inequality of PE that warrants further exploration (Block & Galabuzi, 2011; Cranford & Vosko, 2006; Galarneau & Morissette, 2008). Many immigrants experience employment precarity including a lower rate of union coverage, employer-sponsored pension plans and life insurance, and higher rate of jobs that are involuntary part-time and/or temporary as compared to their Canadian born counterparts (Gilmore, 2009). As a result, they are more likely to experience employment instability and low income (Reitz, 2011). About one in five recent immigrants experience low income in a chronic (more than three years in low income) or repeated way (Picot et al., 2007). These difficulties increase their challenges to integrate and adapt to life in Canada (Aiken, 2007; Thobani, 2000).

Historical Background of Immigration

To place immigration in Canada into context, it is important to understand its historical events. Canada has an immigration history from the early 1600s when the French and British first arrived. Immigration was predominantly granted to white Europeans until the early 1950s when the numbers of immigrants from these countries decreased. Due to continued labour needs, Canada started to allow formal immigration of visible minorities from Asia, the Caribbean, and
South and Central America (Dewing, 2009). However, racist sentiments and discrimination continued to influence immigration policy in excluding applicants based on ethnicity or nationality. In 1967, largely due to skills shortages for various national and regional labour needs, Canada created a point system to admit all prospective immigrants in the Economic class based on a weighted aggregate score of factors such as age, education, occupational experiences, and official language fluency (Beach, Green, & Worswick, 2006). The Economic class contributes to the largest source of permanent residents. In 2010, 67% of all immigrants belonged to this class. To fulfil Canada’s ideological and political obligations, the immigration system also admits two other classes of immigrants. One is the Family class to serve the purpose of family reunification. The other is the protected persons class for fulfilling international obligations based on humanitarian values (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2010).

As a result of eliminating racial exclusion and the point system, recent waves of immigrants tend to be Asian, younger, highly educated and motivated to work (Beach et al., 2006; Kustec, 2012). Since 2001, immigrants have constituted 69% of the total population growth in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2012). Much of the growth comes from immigrants of Asian origins. In 2006, the proportion of Asian born immigrants (41%) surpassed European born immigrants (37%) for the first time, bringing the total foreign born population to reach over 20%, highest in the G8 countries and second in the world after Australia. For example, from 2006 to 2011, visible minorities made up 78% of all new immigrants, with 57% from Asia (mainly South Asians, Chinese, and Philippines). Chinese has been the largest ethnic group in Canada from 1987 to 2006, and the second largest since 2006. Although Chinese immigrants are not a uniform group, most of them share the same Chinese ethnicity with the majority of recent waves from China (Li, 2010; Wang & Lo, 2005). In contrast, South Asians have a diverse ethnic
and linguistic background with over five ethnicities and six languages (Lindsay, 2001). Immigrants in recent years tend to be younger, healthier, and had higher educational attainment than native-born Canadians (Statistics Canada, 2008). They also has higher labour participation than the total population (Kustec, 2012).

The influx of more diverse and visible minority immigrants since the 1900s has facilitated an increasing awareness and recognition of a cultural mosaic, both as a historic fact and a demographic reality. Canada officially established the Canadian Multiculturalism Act in 1988 as a federal policy based on a larger legislative framework such as the Canadian Human Rights Act (1985) and later the Employment Equity Act (1995). A key objective is to promote equal opportunity and eliminate barriers (Government of Canada, 2013). However, mounting evidence of a disproportionate ratio of immigrants in PE suggests that the Canadian Multiculturalism Act has been more of a symbolic commitment in the labour market (Block & Galabuzi, 2010; Reitz, 2011).

**Visible Minorities and PE**

Immigrants’ employment outcomes are highly influenced by both their visible minority status and their gender. In 2006, visible minority immigrant women earned the lowest income, making only 43.9 cents for every dollar the white Canadian-born men earned, 48.7 cents that of white immigrant men, 70.5 cents that of white Canadian-born women, 70.8 cents that of visible minority immigrant men, and 82 cents that of white immigrant women (Block & Galabuzi, 2011). Visible minority women in general were also at the highest risk of job uncertainty as indicated by higher rates of intermittent employment and low job tenure (Cranford & Vosko, 2006).
However, whereas men generally earn more than women, race and immigration are more disadvantageous for men than women (Block & Galabuzi, 2011; Chui, 2011; Picot & Hou, 2011; Skuterud, 2010). The income gap was 19% larger between visible minority immigrant men and white immigrant men than the gap between their female counterparts, even after controlling for age and education. Visible minority immigrant men earned only 68.7 cents for every dollar white immigrant men earn. This trend of earning disadvantage for visible minority men persists even to the third generation and beyond (Block & Galabuzi, 2011). Furthermore, although the recent economic downturn had a negative impact on both the Canadian-born and immigrants, immigrant men have the highest decline in employment rates and the highest increase in unemployment rates compared to immigrant women and Canadian-born men and women (Chui, 2011).

Lastly, research suggests that contrary to popular belief, the challenges facing recent immigrants not only persist for many, but have worsened in recent years (Galarneau & Morissette, 2008; Reitz, 2011). In 1981, the unemployment rate of immigrants fell even lower than that of native-born Canadians within five years of arrival (7.1% versus 7.9%); in 2001, it would take more than ten years for the gap to narrow (9.2% versus 7.4%) (Lochhead, 2003). Although underemployment (skill-job mismatch) is affecting all Canadians, the rate remained stable at around 10% for native-born Canadian men and women from 1991 to 2006; but, the proportion of established immigrants (11-15 years post arrival) in underemployment during this period was a remarkable 9% increase among males (from 12% to 21%), and 5% increase among females (from 25% to 29%) (Galarneau & Morissette, 2008).
Chinese Immigrants

People of Chinese descent account for 20% of the global population, with over 1.3 billion in China, and millions around the world (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2012; World Bank, 2010). In 2010, China defied the recent economic recession to become the second largest economy in the world (World Bank, 2013). However, problems of overpopulation, urbanization, political censorship, and environmental sustainability are some of the realities its government and people face. As a result, highly skilled and educated Chinese moved overseas to establish their lives and this created a fit with the needs of the countries that experience population stagnancy and skill shortages. In the past decade, Chinese immigrants remained the most important source for the immigration needs of OECD countries (OECD, 2013).

In Canada, the hard work and talents of Chinese immigrants have contributed to the building of the nation since the 1850s, from gold mining techniques to the building of the Pacific railway. Today, Canada continues to rely on China as one of the major source countries to meet the needs for population growth and labour supply (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2013; Wang & Lo, 2005). In 2011, over 1.3 million people of Chinese decent lived in Canada, half of them (545,535) first generation immigrants from China (Statistics Canada, 2013a). Immigrants from China represented the largest immigrant group in the city of Toronto, and the second largest in Ontario and the Census Metropolitan Area of Toronto. In Ontario, Chinese comprised the largest ethnic group in the labour force in 2005 (Noack & Vosko, 2012).

However, compared with workers with other ethnic backgrounds, workers of Chinese ethnicity were at a higher risk of holding precarious jobs (Noack & Vosko, 2012). Based on the study of labour market in Ontario by Noack and Vosko (2012), 22% of jobs in 2008 were considered to be PE if a worker earned low wages plus two of the three indices of PE: no union,
no pension, and/or small firm size (Law Commission of Ontario, 2012; Noack & Vosko, 2012). If using the combination of all four indicators of PE, approximately 33.1% of Ontario jobs fell in PE categories. Among the five large visible minority groups in this study, Chinese Canadians comprise the largest proportion of workers in precarious jobs at 38.2%, far ahead of the other ethnic groups ranging from 29.5% to 34.6%. More specifically, Chinese workers were especially likely to lack union and pension coverage. This is consistent with their historic experience of exclusion. Second, compared with other ethnic origins, they were most likely to work full-time, yet earned low wages (defined as less than 1.5 times the minimum wage); 1/3 of them had full-time permanent jobs that paid low wages (Noack & Vosko, 2012). Third, East Asians, primarily Chinese, and Africans experienced the largest increase among recent immigrant males overqualified for their jobs (Galarneau & Morissette, 2008). Earlier research also suggested that, whereas it would take more than 20 years, or a master’s degree for Chinese immigrants in Canada to close the total income gap with that of the general Canadian population, it was not clear whether the gap will ever close (Wang & Lo, 2005).

Research has identified public attitudes and employment barriers as two important obstacles to the successful integration of immigrants (European Economic and Social Committee, 2012). Studies have reported a causal relationship between individuals’ aversion for a specific country/ethnicity (due to various reasons such as nationalism) and their covert employment discrimination against immigrants of that group, as early as the resumé selection step (Krings & Olivares, 2007; Stewart & Perlow, 2001). This group-specific discrimination would extend to the group’s second generations. Thus, this finding challenges the popular and generalizing beliefs that the first generation immigrants’ employment barriers result primarily from inadequate language abilities, foreign credentials, or lack of knowledge of local customs.
(Krings & Olivares, 2007). Although public attitudes towards China have fluctuated by country and time, there was a sharp deterioration among Anglo-Saxon countries such as the European Union countries and Canada (GlobeScan, 2005; 2013). The rise of China’s economic, political and military power has created much ambiguity and perceived threat, if not decidedly anti-Chinese sentiments among peoples (Huang, 2013; Kim, Meunier, & Nyiri, 2012; Shearer, 2010). In Canada, those holding a positive view of China plummeted from 49% to 29% between 2004 and 2013, and those holding a negative view increased from 44% to 59% (GlobeScan, 2005, 2013).

The Cultural Context of Chinese Families

East Asian families have long been shaped by Confucianism, an ideology originated from ancient China throughout East Asia, which has dominated Chinese ethos for over 2,000 years (Shwalb, Nakazawa, Yamamoto, & Hyun, 2010). Confucianism assigns fathers a set of roles including the breadwinner and the strict disciplinarian of their children, whereas mothers traditionally are assigned the roles of kind caretakers, attending only to household affairs. Children are expected to practice filial piety that prescribes caring for aging parents and multi-generational co-residence (Chuang, Moreno, & Su, 2012; Ko, 2012).

In general, the Confucian influence on contemporary Chinese families has been declining. Throughout the second half of the 1900s, China’s communist revolution strove to discard any feudal remnants including the formal teaching and practice of Confucianism in order to enforce gender equality in families and encourage women’s participation in the paid labour force. Additionally, China’s transformation from primarily an agrarian society to a highly competitive market-driven economy and the relatively lower cost of paid childcare inadvertently contributed to a high percentage of employed women (Qin & Chang, 2013). Lastly, China’s
“one-child policy” instituted in 1976 led to a dramatic change towards a small family structure with 95% of children in urban families today being the “only child” (Chen & He, 2004).

Collectively, these social and historical changes have blurred the traditional Chinese father/mother role division (Shwalb et al., 2010). With the shifting roles of women in society and in the family, research suggests that despite some continuity in fathers’ traditional role (Qin & Chang, 2013), contemporary Chinese fathers have expanded their roles and practices. For example, in one of the few comparative studies of contemporary Chinese fathers in China and Canada, fathers in both samples were more egalitarian and involved in their children’s lives than in the past (Chuang & Su, 2008, 2009; Chuang, Moreno, & Su, 2011). One limitation is that these findings are predominantly based on families with infants or young children and with urban and middle SES background or higher (Chuang & Su, 2008, 2009; Chuang et al., 2001; Qin & Chang, 2013). Furthermore, studies have reported that older children, such as those in adolescence, perceived their fathers as more authoritarian than mothers (Shek, 2005, 2008). Thus, these findings need to be interpreted with caution, especially given that a substantial proportion of immigrant families live in less optimal socioeconomic circumstances that may influence family roles.

**Chinese Immigrant Families in Canada**

Chinese families in Canada have been shaped by Canadian social and political attitudes and practices (Man, 2013). Historically regarded as one of the undesirable race, early Chinese immigrants, mostly men, were tolerated only as long as they were needed for cheap labour. To deter them from having families in Canada, various discriminatory policies and laws were implemented such as the Chinese head tax and the Chinese Exclusionary Act from 1885 to 1947 (Man, 2013). As a result, almost 13,000 Chinese husbands and fathers as of 1951 were still
separated from their families in China; many of them did not reunite until the 1970s (Li, 1998).

Today, the Chinese population is one of the top growing ethnic groups in Canada. From 2006 to 2011, the number of people speaking Mandarin as their home language increased by over 50% (Statistics Canada, 2012c).

Despite the rapid growth of the Chinese population in Canada, a review of research on contemporary Asian fathers found that of the 22 empirical studies conducted in North America, only four were conducted in the Canadian context. None of the studies in Canada used samples from lower SES background and/or focal children in their middle childhood years. Specifically, 19 focused on families with children in either early childhood or adolescence, and 18 used samples from middle or higher SES backgrounds. This tendency to use samples with middle class background and children in mainly early childhood and adolescence is also the case with research on contemporary Asian fathers in their origin countries, with 68% of a total of 25 empirical studies sampling families from middle-class or beyond, and only three with a focus on middle childhood (Qin & Chang, 2013).

Research on Chinese immigrant fathers in the lower to middle class (working class) from the US suggests that after downward economic mobility post-migration, these fathers were over committed to their breadwinning role. They worked long hours to overcome their economic disadvantage and spent less time talking with their children (Qin, 2008; Tamis-LeMonda, Niwa, KAhana-KAhana, & Yoshikawa, 2008; Yeh, Kim, Pituc, & Atkins, 2008). However, middle childhood from five or six to 12 is a period of intensifying transitions in cognitive, social-emotional, and interpersonal development, a period that requires parental involvement to take on unique and complex tasks. First, the onset of middle childhood signifies a major expansion in children’s social worlds, outside the home including the entrance into the formal school system.
Parents of children in this age group have added tasks of helping children with school-related work, increased leisure activities outside home and school, transportation arrangement for all these settings, and increased interactions on behalf of their children with other individuals such as teachers, other families, peers, or coaches (Collins, Madsen, & Susman-Stillman, 2003). Thus, to understand how PE affects father involvement, it is important to first understand the nature of father involvement.

**Father Involvement**

Optimal parenting requires parents to be involved in their children’s lives, including the quantity and the quality of their involvement (Coleman, 1988; Parke, 2002). As a result of a cultural shift and/or maternal employment, fathers around the world have increased their involvement with children in both absolute and relative terms (Bianchi, 2011; Chuang & Su, 2008, Fox, Han, Ruhm, & Waldfogel, 2011; Parke, 2002). Father involvement takes multiple forms in relation to the father’s role, including provider, playmate, manager, advocate, and educator (Chuang & Su, 2008, 2009). Research has shown that highly involved fathers make unique contributions that benefit their children from infancy to early adulthood (Lamb, 2010). Among the various fathering roles that influence children’s development, economic support has been regarded as fundamental (Christiansen & Palkovitz, 2001; Lamb, 2000).

Yet, the prevalence of a precarious employment relationship that demotes qualities important for families (i.e., financial and psychological security, stability, and support) has posed challenges to the centrality of a father’s ability to be involved in financial terms (Bianchi, 2011; Caragata & Miller, 2008). The challenge may also impact other areas of father involvement through fathers’ own employment, and/or through other family members. From a family systems perspective, mothers and fathers, as well as other caregivers such as grandparents, are
interconnected members who influence each other and are influenced by changes to family members. Family members also respond by adapting to the changes with individual variations (Chibucos & Leite, 2005; Tamis-LeMonda, 2004; White & Klein, 2008). The actors in a family system change their internal functions (e.g., expectations and roles) and/or external context (e.g., social, cultural, and economic contexts) to reach a system-environment fit so that new practices will support effective family functioning (Boss, 2002; Gottfried, Gottfried, & Bathurst, 2002).

**Father Involvement Construct**

The exploration of how fathers’ involvement influences their children’s development has been dominated by a model conceptualized by Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, and Levine (1987). This model is composed of three components: (1) engagement, the time fathers spend in direct interaction with the child that includes face-to-face caretaking such as changing a diaper, and more intensive activities such as playing and teaching; (2) accessibility, the time spent on activities of a less direct and intense nature, such as cooking while the child is playing; and (3) responsibility, the extent to which fathers take responsibility for the affairs involving their children, including knowledge of the events in their children’s lives, making childcare arrangements; or ensuring the material needs of the child are met such as clothes.

Even though Lamb and his colleagues did not develop the father involvement model to be all-encompassing, many researchers use this model. With the increased attention focused on fathering, researchers are acknowledging that this father involvement model is limited. For example, both the quality and type of engagement were defined more explicitly and specifically to refer to the positive and more interactive types of engagement such as play. Also, responsibility, as well as accessibility, examined both the cognitive and behavioural aspects of father involvement. More recently, researchers have explored roles that fathers play that are not
necessarily in the direct presence of their children such as organizing or planning, which are equally important and largely underestimated (Lamb, 2000; Pleck, 2010).

Given these new insights and moving beyond overt behaviours, Pleck (2010) recommended a reconceptualization of the construct to address these concerns: (1) positive engagement, confined to only positive and direct interactions such as caregiving and playing; (2) warmth, the emotional quality dimension of fathering in providing warmth and responsiveness; (3) control, the monitoring or knowledge of children’s whereabouts and active participation in decision making related to children; (4) indirect care, things that fathers do for their children; and (5) process responsibility, the degree to which fathers take initiatives in making sure that the child’s developmental needs in the first four areas of involvement are met.

Of great interest to the present study are the two new components, indirect care and process responsibility. The first component, indirect care, refers to the activities parents undertake that are child-oriented but not child-interactive. It is a type of involvement that includes arranging and planning for resources to be available to children; responsibilities parents take on for their children, not with them (Pleck, 2010; Pleck & Masciadrelli, 2004). Indirect care engages parents’ executive functioning in planning, coordinating, and managing in various aspects of a child’s life (Lamb, 2010). Examples of such activities range from purchasing and arranging child-related goods and services such as clothes, child care, and organized leisure activities, educational planning, making doctor’s appointments, arranging transportation for child-related trips and social events for children to participate in, and advocating on behalf of their children (Pleck, 2010). The second new component, process responsibility, refers to seeing to the completion of a task such as the child being taken to a doctor’s appointment, but not necessarily the father himself performing the task (Coltrane, 1996; Pleck, 2010).
With the focus on fathers’ behaviours and cognitions, the role of breadwinner has taken a “backseat” as it was viewed as an older function and less of a dynamic dimension of fathering (Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, & Levine, 1985; Pleck, 2010). However, this claim may not be accurate in light of an increasingly precarious employment market that is affecting more fathers than in the past several decades. This may be especially true for Chinese immigrant fathers who face employment difficulties. Also, Chinese fathers and their families still perceive the fathers’ breadwinning role as essential (Luk-Fong, 2005). To secure more suitable employment, people are likely to engage in skill upgrading and planning activities that are resource-enabling for a father’s breadwinning role.

Research has demonstrated a higher proportion of past degree holders in the Canadian post-secondary education to be among immigrants than native-born Canadians, most likely due to difficulties finding employment with international credentials. Moreover, this type of planning activities related to breadwinning may create higher levels of mental energy, and greater use of family resources in relation to time and quality of time, and money including lost savings, debt, and lost income, all of which are important for child development.

**Employment Effects**

To the extent that parents’ work affects a myriad of psychological, social and economic factors important to child development, children of parents in PE may be at a higher risk of negative outcomes. More specifically, the detrimental effects of socioeconomic disadvantages are especially consequential for children in early and middle childhood. Experiences during these formative years were associated with various developmental challenges in areas including health, behavioural, social, cognitive, and academic performance (Mistry & Wadsworth, 2011).
**Family income.** Research has consistently found that income is crucial for family well-being and child development. Substantial findings have linked the effects of low family income to an array of child development risks (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002; Conger & Donnelan, 2007; Mistry & Wadsworth, 2011). Low income directly decreases parents’ ability to afford an adequate standard of living such as nutrition, health, and housing, as well as investment in creating an enriched learning environment at home, quality child care, and organized activities outside schools (Gupta, Walker, & Huston, 2008). Additionally, low income indirectly influences child outcomes by interfering with parents’ psychological well-being and involvement with their children (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002; Conger & Donnelan, 2007; Hernandez, Denton, Macartney, & Blanchard, 2012; Mistry & Wadsworth, 2011). Thus, the economic pressure that parents experience increases their emotional distress, which leads to their compromised capacity to parent in a nurturing and involved way that is most conducive to optimal child outcomes (McLoyd, 1998; Mistry & Wadsworth, 2011).

**Maternal Employment.** Research on maternal work characteristics in low income working families have offered insights into the effects of PE because the jobs these mothers held have features that indicate employment precarity such as low wage, low skill requirement, non-standard schedules, and job insecurity and instability. Findings suggested that whereas the positive effects of mothers in paid work were mediated through psychological well-being to impact their parenting and children’s development, job characteristics such as instability, insecurity, and low cognitive complexity (or low occupational status, jobs that require low skill) mediated these links (Gottfried et al., 2002; Hill, Morris, Castells, & Walker, 2011; Johnson et al., 2012). Moreover, mothers’ mood only mediated maternal employment and parenting in
lower SES families but not in middle SES families, suggesting the buffering role of family resources in middle SES families (Gottfried et al., 2002).

**Paternal employment.** A growing body of literature on work and families has expanded to include fathers’ employment and its relationship with their involvement. Regardless of fathers’ employment status, on both workdays and non-workdays, and whether or not mothers were employed, fathers’ time involvement showed a significant increase in both absolute and relative terms over the past 40 years (Bianchi, 2000, 2011; Fox et al., 2011; Parke, 2002). For many fathers, economic provision is still a foundation on which they integrate other aspects of father involvement (Christensen & Palkovitz, 2001). Fathers who could not provide economically after job loss experienced more mental distress than mothers who lost jobs, and were more likely to disengage from other aspects of father involvement compared to employed fathers (Christensen & Palkovitz, 2001; Rege, Telle, & Votruba, 2011). Moreover, research has shown that fathers who experienced involuntary job loss may perceive subsequent father involvement as involuntary, which had adverse effects on children including a higher likelihood of behavioural and academic difficulties (Kalil & Ziol-Guest, 2007). Given that men still earn more than women, fathers’ breadwinning role is an important one, especially among low income families (Allen & Daly, 2007; Christensen & Palkovitz, 2001).

The quantity, quality, and domains of father involvement change as family resources such as income and time change. In general, fathers’ time with their children was inversely related to their number of work hours per week and positively related to non-standard schedules and/or their wives working more hours (Bianchi, 2011; Gottfried et al., 2002; Parke, 2003; Wood & Repetti, 2004). More specifically, fathers whose wives were not employed or who worked less than 25 hours, and fathers with higher incomes spent more hours at work but also proportionally
more time on play than caregiving tasks such as changing diapers. These fathers were also more positive during these interactions. In comparison, fathers whose wives work more than 20 to 25 hours, fathers with lower income, and fathers with non-standard schedules performed more caregiving tasks than play, and were more negative in their interactions with their children (Bianchi, 2011; Gottfried et al., 2002; Parke, 2003; Wood & Repetti, 2004). Other studies found that fathers spending more time playing than caregiving were more satisfied with their involvement and with their role as a father than fathers who spend more time caregiving. The latter may feel more tension from economic difficulties to purchase goods and services such as quality childcare and other relief services that alleviate the demands of parenting and improve life quality (Parke, 2002).

**Precarity characteristics.** The literature on paternal employment and families has not paid much attention to employment precarity among fathers beyond family income (Christensen & Palkovitz, 2001). Findings from labour, economy, family, and policy studies suggest that workers in PE may be subjected to multiple constraints from their employment in their parental involvement with children. The availability of their future work is often contingent on their willingness to take any given task (Lewchuck et al., 2008). Moreover, for many working parents, their income is often not sufficient to purchase care, but too high to qualify for public programs such as child care subsidy (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). Thus, these parents face the dilemma of working enough hours to maintain income, spending more time in their children’s lives, and maintaining a one-way commitment to their employers.

The timing of working hours, flexibility, and predictability comprise dimensions of time that constrain parents in PE which, in turn can facilitate or constrain involvement with their children (Moen, Kelly, & Huang, 2008). First, non-standard schedules are often a requirement of
employment and controlled by employers (Enchaugueti, 2013). Workers in PE may not be in a position to request accommodations, especially at the cost of lowered earnings and/or future prospects. Second, workers in PE often manage multiple jobs, work sites and schedules, and are more likely to have schedules that are uncertain, irregular, short-noticed, or incompatible with normative family time (Lewchuk et al, 2011). Thus, these parents may have great difficulty scheduling routine activities such as appointments with doctors or planning organized leisure activities for children, responding to unexpected events such as children’s illness or a snow day, or involvement in social events that promote support such as gatherings with friends.

Research has indicated that in the absence of adequate and formal government support, workplace flexibility provided working parents agency and control in how they could best coordinate their work and parenting schedules (Bianchi, 2011; Galinsky, Sakai, & Wigton, 2011; Gottfried et al., 2002). Studies have found that contemporary fathers are still less likely than mothers to request child-related accommodations such as paternal leave or taking time off work for child related issues. Fathers also received more implicit or explicit penalty for being too devoted to their fathering role (Gottfried et al., 2002). Research showed that among workers with formal flexibility policy at their workplace, the likelihood of accessing the rights was only higher among workers with higher status and income, and better benefit packages (Galinsky et al., 2011). Thus, parents in PE may be less likely to ask for accommodation due to their insecure positions and lower statuses in the workplace.

**Psychosocial effects of fathers’ employment.** Little attention has focused on the effects of psychosocial qualities of parental employment on fathering (Parke, 2002). Some studies showed that the quality and nature of fathers’ employment created different types of stress with short-term and long-term effects on the marital relationship and on father involvement (Crouter
In a sample of air traffic controllers, fathers with a high work load were more withdrawn during interactions with their spouses and children. When the stress stemmed from negative social events such as interactions with coworkers and supervisors, fathers displayed more anger and used more disciplining with their children. When stress came from a negative social climate that was more lasting such as a poor team culture, the fathers’ interactions with their children carried a less positive and more negative emotional tone (Repetti, 1994). Lastly, fathers with more autonomy and control at work, and more cognitively complex and stimulating jobs interacted with their children in ways that were more authoritative, flexible, and skill promoting, especially with sons (Parke, 2003). In sum, these job characteristics of fathers seemed to be stronger predictors of paternal involvement than maternal employment. One observation is that there were no studies done with immigrant families on how the deskilling process of highly skilled immigrant fathers affects father involvement.

**Children’s age.** Over the last 40 years, employed mothers have maintained a comparable level of time in doing things for and with their children, but only with children aged zero to four, whereas older children aged five to 17 experienced a decrease in maternal time involvement (Bianchi, 2000; Fox et al., 2011). This decrease with the older children has been, at least partially, made up with an increased participation in organized leisure activities (Sayer, Bianchi, & Robinson, 2004). The activities may range from sports-related activities such as soccer and skating to organizational activities such as scouts and church choir; and cultural pursuits such as arts and music lessons; to activities such as tutoring. Children in middle childhood also start school for the first time around five or six, a key milestone in their development.
Parents with children in this age group face additional challenges in reconciling their own work with children’s before and after school care, school, out-of-school activities, and transportation between these settings. As a result, these parents face new and unique challenges to negotiate on behalf of the child with non-familial adults, maintain their knowledge of their children’s whereabouts, plan their children’s learning and activities, and execute the logistics of the activities such as transportation or coordination to meet the needs of multiple children.

These activities and settings pose threefold challenges for parents in PE. The first challenge is about timing. The schedules of these activities inevitably intersect with those of parents and often are more problematic for families with more challenging circumstances such as having at least one parent working non-standard hours (Lareau & Weininger, 2008). These difficulties may be more pronounced in families with more than one child, and when children are under the age appropriate to be home alone (the age varies from ages 10 to 12 depending on the province) (Child Safe Canada, 2012). The second challenge involves lessoned quantity of time, especially for parents who work long hours or multiple jobs, and/or those who are going through training or schooling in order to obtain more secure employment. This second challenge may also present difficulties in affording the fees and tuitions for various activities.

**The Present Study**

Given the challenges facing visible minority immigrants in the Canadian labour market, and the prevalence of Chinese workers in low wage jobs, those who are also fathers may sustain a greater impact of the various repercussions of PE in relation to families. To pursue this line of inquiry, the goal of this study was to explore four research questions:

1) How do these fathers perceive their fathering roles?

2) How does their precarious employment situation influence their fathering role?
3) What are the most relevant challenges in fulfilling their fathering role?

4) What strategies do they use to coordinate their employment and their father involvement?

Method

Participants

Eight Canadian immigrant Chinese fathers were interviewed for this study. They were between 41 and 51 years of age (\(M \text{ age} = 46 \text{ years}; SD = 3.0\)), recruited from Toronto (\(n = 1\)), Scarborough (\(n = 5\)) Hamilton (\(n = 1\)), and Guelph (\(n = 1\)). To be eligible for participation: (1) fathers and their wives were from China and were living together; (2) had been in Canada for 2 years or more; (3) both were working (including self-employment without employee/s); (4) fathers had a university degree; (5) had at least one child between six and 12 years of age; (6) fathers’ employment scored higher than 38 points on the questionnaire Employment Precarity Index (Lewchuck et al., 2013) or had a family income below LICO according to their family size and area of residency (see Appendix D). Their average length of residency in Canada was 9 years and 11 months (\(M = 9.93, SD = 2.73\)), ranging from 5.83 to 14.33 years in Canada. Two participants’ family incomes were below low income cut off (LICO), at less than $45,000 and $51,000 (adjusted for inflation), respectively, according to their place of residency and number of family members (Statistics Canada, 2012a). Four participants’ family incomes were between above LICO but below $50,000. According to Lewchuk et al., (2013), $50,000 may be used as a simplified measure of living wage, what a family needs for actual costs of living in a certain community. These four families had a family income between $37,000 to $49,999 and $45,000 to $49,999, respectively (according to their different numbers of family members). Two participants had a family income that were between $50,000 and $69,999. Descriptions of the participants’ demographic background were summarized in Table 1. Information has been broken up in the rows of the table to protect the participants’ identities.
Procedures and Measures

Prior to recruitment, study procedures were approved by the Ethics Review Committee of the University of Guelph (see Appendix A). To invite participants, a description of this study (see Appendix B) was advertised in free Chinese community newspapers; on Chinese websites; on a Television channel’s Mandarin program which announces community information; and through two email list services used among Chinese communities in Guelph. The primary researcher also promoted the study in a weekly Mandarin news program on the same Television channel. With permission, flyers (see Appendix C) were placed in organizations serving large immigrant populations in GTA, Hamilton, and Guelph. Word of mouth served as a snowball strategy for recruitment; individuals who contacted the main researcher about this study were encouraged to pass the study information and contact method to people they knew, regardless if they themselves met the criteria or decided to participate. The primary researcher also recruited some participants through her own personal network.

During telephone screening (see Appendix D), the primary researcher briefly introduced the study including the fact that the face-to-face interview needed to be audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Fathers were informed that if they did not meet the criteria, their answers from the screening would be destroyed permanently; and that if they meet the criteria and continue to interview phase, their answers would be saved to be linked with their interviews. Screening questions asked about the basic criteria such as fathers’ ages, lengths of immigration, employment status, ages of their children, and more specifically, 12 questions regarding their PE using the Employment Precarity Index questionnaire.

With participating fathers, interviews occurred either in their homes or at a public location if they preferred. Most fathers preferred public places (6 fathers) and two were at their home. At
the time of interviews, written consent (see Appendix E) was obtained, followed by a background questionnaire (see Appendix F). Participants were all adults in their 30s and 40s at the time of immigration and were interviewed in Mandarin. The average interview length was 1.4 hours (range = 1 hour to 2.3 hours). Two of the Mandarin transcriptions were translated to develop a coding system with a co-researcher and research assistant. The rest were analyzed in Mandarin. Fathers received $30 in cash as an appreciation for their time and participation.

**Employment Precarity Index.** This measure was comprised of 12 questions (see Appendix D) to construct a precarious employment index for one’s employment (Lewchuck et al., 2013). Cronbach alpha was 0.73 for the internal consistency between the items. Sample questions included, i.e. 6) “Do you usually get paid if you miss a day’s work?”; 7) “In the last 12 months, how much did your income vary from week to week?”; and 9) “In the last 3 months, how often did you work on an on-call basis?” Questions such as 6 have a response of yes or no. For questions 7 and 9, a 5-point Likert scale was used (1 = all the time; 5 = never). The scores were summed to construct the index of a job. A higher score indicates higher precarity. Individuals with scores 38 points or higher fall in the precarious workers category.

**Background questionnaire.** This questionnaire included basic demographic questions such as participants’ age and education. More specifically, it was designed to understand: (1) families’ immigration such as reasons for immigration; current immigration status, and their ties in Canada with home ownership and intention for Canadian citizenship; (2) their acculturation (e.g., father’s perception of their own English proficiency and that of his spouse); (3) family situation such as living arrangement, co-habitation, home and car ownership; (4) employment information such as the couples’ number of jobs, job titles, industries and schedules; (5) the
number and ages of children, and caregiving arrangement such as schedules and transportation of children’s organized leisure activities and before-after school care.

**Interviews**

The interviews used a semi-structured method which asked open-ended questions followed by prompts such as “can you tell me more?”, “anything else?”, and “can you give me some examples?” This type of qualitative interviewing allows for a richer set of responses from participants on less explored subjects. Thus, researchers may be able to elicit feelings, reasons, beliefs, and meanings of their employment, family, and fathering experiences.

To understand the basis of family functioning, fathers were first asked to describe their roles and responsibilities in the family, as well as those of their spouses. The second line of inquiry was on father involvement in their children’s lives. The interview questions were, “What do you do with your child/ren?” and “What do you do for your child/ren?” Two additional areas of questions focused on fathers’ perceptions of how their employment impacted their fathering, and various challenges around caregiving schedules, transportation, children’s activities, and school involvement; as well as the strategies fathers used in improving employment and balancing work and family (see Appendix G).

**Data Analysis Strategies**

The present study used a phenomenological approach to understand how immigrant Chinese fathers’ experiences of precarious work influenced their fathering of school-aged children. More specifically, the study explored how they view their familial roles and responsibilities, those of their spouses’, as well as their own roles as fathers, and to examine their strategies of improving their work and work-family balance. The use of phenomenological
approach focuses on the individuals’ meaning-making of their circumstances, experiences, and lives (Mattis, 2002). Thus, the approach is relevant and appropriate for this type of inquiry.

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a relatively easy-to-use, flexible, and useful research tool for summarizing and highlighting patterns and themes within a large amount of data. It is also compatible with a number of theoretical frameworks (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For the immigrant Chinese fathers’ interviews, thematic analysis was used to identify and analyze the similarities and differences among their responses. The analysis followed Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six-step guide. The primary researcher first listened to the audio recordings and used the transcribing process itself as a method of familiarizing with the data. During this process, notes and observations were kept to assist in understanding the data. Second, with initial codes, initial codes were generated for each question, and then commonalities in the interviewers were marked across the data set. Depending on the availability of well-established terms to describe a theme, the researcher used existing terms as well as descriptions and phrases for a theme within a topic. Third, codes across the data set were combined or discarded when looking for potential themes. The fourth step involved scrutinizing the codes created on transcripts and relevant extracts, and across the entire data set. Transcripts were repeatedly read to evaluate the pertinence of themes. During this process, new themes or subthemes were identified and coded, and some themes were no longer relevant or supported. Last, codes and their definitions were refined and developed to describe the themes.

Two transcripts were translated into English to develop the initial coding systems with a co-researcher. Additionally, to ensure the minimization of researcher bias and maintain inter-rater reliability, a research assistant who is fluent in Mandarin was recruited to use the initial coding systems to code all of the transcripts. Then, discrepancies were discussed to reach
agreement on the final refinement of the coding systems. The coding systems were checked again with unmarked transcripts to ensure the saturation of themes. Upon the completion of data coding, several coding systems were produced to address the research questions: (1) fathers’ familial roles and responsibilities; (2) mothers’ familial roles and responsibilities; (3) fathers’ direct interactions with their school-aged children; (4) fathers’ indirect care for their school-aged children; (5) the employment effects on fathering; (6) challenges of children’s short-term and regular schedules; challenges of school involvement; and challenges of choosing children’s organized leisure activities; (8) strategies of improving employment; and (9) strategies of meeting the needs of both work and family (see Tables 1 – 9). The process of reporting results also followed the guide by Braun and Clarke (2006) by keeping notes and documenting insights, questions, as well as personal beliefs.

Results

Thematic analysis was used to understand immigrant Chinese fathers’ responses along four lines of inquiry: (1) their perceptions of their roles and responsibilities in the family and those of their spouses; (2) their involvement with and for their children; (3) the influence of employment on their fathering roles; and (4) the strategies they used to improve their employment and the coordination of their work and role as father.

Fathers’ Familial Roles and Responsibilities

When these fathers were asked to describe their various roles and responsibilities in their families and children’s lives, eight themes were identified. Specifically, they were: mother support, economic provider, household chores and errands, training and educating their children, child care, communicating with their wives and children, role modelling, head of the family, and disciplining (see Table 2 for definitions).
**Mother support.** One of the most prominent themes mentioned was fathers’ support for their spouse. Defined as providing assistance to their wives, two dimensions were found: (1) support such as talking or discussion; and (2) instrumental support such as pragmatic behavioural assistance (e.g., sharing chores and child care tasks. All of the eight fathers explicitly mentioned that it was important for them to talk with and support their spouses, either emotionally and/or instrumentally. A 45-year-old father of 12- and 9-year-old boys stated,

“…a husband’s role is about how to love your wife … specifically it means, for example, to help your wife do as much chores as possible … sometimes it’s to use language, and it’s in terms of family relationship, also to get her opinion when encountering things” (F04).

Through instrumental support, fathers also supported their spouses emotionally, either by taking initiatives in sharing labour, or undertaking tasks perceived as more difficult, such as walking children to school in more harsh weather.

**Economic provider.** In response to their roles and responsibilities, working and providing financial resources was also seen as a significant role to fulfill (7 fathers). They often regarded themselves as either the primary provider or the economic foundation for the family, especially when children were younger. For example, a father of two boys aged 13 and 6 whose wife started working last year remarked that, “When the kids were young, I was the only one working, for 4 years” (F02). Fathers tended to discuss their provider role concurrently with their spouse’s income. Two described their current income level as auxiliary to that of their spouses. As one father of a nine-year-old daughter said, “Before, I am the main economic pillar of our family…before I was laid off. Now, currently, she makes more than me” (F04). Another father
explained, “…but in reality, for the time being, in this family, I’m currently not such a role. Currently it's my wife. I’m only auxiliary, bringing home some supplementary income” (F05).

**Household chores and errands.** Household chores and errands was a prevalent theme among the fathers’ roles. The majority of fathers (6) talked about performing various household chores such as cooking, cleaning, laundry, shovelling the snow, and lawn mowing. They also engaged in grocery shopping and car-related errands such as trips to a car repair garage. A 45-year-old father of two girls (13 and 6 years of age) stated, “For example, you need to do maintenance around your house. Sometimes you need to fix things if they break down” (F01). Another father said, “I cook. Sometimes I was told it’s not good, ‘don’t like it’ ” (F05).

**Trainer/educator/guidance.** Another theme for fathers’ roles and responsibilities was being their children’s trainer and educator. The majority of the fathers (5) discussed their efforts in teaching their children literacy, math, or other skills such as biking and swimming. A father of two boys, 16- and 6-years old discussed,

> “Knowing what your child was thinking at the time, is needed. Not just in front of you, but also how he behaves during the day at school. Only when you know that, then you can use appropriate ways to educate children…” (F02).

Another father of a 9-year-old daughter and 6-year-old son commented, “I do…maybe because I think a bit more than my wife, so I do a bit more…like their education and learning” (F07).

**Child care.** Half of the fathers (4) mentioned caregiving responsibilities. Because of children’s ages in this study sample, caregiving focused on age-distinct tasks such as packing lunches, taking children to school and picking them up from school, or providing transportation to various child-related activities. For example, this father commented, “I need to take care of
life in the current state, preparing him (12-year-old son) for school in the morning, preparing food…These need to be done” (F06). Another father stated that, “…picking up and dropping off, being a driver, a coachman” (F08).

**Communication with wives and children.** Communication, defined as imparting and/or exchanging information by speaking, has two subthemes in the context of family-related affairs. Fathers discussed their communication responsibilities in relation to having discussions with their wives and talking with their children. Four fathers mentioned communication and discussions with their wives. A father of two boys aged 12 and 6 years old mentioned, “What’s more, I need to discuss with her over things, not like, I’m the head of the family, and my word counts for everything” (F04).

Two fathers mentioned communication with children such as asking about their day or talking to them about children’s concerns. A father talked about his 6-year-old son, “His mother always say…every day when I take him for bedtime bath, he talks to me non-stop. His mother listens downstairs, and says ‘how come he likes to talk to you, not me’? It didn’t occur to me before that. Then I see it. He really is, around that time, more relaxed. He’s willing to tell me about school, things, or what he likes to talk about around this time. So I realized that regular communication with him should be a priority, like when playing games, when I mostly likely to get to know what he’s thinking, and what he’s doing” (F02).

**Role modelling.** Three fathers discussed the importance of being role models for their children. One father of two boys, 16- and 9-year-old said, “I think, through doing activities with him, I think, this unconscious teaching through role modelling, produces best effects” (F02).

Another father mentioned, “As a father, a husband, I think setting examples by your own
behaviour is the most important. They said that in English, ‘Monkey see, monkey do.’ Others see how you…if you don’t walk the talk, it won’t work…” (F04).

**Head of the family.** Head of the family has been described as the role that guides, leads, and plans the direction and future of the family. Three fathers mentioned their roles as the director of their family’s current state or future interest. “As a father, actually his responsibility is to be the leader of this family, taking this family to go in the right direction, take the right roads,” said this father of a 19-year-old girl and 7-year-old boy (F08).

**Disciplining.** Two fathers also discussed setting limits for their children. A 41-year-old father of a 9-year old daughter and 6-year-old son talked about how he enforced rules depending on the severity of the situation,

“It depends on how severe the violation (of rules) are…for example, sometimes in the car, they dropped something and unbuckled seat belts to get it. This belongs to the same category of jumping off a moving swing, and requires patiently talking to them.

Yes, it depends on how serious the situation is. For example taking subway, sometimes train is very close, jumping and running around is very dangerous” (F07).

In response to this question, fathers also used other words to describe their familial roles such as planners, managers, or the “servant” of their spouses and children.

**Mothers’ Familial Roles and Responsibilities**

From the fathers’ perspectives, their children’s mothers took on a number of roles with the following themes: household chores and errands, economic provider, child care, communication with their husbands and children, as well as others outside family, father support, and trainer of their children (see Table 3 for definitions).
**Household chores and errands.** Household chores and errands were the most prominent theme that fathers believed were the mothers’ roles and responsibilities. Similar to their own roles, all of the fathers talked about the various household chores that mothers performed such as cooking, cleaning, dish washing, and laundry. Three differences were identified in this sphere of responsibilities. First, two fathers described their spouses’ chores to focus more on cooking such as searching for new recipes as described humorously by this father,

“Yes, I cook. She does too. But she would be very interested in recipes, often looking online. I never checked once. Sometimes she would say…reproach me… ‘you should be humble and learn more’…but I said, ‘I’m not into that’” (F05).

In contrast, none of the fathers delved into the details of their own cooking. Secondly, the mothers’ chores involved more shopping such as household items or children’s clothes. Lastly, none of the fathers discussed the role of running errands for mothers.

**Economic provider.** From the fathers’ perspective, mothers’ role as a financial support was also a prominent theme (6 fathers). Fathers often discussed this role of the mothers in relation to their own. “She worked for eight years, after coming to Canada. At that time, the money she made was more,” said one father of a 19-year-old girl and 6-year-old boy (F08). Another father of three boys (6- and 3-year-old, and 3-month-old) said that his wife, “…shoulders a portion of income. Although it’s not the main source, it is indispensable” (F03).

**Child care.** Most fathers (6) mentioned their wives’ role to include child care tasks. Fathers commented on how attentive and specific their wives were in their children’s caregiving tasks. “She just do more cooking, giving them food, clothing, and taking them to all kind of activities…that is things with more details, she does it better than me. Perhaps we are
complimentary…I’m more big direction, she is more specific,” said one father of two boys, 9- and 12-years old (F04).

**Communication with family members and individuals outside the family.** According to fathers, mothers’ communication in the context of family took on another layer of meaning. Two subthemes were identified from their responses. First, because communication with spouse often was conveyed in ways that indicate back-and-forth mutuality, it is not surprising that fathers (3 fathers) also mentioned their wives discussing household and child-related affairs with them. Their wives’ communication with children was also brought up, although it was also in the context of father’s communication with children.

The second subtheme (2 fathers) under communication was that fathers considered their spouses as a communication broker with the community outside the home, one in terms of language advantage (better English), and the other communication skills. As this father of two boys, aged 13 and 6, put it, “When there are schedule conflicts, she arranges things better than me…she with the people in our church, She seems to have better skills making phone calls, and her voice is more pleasing to the ear” (F04).

**Father support.** Three fathers talked about assistance from their spouses. Similar to discussing their wives’ provider role, father support was also frequently discussed in the context of mutual support within the couples (e.g., business referrals for each other). A father of a 19-year-old girl and 7-year-old boy talked about how supportive his wife was on various fronts, “A lot of responsibilities…that is taking care of children, doing household chores…she would help me; she would also help a little with my career. Whatever she can help, she would help as much as possible. Our family, now, is in an unstable stage. Mainly, she is busy, when she is having an exam, I would do more chores. Then when I’m busy, have
business, have exams, she would do more. We have a balance between us. When one sees the other busy, one would take the initiatives to do more” (F08).

**Trainer/educator/guidance.** Mothers also had the responsibility and role of training and guiding their children. Three fathers brought up their wives’ role in this area. A father of three boys (6- and 3-years old, and a 3-month-old) said, “My wife sometimes would take them out, take the second one to those parent-child classes, mainly to let him have some social life. Always being at home without contact with group activities may do hard to all-around development” (F03).

**Fathers’ Direct Interactions with Children**

The primary researcher coded seven themes among fathers’ answers to the question, “what do you do with your six to 12 year olds?” (See Table 4 for definitions)

**Play.** Engaging in parent-child activities with an interactive and playful nature was the most predominant theme. All of the fathers discussed being engaged in these types of parent-child activities with their children. The play and activities showed a developmental progression consistent with middle childhood, such as sports or video games. The physical activities that were mentioned ranged from swimming, soccer, and badminton to biking, Frisbee, or tobogganing. Fathers also spent time with their children doing various home-based chores or projects. This father of two girls, 13 and 6 years of age, illustrated the following interactions, “Sometimes, before she went to swimming classes, when she was just getting familiar with water, I always took her. She likes to ‘fight’ with me, often we…I need to be ‘defeated’ by her. This she calls fight. Then, for example, do some project at home: helping kids make a swing, tree house, for them to play; or help them organize a
party…these things, she at least stayed around me, couldn’t do much, but very excited” (F01).

**Communication.** The next dominant theme was communication (7 fathers). Fathers mentioned talking with their children, and more specifically, asking about their children’s lives, praising them, listening to their concerns, and responding to their children’s initiation for communication. Fathers used various ways to foster communication, a tool considered to enhance their understanding of their children. This father of two boys, 16- and 6-year olds, spoke of his view of play interactions, and what it, in turn, meant for communicating with his younger son,

“Interaction…for one: what I hope the child would do…games, activities, what I feel would be beneficial to him…thinking about this, and implement it; for another: what he likes to do, then facilitate him to do those things he likes to do. So, through these interactions, and communications, I feel I can get to know lots of what the child has on his mind” (F02).

Another father (12-year-old boy and 2.5-year-old girl) discussed how he tried to foster his communication with his son,

“But now it seems not as good as before, seems everyone faces more their cell phone, computer; then even talking is less, all like question-answer kind. So this I think is not very good. But haven’t figured out a good way. Solutions like, trips, vacations, this is a good solution. During that kind of state, it's easy to communicate. But this couldn’t happen often, could it?” (F06).
Communication was also considered a tool to monitor children’s environment and the people in these environment when parents are absent. This father of a 19-year-old daughter and 7-year-old son commented,

“I pay attention to what he does in school: with teachers, with friends, what they talked about regarding topics they care; then, try to detect what kind of influence he is getting from teachers, classmates. Because lots of his understanding of the world come from classmates, teachers, schools…It’s every day, through talking, looking for opportunities to chat with him…for instance, he mentioned things in school…some things between classmates, teachers…we would try to ask more, to try to know more…” (F08).

In addition to help understand children and monitor their social environment, fathers also used communication to help children understand the world and its rules and instructions. A father of three boys (6- and 3-years old, and a 3-month-old) talked about how he tried to explain to his 6-year-old son why an art teacher required the son to redo his drawing,

“Many children just drew whatever the teacher required them to draw: snowball fight or skiing…he just didn’t do as asked, that is to draw the limbs and movements of these activities, for example, one foot forward, one behind. He didn’t adhere to the requirement…His observation was actually pretty good… But still, I need to explain to him… So communication, explanation, why it has to be this way” (F03).

**Trainer/educator/guidance.** Another theme identified was the fathers’ active involvement with the training, teaching, and guidance of their children in various skill development (6 fathers). The skills that fathers were teaching their children included recreational skills (e.g., learning how to bike, swim, or other games and sports), practice life skills (e.g., household chores), as well as academic skills (e.g., reading, math, analytical/logical thinking).
As one father of a 9-year-old girl mentioned, “I would give her some new problems to solve, completely new territory, so new that she would have no way to… I mean to see if she could find a way. Then I teach her” (F05).

**Disciplining.** Half of the participants (4 fathers) discussed setting limits and enforcing rules. These disciplining strategies were house rules, as well as for facilitating teachers in classrooms, and for children’s own safety. A father of a 6-year-old son said,

“Games such as video games, of course you cannot entirely refuse to let him play. One is that he likes it; another is among classmates, they all like it. They would spend a big part of time talking about these things, and could you ask him to stop any contact with classmates? I would let him play, but I need to control the degree and not let him be too invested” (F02).

Another father voiced similar principles of limit setting of his two sons, 12- and 9-years old, “There are no children who don’t play video games. I can only control them…” (F04).

One father talked about his differentiation of the severity of rule violation this way, “It depends on how wrong the action is. If it’s a serious situation, I might just reprimand formally. For example, sometimes things drop in the car, they unbuckle to get them. This is the same severity with jumping off a moving swing. This needs slowly talking to them. Yes, it depends. For example, taking subway, sometimes it’s really close, jumping and running around is very dangerous…then this needs formal and informal talking to them” (F07).

**Social play.** In response to what they do with their children, three fathers mentioned taking children to and spending time in social settings such as going to church or have social gatherings with other families. One father of a 12-year-old son and a 3-year-old daughter indicated, “For example, I have six university friends here now. We would often find some
reasons to get together. All our kids are approximately the same age…they often played well together…this is really good for him” (F06).

**Fostering autonomy.** Two fathers mentioned that they offered their children choices or jointly made decisions with them. These choices tended to foster children’s autonomy. One father of three boys (6- and 3-year-old, and 3-month-old) commented,

“‘We registered for swimming in the fall. In the winter, he feels envious of other people skating, saw it on TV etc. says ‘I want to skate.’ Of course then…to respect his idea but can only pick one…’You pick one.’ He thought about it for a long while and picked skating” (F03).

**Good citizenship/ethical development.** Two fathers also discussed the fostering of children’s ethical development, what it means to be a good person and citizen. A father of a 9-year-old daughter said, “Just to do right things. Actually nothing much. Need to think right…talk to her. Sometimes it’s sudden. Something occurred, or saw something. Then you extend it when opportunities arise, talk about it” (F05). One father of a 9-year-old girl and 6-year-old boy spoke this way,

“They play in school, for sure referring to some people as good, or bad. Like our older one, she talked about this person, a teacher, nobody likes her. So then she also doesn’t like her. Then I talked about how you cannot do something because others…you need to have your own judgment. Because she said this teacher isn’t nice, said that no one liked her. So she also said she doesn’t like her … these are the things that happen in real life” (F07).
Fathers’ Indirect Care

From the fathers’ responses to the question, “what do you do for your children?” eight themes were identified: 衣食住行 (clothing, food, shelter, transportation), resource enabling, communication with individuals caring for children, social-emotional/character building, process responsibilities, parental concerns, advocating, and economic providing (see Table 5 for definitions).

衣食住行 (clothing, food, shelter, transportation). 衣食住行 is a Chinese indigenous expression that translates into “clothing, food, shelter, transportation”. The four categories represent a summary of people’s basic needs and everyday activities, the most dominant theme among fathers’ answers (7 fathers). In the context of indirect father involvement, fathers discussed these daily activities that they do for their children such as buying their clothes, preparing lunches, ensuring their safety at home, driving their children to their various events and activities (e.g., taking them to the doctors). One father of two boys, 12- and 9-years old, stated, “For example, grocery shopping: I would think that perhaps he likes this, so I’d get it. Some stuff, I like to eat. But they don’t, I may not buy them even I like” (F04). A father of a 9-year-old girl and a 6-year-old boy commented on the challenge of the location of their home and if it was not within the catchment area of a good school, “(He would) find ways to move or something. Many people do this now” (F07).

Resource enabling. Resource enabling is defined as ensuring children’s access to resources deemed important for their future success, including developing talents and skills such as involving children in organised leisure activities, and future planning such as allocating financial resources for university education. It was identified as another dominant theme (7 fathers). For example, one father of 12- and 9-year-old sons stated that he was “…buying RESP
for him, prepare for his university down the road…sending him to learn this and that, these extra-curricular activities” (F04).

Fathers also engaged in specific steps from researching information on organized leisure activities, introducing children to the activities, making household financial adjustments to afford relevant expenses and registering for activities, to buying materials and equipment. To reduce expenses to support his 6-year-old son’s violin lessons, this father of three boys (6- and 3-year-old, and 3-month-old) was resourceful in utilizing existing resources. For example, he had asked a friend who was going to China to bring back his niece’s violin since she was no longer playing it (F03).

Another father discussed how to develop his 6-year-old-son’s future vocational skills by implementing the necessary skills now,

“Depending on what kind of talents this society needs in the future, now getting him to learn piano, or some sports stuff, later things like drawing…hope in the future, they find…like my daughter getting a job like a teacher… In a short, some normal, fairly good jobs” (F07).

**Communication with individuals caring for children.** Five fathers mentioned that communication, more specifically, having discussions with their spouses, and other important individuals such as teachers and doctors, were how they were indirectly involved in their children’s lives. These discussions were on various topics, ranging from spending money on merchandise like clothes and birthday gifts, to education, health, or school-related issues. A father of two daughters, 13- and 6-years old, noted that,

“This also includes discussing with wife whether this child has grown this year and whether there’s a need to get new snow pants and boots. Or, if we were to go on a longer
trip, we’d probably discuss between ourselves, not necessarily ‘child, where do you want to go?’” (F01).

**Social-emotional/character building.** The third most dominant theme is social-emotional character building, defined as consciously shaping their children’s character. Half of the fathers mentioned the purposeful behaviour in tailoring activities to their children’s individuality such as their temperament or personality. For example, a father of a 12-year-old boy expressed that, “Taekwondo is what I intentionally involved him in, because I hope he become more confident, more like a boy. Let him go swimming, tried basketball, soccer, and skating…all these are my ideas for him to do” (F06).

**Process responsibilities.** Process responsibilities refers to the responsibility fathers take in overseeing an activity such as planning, preparing, organizing, or implementing the activity they may not necessarily conduct directly. The activities range from having a party for a child, family trips, or reminding/asking their wives about a task. Half of the fathers mentioned this theme. A father of two boys, 12- and 9-years old, commented that, “Planning the routes of the whole trip, then I need to book rooms, then how to plan for all the expenses on the trip…in short, prepare the whole trip” (F04).

**Parental concerns.** Parental concerns is defined as the executive/cognitive functions that guide fathers’ subsequent actions around specific child issues. Three fathers discussed their worries, thoughts, revelations, or understanding that prompted subsequent actions such as monitoring, observing, or decisions. For example, a father of three sons, 6- and 3-years old, and a 3-month-old, expressed how he was concerned about his 6-year-old son,
“he was transferred to this school during JK, not from the start...that time, I already found that he was excluded...because a couple of times, we saw during recess that he wanted to play with others and others wouldn’t play with him” (F03).

This father went on to explain how his concern made him maintain his concern today and his subsequent actions.

**Economic providing.** Two fathers discussed providing economic resources by working. One father stressed the reason why he works hard,

“Now just try to make more money, for their education in the future. Much of what we do now, including working this hard, basically is for kids. We don’t have to work this hard. Canada has good social system, you can survive without working. Now we work so hard, it is to be able to afford a fairly good university when they grow up” (F07).

**Advocacy.** Defined as supporting or promoting the interest of children on their behalf, two fathers mentioned that they advocated for their children in varying situations (i.e., school and health care). Two fathers explicitly discussed their recognition of the need to advocate for their children which took different forms between the fathers. For one father of a 16- and a 6-year-old son, he described an incidence in which his 6-year-old had misbehaved at school and a note was sent home to inform the parents of the incident. Both parents spoke to their child about this situation as well. A few days later, the son came home and told his father about a classmate who also engaged in the same misbehaviour but did not get into trouble. “So I talked to my wife. It seems our child is thinking carefully, feeling that it’s unfair. It’s necessary to communicate with the teacher a little. Communication is her (my wife’s) job in our family.” (F02).

Another father of three sons (6- and 3-years old, and a 3-month-old) advocated for his 6-year-old when the child revealed that he was poked by a physically larger classmate with a stick.
“As soon as I (talked to the teacher), the teacher took it seriously right away…that day actually I wasn’t the first, already the third to talk to her” (F03).

**Employment Effects on Fathering**

When asked “how has your employment influenced you being a father?”, six themes were identified, including: (1) time and scheduling conflict; (2) income; (3) turning disadvantages into teaching opportunities; (4) flexibility; (5) impact on psychological well-being, (6) worries of children’s future employment, and (7) job informing parenting (see Table 6 for definitions).

**Time/scheduling conflict.** Negative effects such as having less time with children and scheduling conflicts were coded as the most dominant theme (6 fathers). Due to the amount of time devoted to work and/or work schedules, employment led to less time available to be with children and/or conflicts with various children’s activities. A father of three children who has two jobs, one permanent night shift, the other casual on-call during the hours before the night shift, referred to his work schedules as “non-compatible” with his fathering. “When I should be with them during bedtime…I had to leave for work. There may be time conflict. That time, the consideration (to work night shift) was that we can share a car” (F03). Another father who is self-employed as a real estate agent also mentioned this incompatibility, “Basically when (my) family (members) over weekends are together, I’m very busy.” He also discussed his observation that,

“The more time you spend on something, the better understanding you have about it. If you don’t have more time to be with him, then it influences the relationship with him. Because I find that, between my wife and I, whoever spends more time on him, he’s more close to that person” (F08).
**Income.** Income from employment was a predominant theme (5 fathers). Income and time are interconnected as fathers described that a higher hourly wage could lead to less hours needed to work to reach similar income and more time for families. The effects of income on fathering was both indirect (e.g., emotional quality) and direct (e.g., providing material resource). Income could indirectly affect the emotional qualities of fathers’ interaction with children by undermining their psychological well-being. For example, a father mentioned his bad mood when income was not enough to pay bills (F06). Income also directly determines families’ ability to provide a standard of living and the goods and services beneficial for children. For instance, a father who works two part-time jobs commented, “When employment circumstance is not good, your income is quite tight, or in other words, your finances are limited in what you’d like to do for her” (F01).

**Turning disadvantages into teaching opportunities.** Turning disadvantages into teaching opportunities was the next prominent theme. Half of the fathers mentioned utilizing their marginalized situations, be it a status loss after coming to Canada, or rebuilding a career after lay-off, as opportunities to teach children good citizenship (e.g., work ethics) and practical skills (e.g., budgeting). For example, after his lay-off, one father spoke to his 9- and 12-year-old sons about the importance of saving and financial planning. To ease the worry his older child had, the father spoke to him with optimism and wisdom, “Although there is impact, it’s not necessarily bad. Like in Chinese language, the word ‘crisis’ (危机), is consisted of two characters: ‘danger’ (危), but also ‘opportunity’ (机)” (F04). Another father in a general labour position with minimum wage mentioned his lack of control over occupational achievement and stressed that it is important his children will not judge others on their occupation, appearance, or background etc. (F02).
Other fathers emphasized the significance of teaching children work ethics by having work and working hard, whatever the work was. For one father who refused to apply for subsidized housing, he believed in not only teaching this work ethics to his 9-year-old daughter and 6-year-old boy by talking with them, but also role modelling with his choices and actions. “At the time, I insisted not to (apply), insisted on keeping looking for work. Children will do the same when they see how parents work and making a living” (F07).

**Flexibility.** Another dominant theme of employment effects was the flexibility it provided by work characteristics such as self-employment and night shifts (3 fathers). A father in the insurance industry discussed the difference this way, “Now that I became self-employed, I have more time, and it’s easier to plan” (F04). However the flexibility came with other conditions. For example, this father of a 6-year-old son mentioned his dilemma in building his realtor career, “Different from people who work Monday to Friday, mine is fairly flexible. But then, when clients need me, I basically have to put down stuff at home and go right away” (F08).

**Impact on psychological well-being.** Another theme (3 fathers) was the negative psychological effects from employment including stress, pressure, and feelings of guilt etc.. Fathers discussed the negative impacts from job insecurity (e.g., going from contract to contract), work schedules, or perceived underemployment. One father of two part-time positions said, “When your employment is not where you would want it to be, it makes your mood…you are just stressed. You may not have the mood, or time, to have more interactions with her (6-year-old daughter), or to pay attention to her” (F01). A father of three described the limitations his night shifts put on the daytime activities of his wife and children, “Because children make noises, my wife has no other solutions…has to take them out, either stores, or parks…just to
keep them out for me to have a quiet environment. Actually…how to say it: I sometimes feel really sorry…” (F03).

Worries of children’s future employment. Two fathers mentioned that their precarious employment may have an influence on their children’s occupational interest and/or achievement. First, fathers’ occupation was perceived to influence that of their children’s. For example, a father with two boys, 16- and 6-year-olds, discussed his worries about differential effects between his children. His older child was eight when the family immigrated to Canada, whereas the younger one was born in Canada where the father experienced status change from a professional occupation to a factory labour position. Although the father is happy that his 16-year-old is now actively planning to follow the father’s prior employment field, he expressed his concern about the potential negative influence from his current job on the younger one’s aspirations.

Second, fathers’ experience working in Canada may also have an effect on whether or not their children will become self-employed. After losing his job during the 2008-2012 recession, one father of two boys, 12- and 9-year-old, became self-employed to sell insurance.

I encourage them…in the future…actually I don’t know if this is good or not, but I say to them, ‘In the future, the best is to have your own business, better than work for others.’

So now, they would often be involved in my business. They often ask…then I tell them, i.e., why this is not approved, or what is a claim… (F04).

Job informing parenting. Although only one father touched on this positive effect of employment, the knowledge and skills from work can be informative and guide parenting practices and beliefs. For example, one of the fathers was a mental health professional in China, and worked in a lower occupational position in a related health field in Canada. His training and
job has informed his parenting in problem solving or conflict resolution. He discussed how his occupation has given him a lot of experience in seeing children’s needs or reminding himself to give them attention (F01).

**Challenges of Unpredictable Child Care Needs**

Working families have child care needs that sometimes require an immediate and/or unanticipated adjustment such as school closure due to inclement weather or when a child is sick or injured at school and needs to be picked up. When asked about the challenges in meeting the unexpected care needs, taking time off was the only major theme (3 fathers). A father of a 6-year-old son described his family arrangement for his younger son’s illness, “Currently we are experiencing this. His mom has been home two days now. The kid has a fever. I said, ‘how about…if your workplace is busy, we each take a day off till he gets better’” (F02).

Other challenges included financial cost and personal health cost such as lost sleep for night shift workers. Some couples would designate the partner with the lower hourly wage or less hours in a shift as the person to take time off. One father stated that his wife was the designated person to attend to these needs, as the income loss from his ten-hour per day shift would be much greater than that from his wife’s, especially if he would not able to return to work that day.

**Challenges of Children’s Short-term Schedules**

Three predominant themes were coded in response to what challenges families faced in going to activities within a week’s notice or arrangement such as a doctor’s appointment or an event at their children’s school (see Table 7). They are: health cost, less time/scheduling conflict, and transportation.
**Health cost.** For fathers with shift schedules, they needed to sacrifice their sleep to attend to errands or appointments that occur during their sleep hours and/or when their spouses were unavailable. Two fathers commented the need to sacrifice sleep for these scheduled activities and appointments.

**Time and scheduling conflict.** Another theme was the challenge of time conflict with work or other family or child activities (2 fathers). Fathers mentioned having to drop a school event, change an appointment time with a doctor’s office, or opt for the mother to deal with the situation.

**Transportation.** Transportation challenge such as having one car or difficulty using public transportation was identified as a theme (2 fathers). This challenge is potentially more burdensome for families with more than one child and both parents working outside home. A father of a 9-year-old daughter and a 6-year-old son described their situation, “I carpool to go to work. If I don’t, she couldn’t work without the car…it doesn’t work with TTC. She does home visits, a few families, back and forth with TTC” (F07). When fathers are self-employed such as a real estate agent, having a car is essential for their business. “Car use totally affects these activities. My job needs to use car, 100%. You can’t take bus for that” said another father of a 6-year-old son (F08).

**Challenges of Children’s Regular Schedules**

Children have regular schedules such as before and after school schedules and organized leisure activities (e.g., Tuesdays and Thursdays or every Saturday). When fathers were asked about challenges around events that have a routine, two themes were identified: less time/scheduling conflict and transportation (see Table 7). Other challenges mentioned included expenses for babysitting and lack of an after-school program at children’s school.
**Time and scheduling conflict.** Time and scheduling conflicts were coded as the most predominant theme (4 fathers). A father of two girls, 13- and 6-years old, described his family situation, “A period of time after school, no adult can be home. This is a challenge” (F01).

**Transportation.** The next dominant theme is transportation (3 fathers). One father of a 9-year-old daughter and a 6-year-old boy mentioned, “If it’s a Saturday, she goes to work. Then she takes the bus and I drive to take kids to activities” (F07).

**Challenges Choosing Organized Leisure Activities**

Parents consider various factors when making decisions about organized leisure activities for their children. When fathers were asked about the challenges they encountered in these situations, there were five themes: scheduling conflict, financial considerations, transportation, perceived benefits, and busy-ness (see Table 8).

**Scheduling conflict.** Schedules may not work out among work, family time, and children’s activities. When this occurs, parents need to prioritize and make a choice. This conflict emerged as the most dominant theme (6 fathers). A father of three sons discussed that he wanted his 6-year-old son to take both Chinese language class and music lessons which had a half hour overlap in schedules. Despite his effort to convince the teacher of the second class (the language class) for which his son would be late for half an hour, it was deemed too disruptive. Thus, he had to choose one to discontinue.

**Financial considerations.** In deciding the activities for children, most fathers also mentioned financial considerations (5 fathers). Nonetheless, they often discussed this challenge with the understanding of children as the priority. This father of two, a 9-year-old daughter and a 6-year-old son, described, “When it (the programs) would be beneficial, then you consider if the fees are affordable” (F07).
Perceived benefits. Another theme from fathers’ responses is the perceived benefits that activities have for their children (3 fathers). Sometimes, what parents see as advantageous or essential, either for their children’s future or as a foundation for other important skills, may not be in line with their children’s interests. Often, depending on the nature of the activities, children are required to practice the skills at home on a daily basis, such as a music instrument. However, investing in start-up equipment, instrument, activity registration fees and tuitions may not be beneficial if the children do not persist or are not interested after a period of time. Therefore evaluating whether children will get the benefit from the investment requires consideration of various factors such as personality, interest, and the importance of a skill regarded by parents. For example, a father of two boys, 12- and 9-years old, described his experience as follows, “First is whether kids like it…but sometimes, like piano, they don’t like. But I enforced it…because I think piano for children equals a foundation for them. In the future, when they learn other instrument, it is much faster…Learning to draw, I felt is very useful. I want them to learn. But they don’t like it. They don’t want to go anymore after once or twice that I made them. Then I couldn't do anything.” (F04).

Transportation. Transportation emerged as a theme (3 fathers). This refers to not only the means of transportation, but also the ease with using the transportation such as the amount of time, frequency, and number of transfers of public transportation.

Busy-ness. Working families seem to be caught between the need to take a break and the wish to provide their children with opportunities to learn and develop various skills beneficial to their development and future prospects. Busy-ness, the assessment of whether parents and their children can manage the scheduled activities is another theme among father’s responses (2 fathers). With organized leisure activities, they are both opportunities for children to develop
skills, as well as discover their talents. However, when children start to demonstrate talents in the trained areas, the activities may become more intense in terms of scheduling, energy, and expenses than originally expected. For example, one father of a 12-year-old boy and a 3-year-old girl discussed about an activity his son was no longer engaged in,

“Sometimes he is the busiest in our family…for example, he learned Taekwondo for about one and half year, from two lessons per week, then another monthly training in school team. Every few months was some competition outside the schools” (F06).

Challenges of Parental School Involvement

In response to what challenges they encountered in their involvement in their children’s school life, most fathers expressed satisfaction with the Canadian schools. Two themes warrant attention: time/scheduling conflict and lack of meaningful involvement.

Time/scheduling conflict. Similar to the other questions, time/scheduling conflict emerged as the most dominant theme (3 fathers). Fathers mentioned that school activities may occur during family meal time, work time, or children’s other activities. The school activities may be fundraising, a competition, or parent-teacher interviews.

Lack of meaningful involvement. Schools involve parents in their children’s school life through engagement such as homework, school activities, or school-parent communications. Lack of involvement that fathers feel are meaningful or helpful was identified as an important theme (3 fathers). One father of a 12-year-old son and a 3-year-old daughter discussed his insight in his interactions with the home classroom teacher, “Actually, I always really wanted to help my child learn better. I said whether he needs more…or where he needs improvement, but the teacher always told me he is the best in class.” Later when discussing parent-teacher interview, he commented,
“For one, it’s not a lot. Then, I wasn’t even asked to go these two years. I asked why. They said, ‘school is like this’. Usually if they think you have no problem, they don’t give you this appointment… To be honest, because…if nothing needs improvement, my communication with school becomes meaningless” (F06).

Another father of two children, a 9-year-old girl and 6-year-old boy, also described,

“At least we need to know a little what’s going on at school…hope some regular or fairly frequent communication with us. But sometimes teachers may be quite busy; s/he wouldn’t communicate much with you. If no big problems, s/he wouldn’t inform you” (F07).

The traditional school activities such as signing-up for pizza day seemed to take for granted parents’ knowledge of the meaning or intention. Immigrant families may not understand a pizza day’s multiple purposes of parental relief, eat and socialize with peers, and fund raising. It could cause confusion for immigrant parents and their children. For example, a father of a 6-year-old talked about his family’s experience when he first received a sign-up sheet for pizza day from school,

“We didn’t pay much attention the first time. My child has a good appetite and one slice wouldn’t be enough…then when it is the Pizza Day, we realized when child came home and said, ‘how come teacher gave them pizza, not me’. He was not happy, ‘only I don’t have’. Then we realized: No, this is not simply a meal… this is not voluntary. It actually is ‘mandatory’” (F02).

**Strategies of Improving Employment**

When responding to the questions, “what strategies have you used to improve your employment situation, including finding employment?” fathers discussed several methods to
improve their situation and career trajectory. Seven themes emerged from their responses, including doing well in their current job, networking, Canadian experience, improving language, credentialing, and paving a self-sustainable future (See Table 9 for definitions). Other strategies mentioned included attending government-funded job search workshops, and becoming more acculturated.

**Doing well in the current job.** To do well in one’s employment emerged as one of the most dominant themes (5 fathers). More specifically, it includes having competency in completing tasks, capacity to improve on technical skills, being a team player (e.g., maintaining working relationship with co-workers), and having a positive relationship with supervisors. It may be understood as having a good reputation as an employee, both technically and relationally. For fathers employed through temporary agencies, these agencies were significant evaluators of the workers’ performance. As a father of two, a 9-year-old daughter and a 6-year-old son, commented,

“Every project, it (the temp agency)…for example, it hired 10 people for the first project. It only calls back 1, 2, or 2, 3 people for next one, getting rid of all the bad ones…and the next. It only keeps those it kind of trusts, or those it regarded as pretty good” (F07).

**Networking.** Networking in this context refers to building relationships with past, current, and potential contacts for employment prospects (5 fathers). Fathers stressed the importance of maintaining contact with previous co-workers and supervisors, as well as getting to know more people. One father of three boys, 6-, 3-, and 1-year-old, discussed,

“Actually finding work in Canada comes down to knowing people. If you have good relationships with previous co-workers, supervisors, and subordinates, it’s a good chance
to find work. When their new workplace has good positions open, they’d introduce you.

Companies in Canada still fairly trust internal referrals” (F02).

Networks can also be created by joining professional associations or attending events such as training or meetings, whether or not one is currently working in the field. One father mentioned that this kind of networking provided a reference point of where he was professionally. “If you are just by yourself, having no contacts with outside, you wouldn’t know where you stand”, said the father of two daughters, 13- and 6-years old (F01).

**Canadian experience.** The next dominant theme mentioned by four fathers is obtaining Canadian experience, including starting at a lower level in one’s field, using a temp agency which provided easier and faster entry to the labour market, obtaining Canadian education or training, and volunteering. One father stated that his first job working in a factory labour position through a temp agency lasted three years. Later, it was with a friend’s referral that he found his first Canadian professional position that utilized his graduate degrees obtained in the U.S.

**Credentialing.** Credentialing can be defined as the process of becoming qualified to work in a field that requires professional licences, registrations and/or legislations. As stated by four fathers, they went through a self-funded licencing process to work in their field. One was credentialed partially with his international experience. The other three fathers started their self-studying and licencing in a new field.

**Improving language.** Three fathers mentioned improving English for better job prospects. Fathers mentioned attending English classes, through self-learning, and by practising in daily interactions in life and work.

**Building a sustainable career future.** Three fathers mentioned working on a career path perceived as more self-sustaining in the long term. This is a strategy to customize a career path
according to individual strengths, weaknesses, health status, and other factors such as the degree of control in an occupation. Sometimes it was a realization over the years, a job loss, or a health condition that developed from years on a job, or an experience of an increasingly demanding employer. Other times, it was due to a misfit between a previous career choice and personal characteristics. For example, a father of two children, a 12-year-old son and a 3-year-old daughter, described his experience as follows,

“Now I just consider time, another is income. Also job security to consider. Another is hoping that with experience, I can do jobs…like real estate that belong to myself. I can control it. Including electrician…” (F04).

Strategies of Meeting the Needs of both Work and Family

In response to how they were meeting the needs to fulfil both their worker and father role, four themes were coded from fathers’ strategies to strike a work-family balance. They were: “family first” with discretion, separating work and family, finding family-friendly employment, and sacrificing personal time (See Table 10 for definitions). Other responses included using formal resources (e.g., after-school care programs), informal resources (e.g., homecare, babysitter, and friends), delaying and exchanging career opportunities for employment security, and child involvement in fathers’ work.

“Family first” with discretion. “Family first” is believed to be an important guiding principle for work and family balance. However, fathers in this study stressed the importance of placing family first without jeopardizing employment (4 fathers). Fathers sometimes needed to coordinate the needs of fulfilling their financial obligations with other father involvement roles. For example, a father of two girls, 13- and 6-years old, responded,
“When you encounter a specific problem, you need the principles to evaluate it … If it’s for family, but undermines work, you need to consider its delayed effects. If it comes back to harm the family after, then what would you do?” (F01).

**Separating work and family.** Separating work and family to minimize interference with each other is the next dominant theme (3 fathers). This theme refers to time as well as attention. Fathers emphasized the importance of focusing on work while at work and not thinking about work while at home. Those who were self-employed may had more difficulty separating work and family, although some of these fathers found ways to combine work and children as mentioned in other questions.

**Finding family-friendly employment.** Finding work that is more beneficial for their families is another theme (3 fathers). Fathers discussed their efforts to find employment that allows more time for family, more family-friendly schedules, higher income, more stability, and also more energy after work. For example, a father who was working at minimum wage in a factory and as a real estate agent said, “…just hope to have more normal work schedule, more reasonable and better income” (F06).

**Sacrificing personal time.** Two fathers discussed that they needed to balance work and family by sacrificing time and desires for their own leisure and preferences. Two fathers mentioned supressing their wish for personal interest. For example, a father of a 9-year-old daughter and a 6-year-old son stated, “Think about work at work, and try to do a good job. At home, those personal time…what you want to do…you try to cancel. Try to fulfil those parenting responsibilities…do some activities. To sacrifice personal stuff.” (F07).
Discussion

The present study is one of the first to explicitly explore the experience of immigrant Chinese fathers working in precarious employment and raising children in Canada. It demonstrates that precarious employment (PE) comes in various manifestations and affects families in different ways, contributing to our current knowledge of how fathers’ involvement with their children is accommodated and challenged by their work. Furthermore, this study advances the current understanding of how fathers in PE perceived their familial and fathering roles. At a family level, the findings are consistent with family systems theories with fathers and mothers closely orchestrating with and relying on each other to maintain optimal family functioning and economic provision. By inquiring about two broad aspects of father involvement, what they do with their children and for their children, the present study showed that besides actual tasks such as those in housework and caregiving, parenthood is also a “state of mind” and a “way of being”. Fathers were cognitively and behaviorally living out their fatherhood, from performing various mundane tasks with children’s preferences and interests in mind to preparing children for the future. Lastly, the present study shed light on how the socio-economically disadvantaged fathers maintained optimism and strategized to meet their employment and fathering needs.

The Effects of PE on Fathers and Families

When men become fathers, the relationship between their work and family becomes complicated. They experience a shift of values and priorities in life; work matters less than family needs, but becomes more essential for sustaining family (Palkovitz, 2002a). The immigrant Chinese fathers in the present study are no different. However, employment is becoming increasingly difficult for workers to meet the financial needs of their family, and to build the extension of their career and retirement later on (Kalleberg, 2012; Mosisa & Hipple,
The analysis of workers in Ontario revealed that, compared to workers of other ethnicities, Chinese workers were more likely to be in full-time employment with low wage, and lack of union and pension coverage (Noack & Vosko, 2012). Canadian national data also showed that men from East Asian comprise a more pronounced share of overqualified immigrants than their female counterparts (6% vs 1%) from 1991 to 2006 (Galarneau & Morissette, 2008). Given that fathers generally feel more responsible for breadwinning (Doucet, 2013), how PE challenges immigrant Chinese fathers in Canada needs to be explored.

To contextualize the specific effects of PE on families, it is important to understand the many facets of PE in the current economy. These immigrant Chinese fathers held a wide array of precarious employment in different forms (e.g., full-time contract, part-time temporary), status (e.g., paid versus self-employment), and occupations (e.g., IT, trades, general labour, sales). Most of them worked full-time from 44 to 46 hours a week with varying schedules (i.e., permanent night shift, irregular and on-call schedules, to other types of arrangements).

**Time challenge.** Time continues to be a central challenge at the interface of work and family (Root & Wooten, 2008). These difficulties were often due to parents’ work schedules being incompatible with family life such as children’s after school time or evening. With businesses being pressured to operate on a 24/7 basis, family life is increasingly structured by their employers’ prescribed schedules (Wight, Raley, & Bianchi, 2008). Time shortages and nonstandard schedules challenge parents’ ability to spend time with their family and to have down time for individual renewal. As Edgell, Ammons, and Dahlin (2011) found, men who work nonstandard work schedules versus standard schedules, and men who work full-time versus part-time, experienced more difficulty with time for family. Bianchi (2011a) also found with time diaries from American national data that long work hours and nonstandard schedules infiltrate
family time and parents’ ability to rejuvenate. Immigrant Chinese fathers similarly reported the challenge of not having enough time for children and family, as well as personal leisure, physical exercise, and sleep. Many worked 10 or 12 hour shifts on work days that has a large overlap with children’s before and/or after school time. In the case of shifts where work days were different in subsequent weeks, their days off may fall on school days, making many hours a week inaccessible to children.

Sometimes the scarcity of time is due to the self-employment status and insecure nature of their paid employment. Research has shown that when parents are self-employed, their time for children and family is unpredictable (Hilbrecht & Lero, 2014). These findings are confirmed by the self-employed fathers in our study who often had to make themselves available anytime in an attempt to maintain and attract business. They do so by taking phone calls at dinner time, cancelling or not participating in planned family trips and events, and meeting clients at short notice.

Moreover, job insecurity may increase the amount of time people spent on job-related learning. Thus, parents may feel more pressed for time when they are trying to learn a new trade, break into a field, or keep up with industry knowledge. The majority of fathers indicated that they very frequently spent unpaid time on work-related training. Consistent with research on job-related learning, working Canadians are increasingly engaged in more informal job-related learning (self-learning) than paid courses (Livingstone, 2004).

Flexibility. Despite the overall challenges on time, self-employment and nonstandard schedules afforded some flexibility for immigrant Chinese fathers to attend to family situations such as children’s medical appointment during school hours or more urgent situations such as picking up a sick child from school. Although it often is at the cost of their “regular” sleep hours,
at the least, these fathers did not need to ask employers for time off, or lose work hours and income. This limited benefit of nonstandard schedules was also observed from working parents’ responses in the 2012 Survey of Working Life from New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). However, this “flexibility” should not be taken to reflect the efforts on their employers’ part. Rather, it is a by-product that may not benefit parents of children in middle childhood years who spend the majority of their daytime in schools, and do not need as much medical attention as children in earlier years (Shonkoff, 1984). Thus, this flexibility during day time may only have significant trade-off advantage for parents of younger children who could provide parental care at home, reduce child care cost (Barneet & Gareis, 2007; Pagnan, Lero, & Wadsworth, 2011; Wight et al., 2008), and/or for families of children with extended health issues for medical appointments during the day (Schuster, Chung, & Vestal, 2011).

**Financial strain in providing and parenting.** Income is a challenge closely related with time. Whereas time for their children is increasingly becoming a contemporary concern for all fathers, regardless of fathers’ income or occupational level (Bianchi, 2011a; McGill, 2014), fathers in low-paid jobs may need to work overtime or hold multiple jobs for maintaining a level of income. This is similar to fathers in this study. Immigrant Chinese fathers reported this trade-off dilemma similar to previous findings from low-income working parents (Perry-Jenkins, 2004). However, past research also suggests that the number of hours to work is dictated more by employers rather than individual choice or preference (Maume & Bellas, 2001). Therefore, it may not be as simple as to put in extra hours for fathers to solve their financial needs.

Most immigrant Chinese fathers indicated that their families worried about paying bills and child-related expenses very frequently or always in the past six months; many of them were earning minimum wage and/or had unstable self-employment income. Their description supports
the direct and indirect pathways conceptualized in research linking low income and child development in the context of family. Financial strain directly reduces parental economic resources to invest in the materials and services that enrich children’s experiences and development; it also indirectly affects parenting through undermining parental mental health (Conger & Donnellan, 2007; Mcloyd, 1989; Park, Coltrane, Duffy, Buriel, Dennis, Poweres, French, & Wedaman, 2004). The immigrant Chinese fathers in the present study expressed the regret of not being able to meet the needs of their children that required financial resources. They also described feeling stressed or developing a bad mood, which they alluded to as inducing diminished patience and attention for their children.

**Impact on health and well-being.** Beyond income, work also provides other protective mechanisms such as a sense of security and stability, feelings of satisfaction and progress, and family well-being (Guy, 2011; Raykov & Livingstone, 2012; Repetti & Wang, 2014). First, researchers revealed that job insecurity was associated with various adverse health outcomes such as depressive symptoms and stress (Clarke et al., 2007; Dean & Wilson, 2009; Lewchuck et al., 2011; Scott-Marshall & Tompa, 2011). Consistent with these findings, immigrant Chinese fathers have reported feeling anxious, every so often having to find a new job before the end of the current contract, and experiences a sense of “always on-the-go” to find new business and income, etc.

Secondly, defined as education-job mismatch, underemployment, in and by itself, is most significantly associated with perceived stress (Dean & Wilson, 2009; Raykov & Livingstone, 2012). It impacts workers’ health the most when they are highly overqualified. An analysis of Canadian national data showed that from 1991 to 2006, East Asian and African immigrants in Canada experienced the most pronounced increase in the share of the overqualified labour force.
More specifically, male immigrants from East Asia had a more prominent representation than their female counterparts (6% vs 1%) (Galarneau & Morissette, 2008). Among 74 countries from which foreign-educated Canadian immigrants received their degrees, those with degrees earned in China represented the second largest group (32,505) in 2006 after Philippines (39,455). However these Chinese immigrants ranked the lowest 13th in terms of having actual work in regulated professional fields in which they were trained (e.g., engineering or medicine) (Zietsma, 2010). Although underemployment generally declines with experience, it persists in the Canadian labour market as a whole, especially among certain industries such as service and industrial workers, and when workers are non-white immigrants (Livingstone, 2010; Sakamoto, Chin, & Young, 2010). The present study confirmed these findings; most of our immigrant Chinese fathers have experienced prolonged periods of being underemployed. Some fathers were in prestigious positions in China yet have worked extendedly in low wage, low rewarding, and often minimum wage positions. They have reported feeling stress and disappointment, and reduced interaction with their children when negative thoughts associated with underemployment occurred.

Lastly, past research has linked shift work with physical and emotional exhaustion, stress, poorer relationship quality, and family-work schedule conflict (Barnett & Gareis, 2006; Barnett, Gareis, & Brennan, 2008; Jamal, 2004). Our findings partially support past research. Specifically, immigrant Chinese fathers described lack of sleep, intermittent sleep, and an uncertainty of the health cost from long-term night shifts. They also reported feeling stress and negative emotions such as guilt about compromising family well-being by putting their and children through having to take children out of the house to ensure fathers’ day-time sleep.
Retrospective accounts from a father further revealed the exhaustion, confusion, and the consequences for his whole family from waves of rotating shifts.

**Father Involvement: Indirect Care**

Fathers often consider their provider role a component of a set of multiple tasks in raising children (Christiansen & Palkovitz, 2001; Chuang & Su, 2009). Lamb (2000) also stressed the importance of contextualizing father involvement in its totality of activities. Fathers’ direct engagement in various activities such as play and talking have dominated fathering research for decades (Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda, 2004). Immigrant Chinese fathers, indeed, engaged in various play activities that were developmentally appropriate for children in middle childhood such as board games and sports. They also spent time with children doing home projects that entail intermittent interactions and communications.

During these activities and at other times with children, they made sure children’s autonomy was supported and good citizenship was instilled through offering choices, communication, role modelling, and storytelling. This finding is in line with the findings that challenged the stereotypical views of strict and less expressive Asian fathers (Park, Coello, & Lau, 2014; Roer-Strier, Strier, Este, Shimoni, & Clark, 2005). As an example, in Roer-Strier et al., (2005), immigrant Chinese fathers in Canada were mostly expressive emotionally in comparison to other immigrant fathers. The investigation of Park et al., (2014) of East Asian fathers and mothers versus these from western nations from 1989 to 2010 also revealed the more individualistic socialization goals among East Asian parents contrary to popular beliefs.

However, many of fathers’ activities have indirect influence (i.e., economic support, mother support, housework) on children with significance that may be far beyond fathers’ direct interactions (i.e., play and child care tasks such as diaper changing) (Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda,
2004, p. 9). Many household chores, child care arrangements, and communication and decision-making around children occur without children’s presence or direct interactions with them. So does economic provision. Thus, it is informative to understand immigrant Chinese fathers’ overall roles and responsibilities in their families to better understand their involvement in the lives of their children. Moreover, these fathers’ views of their wives’ roles and responsibilities will be discussed to contextualize how they perceived all parental roles.

**Fathers’ coparenting experiences.** From the perspective of family systems theory, fathers and mothers are interacting partners within the system who mutually affect each other (Tamis-LeMonda, 2004). As changes occur, partners continually negotiate and modify their responsibilities, which are influenced by multiple factors such as each others’ earnings, work schedules, personally preferences, skills, and bargaining power (Tamis-LeMonda, 2004). The extent to which the partnership supports each partner in fulfilling their parenting roles and responsibilities defines the quality of their coparenting relationships (Mangelsdorg, Laxman, & Jessee, 2011). Thus, fathers and mothers are interrelated co-parents who assist or weaken each other’s ability to raise their children. Given the importance of parents’ interconnectedness, past research lacked sufficient attention to this coparenting experience (McHale, Khazan, Erera, Rotman, DeCourcay, & McConnell, 2003). Overall, immigrant Chinese fathers in the present study conveyed a salient sense of interconnectedness with their wives, economically, pragmatically, and emotionally. Economically, many of these fathers identified the income of their spouses to be more than that of their own, or indispensable as a secondary source of income for their families. Self-employed fathers and/or mothers also helped each other to make time, space, and referrals for business.
Beyond the mutual reliance and instrumental assistance in each others’ provider role, immigrant Chinese fathers were also heavily involved in a concerted effort with their wives in pragmatic tasks such as household chores and child care. More specifically, the fathers regarded support for their wives, both instrumental and emotional, as first and foremost among their roles and responsibilities. This is consistent with past research that one of the ways an involved father affects child development is through his support to the mother (Lamb, 2010; Saxbe, Repetti, & Graesch, 2011). According to Saxbe et al., (2011), mothers experienced pronounced stress relieving effects measured by their cortisol level when they saw fathers working around house, but not from mothers having leisure time to themselves. It is not surprising because if housework is simply left undone, spending time on leisure, in fact, may be anxiety provoking for mothers. Thus, through instrumental support, fathers indeed may be enhancing mothers’ emotional well-being.

Perhaps the significance of fathers’ support lies in the nature of the support. Whereas some immigrant Chinese fathers considered helping with their wives with chores and child-related activities as mother support rather than helping with work in the family, which may reflect an implicit assumption that it was mothers’ work to begin with, other fathers have similarly described their wives’ support role as assisting them (fathers) with housework. These attitudes towards housework may affect partners in whether or not they will act on them (Poortman & Lippe, 2009). Although only two fathers discussed the responsibility-taking of sharing housework, the practical support mothers received from fathers without having to ask is likely to promote mothers’ well-being and marital relationship (Milke, Bianchi, Mattingly, & Robinson, 2002).
Immigrant Chinese fathers and mothers were also interdependent in before and after school care, and taking children to various child activities. As children grow and enter formal school, their participation in organized activities and needs for school success require more adult time, involvement, and supervision in their after school time (Belsky, 2000; Christensen & Butler, 2011; Root & Wooten, 2008; Wight et al., 2008). Research has shown that parents of children from kindergarten to grade 12 experienced heightened after-school stress (Barnett & Gareis, 2006). Supervision may be especially challenging for parents in PE and/or these with nonstandard schedules and when children are not old enough to be alone before and after school. Often parents’ availability and transportation arrangements were determined by multiple factors such as schedules and transportation means, which were further determined by the nature of each parent’s work demands and need for access to a car which, for some families, changes depending on the job or day of the week, and the availability and feasibility of using public transportation. For them, after school care was further compounded by the safety concerns of using the older siblings, the older siblings’ willingness to babysit, and the vacancy and affordability of formal and informal after-school care by non-family members.

A recent review of nonstandard schedules and child well-being found significant links among such schedules and negative outcomes in children through its impact on parents’ psychological well-being, parenting quality, time shortage, and the impact on parent-child relationship (Li et al., 2014). These researchers found more pronounced effects on families with lower income and when the nonstandard schedules were full time. In line with these past findings, immigrant Chinese fathers and mothers worked various nonstandard schedules and described their limited time availability to supervise after school, having to use sibling care, and coordinating challenges to take children to various activities. Despite these challenges, the
parents in the present study coordinated closely and adaptively in the fluctuations and patterns of each others’ and children’s schedules.

Overall, the findings corroborated the time available perspective where couples divide labour according to their time availability (Raley, Bianchi, & Wang, 2012; Wang, Parker, & Taylor, 2013). Fathers in the present study resonated throughout their interview a sense of sharing household work and picking up for each other when time is stretched. Moreover, the findings on fathers’ view on their role of service to mother and their lower relative income provide support for the relative resource explanation of couples’ labour division where wives’ higher income relative to their husbands increases the latter’s share in housework and child care (Bianchi, 2011). The findings in the present study are also consistent with past research reporting the more egalitarian share of labour including chores and time spent with children among low-income fathers and fathers with nonstandard schedules in dual-parent families (Hossain & Shipman, 2009; Coltrane, Parke, & Adams, 2004). The finding in the present study that mothers may be key income providers is in contrast to the findings from a comparative study of Chinese parents in China and in Canada. In that study, providing is absent from Chinese mothers’ major responsibilities, either in China or in Canada (Chuang & Su, 2009). This discrepancy is likely due to its focus on a middle class sample.

Lastly, immigrant Chinese fathers and mothers also utilized each others' expertise in the realm of communication. First, one important role of fathers is buffering mothers from stress through supporting mothers and enhancing the mother-child relationship (Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda, 2004). Immigrant Chinese fathers have described their role as a liaison person between mother and children. Some of these fathers have perceived themselves to be the go-to person when their children wanted to talk or seek advice rather than their mothers. This finding
is in line with an earlier study by Abbott, Zheng, and Meredith (1992) who found fathers considered themselves more likely to comfort their children than mothers. Second, consistent with previous studies in which couples were found to mobilize respective skills and expertise, fathers have described themselves or their wives who have better English or communication skills to be the designated person for handling communication issues with people outside the family. Although this occurs infrequently among their responses, perhaps due to the higher self-rated English skills for both fathers and mothers, the finding reveals how couples take on different responsibilities according to the individuals’ expertise or preferences (Tamis-LeMonda, 2004). Third, immigrant Chinese fathers and mothers in our study also communicated with each other and used individual strengths in the decision-making and care of their children. Using one family’s example to demonstrate, the father utilized his skill to communicate with his child about an incidence that occurred at school. Then it was the mother’s turn to communicate with the school. Both partners were engaged in the process of decision-making and advocacy for their child.

**Gender roles.** Even though fathers in our sample considered chores as a major role for themselves, they still considered domestic work as the most prevailing responsibility for mothers. This is consistent with existing literature finding slower change in men’s time use in domestic work despite women’s increased participation in paid work (Bianchi, 2011; Bianchi, Milkie, Sayer, & Robinson, 2000; Wall & Arnold, 2007). More specifically, it partially supports the finding in the comparative study of Chinese fathers in China and in Canada that mothers’ roles are still perceived to have three major responsibilities: child care, household chores, and educator/trainer (Chuang & Su, 2009).
Moreover, there are nuances in the type of household chores by gender. Whereas both couples cooked, cleaned, and shoveled snow, the housework performed by fathers and mothers in the present study seemed to have a gendered division. Similar to findings from Bianchi et al. (2000), immigrant Chinese fathers’ tasks included more snow shoveling, lawn mowing, and running errands related to car maintenance and repairs, whereas mothers’ tasks included more cooking and cleaning. An interesting finding is that mothers’ cooking was more likely to involve new recipes, and/or of a higher degree of variety and complexity in the cooking process. Findings in a study by Pootiman and Lippe (2009) of Dutch male and female workers may provide an explanation. They found that compared to men, women had a higher standard and feeling of responsibility towards housework such as cleaning and cooking. Thus, women may spend more time and attention to the quality of these chores. Lastly, gender roles also persisted in child-related tasks. Immigrant Chinese fathers perceived mothers’ role in child-related activities in terms of primary child care activities such as preparing snacks or shopping for children’s clothes among their child care roles. This corroborated existing research that mothers still perform far more child care tasks versus the teaching or playing type of child related activities (Chuang & Su, 2009).

Lastly, Chinese fathering in existing literature tends to portray fathers as being the role models, head of the family, and the disciplinarian of their children (Li & Lamb, 2013). Immigrant Chinese fathers also stated that it was important for them to observe their own behaviours and decisions in life so that they could be a good role model for their children. They also mentioned their role as family head to lead their family and to set and enforce rules for their children. Although these findings were often explained as being influenced by Confucianism of a father and leader figure (Li & Lamb, 2013), Palkovitz’s (2002) qualitative interviews with
American fathers revealed that men who become fathers invariably wanted to become a better person and a role model for their children. Moreover, in their discussions, immigrant Chinese fathers did not impress a sense of importance on their leader role as family head. Instead, they made joint decisions with their wives and offered autonomy to their children. This is, in part, consistent with Chuang and Su’s (2008) finding that Chinese fathers in China and Canada were shifting away from the stern father image and becoming more equalitarian.

**Life with children and the future of children.** When people become parents, many chores and activities they carry out before having children are now performed with children in mind (Palkovitz, 2002). However, Pleck (2012) also pointed out that not all parents live parenthood the same ways. The motivation to allocate mental and material resources to children greatly affects the quality of father involvement and child outcomes (Pleck, 2012). Immigrant Chinese fathers in this study confirmed this difference with conviction. When asked what they do for their children versus with their children, their responses were often not knowing where to start as it entails a vast number of activities. Everything from cooking and house cleaning to family leisure takes on a different meaning. In one discussion in the present study, a Chinese father with grocery shopping task would try to buy the things children liked to eat and not spend money on items only he likes. Although this example may not exist if families had ample financial means, it demonstrates immigrant Chinese fathers’ commitment to their fatherhood and their children’s interests.

Moreover, the activities and concerns with children in middle childhood from ages 6 to 12 take on a developmental distinction. “Concerted cultivation” is a term used to describe contemporary middle class parents’ efforts to prepare their children for the future by various enrichment programs in academics, sports, and other abilities such as piano (Bianchi, 2010b;
Sayer, Bianchi, & Robinson, 2003; Yeung et al., 2001). Our sample of fathers in PE represents a unique intersection of individuals who are highly-educated, but occupy mostly lower status occupations and income categories. Yet, they were keenly aware of the necessity of preparing for their children’s future. Some were worried about the negative influence their current occupational achievement could have on their children’s motivation to succeed. These cognitive activities demonstrates that father involvement is not just what one does when spending time with children, but during the time away from children as well. And the immigrant Chinese fathers subsequently engaged in various observable behaviours such as researching for appropriate programs, registering their children, and preparing materials and goods related to the programs. They also adjusted family finances to make funds available for these purposes. Indeed, research on education in Ontario by Livingstone (2014) revealed that Chinese parents in low income and with low occupational status were as likely to purchase tutoring services as parents with higher income and higher occupational status.

**Education and school involvement.** Cultural values help shape the primacy Chinese parents place on their children’s education (Chao, 1996; Li & Nirmala, 2000). Immigrant Chinese fathers in the present study reported that they played important roles in the education and training of their children. They were involved at home in activities such as teaching children academic skills and supervised homework. On the one hand, this finding is contrary to research indicating a low participation from Chinese fathers in their children’s educational activities including attending parent-teacher meetings or providing assistance their children with school work (Lu, 2005; Wang, 2007). In a study of parents with elementary school children in China (grade 1 to 6), Wu, An, and An (2013) also found that fathers were generally less active compared to mothers in providing education-related support. The low participation was
suggested to stem from the influence of the history of Chinese parental roles that focused on mothers’ responsibilities in their children’s education (Wu et al., 2013). On the other hand, the finding provides some support to Jankowiak’s (2010) study that found Chinese fathers increased their involvement in children’s education when the children entered formal school ages of 6 and 7. Moreover, factors such as sociocultural background or present socioeconomic circumstances may determine fathers’ level of involvement in education (Lamb, 2000). It maybe that immigrant Chinese fathers had higher expectations of their children and subsequently spent more time on educational activities as was found in Chao’s (1996) studies of immigrant Chinese mothers in US.

Although immigrant Chinese fathers were involved in school interactions such as parent-teacher meetings, they were less likely to participate in other non-academic school events such as fund raising events. This result is consistent in part with findings suggesting a higher level of home-based rather than school-based involvement among Chinese parents in Hong Kong and China, although the children in this study was preschoolers (Lau, Li, & Rao, 2011). In another study of parents with school-aged children in Hong Kong, Ho (2003) found that the lack of school-based involvement was due to the school’s wish to inform parents of their children’s academic progress and home cooperation, but not to include parents in other decision making process. However, as a result of British colonization that permeated all social systems such as schools, parents in Hong Kong were likely more familiar with western concepts of school involvement and events such as fund raising. Thus, cultural expectations may explain partially the finding in this study. The immigrant Chinese father who commented that the voluntary signup for pizza days were, in a way, involuntary, because non-participation resulted in their child feeling excluded. Thus, lack of cultural familiarity with simple events like pizza days that
were assumed to be universal knowledge from the schools’ perspective may only be one of many situations where parental involvement failed to assist and support immigrant parents in easing into the life with school-aged children.

**Strategies for a Sustainable Future**

The impact of PE on families were found to be twofold: whereas the characteristics of PE such as being self-employed or shift work afforded some flexibility and freedom for fathers to attend to family matters, at other times, they undermined family time, health, and a sense of personal control (e.g., having to be available anytime to maintain or attract business). Consistent with existing studies, the fathers in this study often entered self-employment upon a job loss or as a result of perceiving no better alternatives. However, they also came to regard self-employment as a long-term solution to lacking adequate and sustainable employment. Throughout the process of data analyses, immigrant Chinese fathers revealed various strategies they used to understand their disadvantage and cope with day to day challenges. In dealing with their situations, fathers demonstrated their flexibility with various cognitive strategies such as acknowledging uncontrollable factors in their situations, recognizing their own strengths and weaknesses for designing a self-sustainable career path, turning challenges into positive teaching moments, and using dual-reference (e.g., Canada versus China) in understanding their experience.

**Limitations and Future Directions**

The present study has some limitations that need to be addressed. The first is the small sample size and its concentration mainly in the Greater Toronto Area, Hamilton, and Guelph. Thus, the findings are limited in their generalizability to other immigrant Chinese fathers. The second limitation is selection bias. The challenge of recruiting ethnic minority fathers may be
due to their unfamiliarity with social research concepts or distrust of such institutions. The fathers who participated in the present study needed to initiate contact with the primary researcher through advertised recruitment in ethnic community newspapers, television programs, websites, immigrant servicing agencies, and the main researcher’s personal network. Thus, those who were willing and able to participate may be inherently different from those who were not in that the former may be more familiar with the culture of research or more open to talk about their personal experiences. These characteristics could lead to differences of how they understand and cope with their PE and fathering experiences.

Moreover, those who contacted the primary researcher may be less busy, less cognitively preoccupied, or perceived less time pressure than those who did not. Vercruyssen, Roose, and Van de Putte (2011) showed that mothers who received a survey request through their children’s school but did not respond were busier; they experienced more work-family conflict and time pressure than those who received information and responded. Given that fathers who work precariously may feel multiple demands in life or have no time for newspapers and websites, it is very likely that the fathers who participated had employment with a lower degree of precarity or had better coping strategies and supports in life. For these reasons, the results in the present study may be limited in their representativeness.

The present study is one of the first to explore the linkage between PE and its effects on fathering. One of the challenges for the purpose of operationalizing the effects of PE was the measurement limitation. Whereas quantitative research on PE are limited in the availability of collected data on a regional or national scale (Noack & Vosko, 2012), there is a lack of measures bridging PE and its effects on families and parenting. For example, simple answers of whether a participant has pension and union coverage are not directly useful in the context of parenting.
Furthermore, participants may not easily know the accurate information of their employers such as firm size (small size of 20 employees or less). The present study used the Employment Precarity Index as a criterion for PE (Lewchuck et al., 2013). Although this measure was developed in Canada and provided a valuable tool for understanding and categorizing the participants’ work as PE, it was limited in a number of ways. First, it may not be abreast with the speed with which employers are changing the rules. As an example, from the many phone calls from potential participants, the answers to the question, “Do you receive any other employment benefits from your current employer(s) such as a drug plan, vision, dental, life insurance etc.?” revealed that, now, even for full-time positions, employers are generating varying degrees of medical insurance coverage such as asking employees to pay a percentage of insurance premiums along with any copayment with actual use. One employer offered a potential participant a choice between purchasing out-of-pocket split medical insurance and the option of a cash back incentive of having no insurance coverage. Thus, these variations of employer discretionary benefits brought much ambiguity in categorizing PE, often failing to classify potential participants who seemed precariously employed. Lastly, many items on the Employment Precarity Index asked questions that were meant to capture instability such as the variability of income from week to week, or whether one knows his or her work schedule at least one week in advance. Given that many precarious jobs paid low wages but somewhat stable income and scheduling, these questions were not sensitive to capturing these types of precarious workers.

With the multiple benefits of using interviews, it also has some limitations (Potter & Hepburn, 2005). The first issue is social desirability. Participants may be motivated to portray themselves in a socially favorable light. The second one is the role of the researcher and any
preexisting biases in influencing the interview process and content (Fontana & Frey, 2005; Potter & Hepburn, 2005). The primary researcher has taken great caution to keep her cultural background and personal biases in check, such as recognizing her own cultural, political, and epistemological stance at the beginning of the study, re-familiarizing with ways to minimize the influence of the researcher on participants and interview process, and establishing a comfortable and neutral rapport with participants. The primary researcher has also kept a memo for critically reflecting on her personal biases. A research assistant was recruited to ensure inter-rater reliability in the process of developing coding systems and data analysis. However, issues with interviews are impossible to entirely eliminate (Potter & Hepburn, 2005). For example, fathering research of underrepresented groups tends to take a deficit perspective (Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda, 2004). The primary researcher also noticed her own expectation of somewhat more negative findings. For example, despite of their salient challenges such as those in their employment circumstances, some participants also had many positive experiences about their life in Canada. Indeed, research has shown that although economic integration is key to immigrants’ true integration into a society (European Economic and Social Committee, 2012), immigration and culture challenges do not necessarily pose as risk factors to immigrant fathers. Immigration itself may offer new opportunities for fatherhood (Roer-Strier et al., 2005).

Nonetheless, the present study is an exploratory study that offered a qualitative research platform for future investigations. A larger sample size in the future would provide results that are more generalizable and representative. Given the limited resources of the primary researcher, the present study only explored the lines of inquiry from the fathers’ perspective. Future studies that use multiple informants such as mothers and children would be of great benefit. The development of measures that could capture the PE in its evolution, and its effects on parenting
would be useful in contextualizing factors affecting parenting. Lastly, given the oppressive history of Chinese immigrants in Canada, the recent evidence of their continued socioeconomic vulnerabilities, and the cultural tendency of maintaining group harmony and understating issues and challenges (Lin, Williams, Shannon, & Wilkins, 2007), future research using participatory action research that actively involves participants in the data collection and analysis processes has the potential to better examine the structural reasons for their oppression (Baum, MacDougall, & Smith, 2006). Moreover, by sharing the power between the participants and the researcher, participatory action research can enable action through empowering the disadvantaged groups and communities (Baum et al., 2006).

**Conclusion**

PE heightens the socioeconomic inequality structured by race, gender, and immigrant status. These “insufficient” jobs are highly represented by visible minorities and immigrants who are rapidly changing the demographic landscape of Canada. Immigrant men who are visible minorities experience a larger income gap than white immigrant men compared with white Canadian born men. Other recent findings in Canada have shown the continued labour market vulnerability among Chinese workers, especially among immigrant Chinese women. They also had a higher likelihood than white workers to be in low income households (Premjia & Lewchuk, 2014). Both immigrant Chinese men and women do not gain from their increased educational credentials as much as white Canadians do (Lee, 2011). This is consistent with findings from Statistics Canada (2007) that showed a 31% wage gap between recent immigrants with university degrees and their university-educated Canadian-born workers, 2% more than the 29% between recent immigrants without postsecondary education and their similarly educated Canadian-born counterparts. Given an almost 4% more Chinese workers in precarious jobs in
Ontario than other ethnic groups, and the finding from the present study that immigrant Chinese mothers, as well as fathers, shoulder important provision role and other parental responsibilities, our findings have important policy implication in supporting immigrant Chinese women and men in their employment and family provision endeavors.

The present study has implications for the parenting research of understudied groups, as well as policy makers and immigrant serving agencies. Cultural influence may affect how negatively or positively participants react to an interview question, which, in turn, may affect how findings are interpreted for policy implications. A population-based survey (Premjia & Lewchuk, 2014) between 2005 and 2006 of 1,611 workers in Toronto found that Chinese male workers were less likely to report experiencing negativity such as lacking benefits or exposure to workplace hazards, which may be attributable to the Chinese traditional attitudes towards social harmony, acceptance, and resignation (Premjia & Lewchuk, 2014). However, Chinese workers experienced high rates of labour market discrimination and workplace discrimination. In line with these findings, Roer‐Strier et al. (2005) revealed that systemic barriers such as discrimination and racism pose real disadvantages to immigrant fatherhood. Thus, the lack of more negative findings in research such as the present study should not obscure the reality of employment vulnerabilities in quantitative studies. Lastly, the results from this investigation provide insights for programs and policies in the areas of immigrant settlement to acknowledge the persistence and cyclical nature of immigrants’ precarious experience, and recognize the service gaps that many established immigrants need in terms of employment and family supports.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Length of residency</th>
<th>Current Occupation of main job</th>
<th>Self-rated English</th>
<th>Rating of wife’s English</th>
<th>Number of cars</th>
<th>Number of jobs</th>
<th>Work hours per week</th>
<th>Wife’s # jobs</th>
<th>Wife’s # hours per week</th>
<th>Ages of children (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>9.75 yrs.</td>
<td>Harm reduction worker</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6, 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>7.5 yrs.</td>
<td>Machine operator</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6, 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>8.42 yrs.</td>
<td>General labour</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>&lt; 1, 3, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>11.42 yrs.</td>
<td>Insurance broker</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35-40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8, 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>12.25 yrs.</td>
<td>Hotel front desk</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>14.33 yrs.</td>
<td>Apprentice electrician</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1, 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>5.83 yrs.</td>
<td>IT technical support</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>9.92 yrs.</td>
<td>Real estate agent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7, 19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* 1 = completely fluent    5 = not fluent at all
Table 2

*Coding System for Fathers’ Familial Roles and Responsibilities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child care</td>
<td>Performing childcare tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication with their wives and children</td>
<td>Imparting and/or exchanging information by speaking with wives and children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplining</td>
<td>Setting rules and limits for children; enforcing and addressing rule adherence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic provider</td>
<td>Providing economic resources through working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of the family</td>
<td>The major player in leading family in terms of plans, directions, and/or decisions etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household chores and errands</td>
<td>Doing housework and running errands related to household such as cooking or grocery trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother support</td>
<td>Supporting their spouse emotionally (e.g., comforting, consulting) and/or instrumentally (e.g., helping with specific tasks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role modelling</td>
<td>Setting positive examples for children through parental actions and behaviours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainer/educator/guidance</td>
<td>Being the teacher and guidance for children’s recreational, academic, and practical life skill development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 3

*Coding System for Mothers’ Familial Roles and Responsibilities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child care</td>
<td>Performing childcare tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication with family members and individuals outside the family</td>
<td>Imparting and/or exchanging information by speaking with 1) husbands and children; and 2) individuals outside the family for family and/or child-related matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic provider</td>
<td>Providing economic resources through working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father support</td>
<td>Supporting their spouse emotionally (e.g., comforting, consulting) and/or instrumentally (e.g., helping with specific tasks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household chores and errands</td>
<td>Doing housework and running errands related to household such as cooking or grocery trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainer/educator/guidance</td>
<td>Being the teacher and guidance for children’s recreational, academic, and practical life skill development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 4

*Coding System for Fathers’ Direct Interaction with Children*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Imparting and/or exchanging information with children including praising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good citizenship/work ethics</td>
<td>Conveying the value of being a good citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplining</td>
<td>Setting rules and limits for children; enforcing and addressing rule adherence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering autonomy</td>
<td>Jointly making decisions with children or helping children make decisions; giving children choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>Parent-child activities that are interactive in nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social play</td>
<td>Spending time in social settings, i.e. religious attendance and family/friends gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainer/educator/guidance</td>
<td>Being the teacher and guidance for children’s recreational, academic, and practical life skill development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5

*Coding System for Fathers’ Indirect Care for Children*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advocating</td>
<td>Supporting or promoting the interests of children on their behalf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>衣食住行 (clothing, food, shelter, transportation)</td>
<td>Taking care of various needs from living a life with children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication with individuals involved in caring for children</td>
<td>Imparting and/or exchanging information with people involving in caring for their children including their wives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic providing</td>
<td>Providing economic resources through working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental concerns</td>
<td>Executive functions concerning children such as worrying, monitoring, and deciding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process responsibilities</td>
<td>Seeing to the completion of a process from planning, preparing, to implementing (i.e. parties, activities, trips)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource enabling</td>
<td>Developing children’s talent/skill and planning for their future by making resources available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social-emotional/character building</td>
<td>Involving children in situations beneficial for their social-emotional and character development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6

*Coding System for Employment Effects on Fathering*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility</td>
<td>Flexibility afforded by employment in fulfilling parenting responsibilities, i.e. the ease with which to take time off work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impacts on psychological well-being</td>
<td>Negative mood such as impatience or guilt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>Effects from income through employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job informing parenting</td>
<td>The knowledge and skills from work informed fathers’ parenting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time/scheduling conflict</td>
<td>Time pressure, inconvenient timing, and/or conflicts in schedules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turning disadvantages into teaching opportunities</td>
<td>Practical skills or good citizenship/ethical Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worries of Children’s future employment</td>
<td>Children’s occupational interest, aspirations, and achievement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7

*Coding System for Challenges of Children’s Short-term and Regular Schedules*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health cost</td>
<td>Loss and/or interruption of sleep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time/scheduling conflict</td>
<td>Time pressure, inconvenient timing, and/or conflicts in schedules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>Having one car; or lack of (convenient) public transportation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 8

*Coding System for Challenges Choosing Organized Leisure Activities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Busyness</td>
<td>Whether the intensity of activities is manageable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial consideration</td>
<td>Whether the activity is affordable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Benefits</td>
<td>Whether activities would benefit children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduling conflict</td>
<td>Scheduling conflict among work, family time, and children’s activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>Having one car; or no (convenient) public transportation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9

*Coding System for Strategies of Improving Employment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canadian experience</td>
<td>Obtaining employment related experience in Canada, including getting Canadian education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credentialing</td>
<td>Becoming qualified to work in a field that requires professional licences and/or registrations in legislated professions and associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing well in the current job</td>
<td>Be known as a good employee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving language</td>
<td>Improving English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>Building relationships such as keeping contact with past acquaintances, cultivating current ones, and creating new ones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building a sustainable career future</td>
<td>Customizing career path that is sustainable, and suitable for individual strength and characteristics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10

*Coding System for Strategies of Meeting the Needs of Work and Family*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Family First” with discretion</td>
<td>The “Family First” motto to be used with care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding family-friendly employment</td>
<td>Finding employment with characteristics that are beneficial for families, i.e. stability; more family-friendly work schedules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacrificing personal time</td>
<td>To sacrifice time and desire for personal leisure and preferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separating work and family</td>
<td>Attempts of not mixing work with family time and mental attention</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A

RESEARCH ETHICS BOARDS
Certification of Ethical Acceptability of Research Involving Human Participants

APPROVAL PERIOD: December 13, 2013
EXPIRY DATE: December 13, 2014
REB: G
REB NUMBER: 13NV028
TYPE OF REVIEW: Delegated Type 1
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Chuang, Sue (schuang@uoguelph.ca)
DEPARTMENT: Family Relations & Applied Nutrition
SPONSOR(S): N/A
TITLE OF PROJECT: Immigrant fathers and Precarious Employment

CHANGES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Document Name</th>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Change Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20140227</td>
<td>Application</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Changed criteria. Changed length of interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recruitment script and relevant flyers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Broadened wording, lowered years in Canada from 3 to 2, and 1 child between 6 and 12 instead of youngest one between these ages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Telephone script</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Changes the length of interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consent form</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Changes the length of interview.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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: [Signature]

Date: February 27, 2014

L. Kuczynski
Chair, Research Ethics Board-General
Appendix B

Study Description for Newspaper and Website Editors

Immigrant Father Study:

A University of Guelph study is exploring mainland Chinese immigrants’ experience of working and raising child/ren in Canada. If you: 1) and your wife were from China; 2) have immigrated to Canada for more than 2 years; 3) have a university degree; 4) both you and your wife work (any kind of employment: i.e.: part-time, temporary, and self-employment without employee/s); and 5) you have a child between the ages of 6 and 12, you may be able to participate! You will receive $30 for your time. Please contact 647-828-9696, or email zweng@uoguelph.ca.
Appendix C

Flyer

A Family Study is calling for Chinese fathers’ participation
-Exploring the experience of working and raising children in Canada

Is this YOU or someone you know?

- You and your wife were from China
- You have immigrated to Canada for more than 2 years
- You have a university degree
- You and your spouse both work (any kind of employment, i.e. part-time, temporary, or self-employment)
- You have a child between the ages of 6-12

Please contact 647-828-9696 or zweng@uoguelph.ca

You will receive $30 for your time

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Guelph Research Ethics Board.
Appendix D

Telephone Screening Interview

Hi!

My name is Jackie Weng. I am a Master’s student at the University of Guelph. I am currently conducting a study of Chinese immigrant fathers under the supervision of Dr. Susan Chuang in the department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition.

The main purpose of my study is to have a better understanding of the experience of Chinese immigrant fathers who work and raise children in Canada.

If you meet the criteria, your participation will involve filling out a questionnaire and a one-time interview with me. I can visit you at your home for the interview or at a location you prefer. The length of the interview can take 60 minutes up to 120 minutes. Our interview will be audio recorded solely for the purpose of this study. After the interview is transcribed and checked for accuracy, the audio recordings will be destroyed.

This study is about employment and its relationship with fathering. To know if you meet the criteria for participation, I need to ask you some questions regarding your employment such as schedules, benefits... If you do not meet the criteria, the answers you give me will be destroyed.

May I start asking you the questions to see if you may meet the criteria?

No: Thank him and ask him if he knows anyone who may be interested in participating. Ask him to give my phone number and/or email to the individuals he has in mind prior to consent.

Yes: Great!

I’d like to assure you that this information is only used to see if you qualify for this study. It will absolutely not be shared with any other party.

Please If at any point, you don’t feel comfortable answering any of the questions, you may choose to skip, stop, or take a break from the questions. Do you have any questions before we start?

Address any questions participants have.

Now, I will first ask you some questions about your basic information and 12 questions about your work to confirm your eligibility to participate. Do I have your permission to start?
Appendix E
Informed Consent to Participate in Research

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL AND APPLIED HUMAN SCIENCES
Department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition

You have been asked to participate in a study conducted by Jackie Weng as part of a Master’s thesis supervised by Dr. Susan Chuang from the Department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition at the University of Guelph.

Purpose of the Study
This study aims to increase the understanding of the experience of Chinese immigrant fathers who work and raise children in Canada. Of particular interest, this study explores the fathers’ employment challenges and how these challenges influence their fathering. As part of this study, how the fathers make sense of their challenges and experiences will be examined.

Procedures
The telephone screening answers you gave me have been saved and will be linked to your answers today for analysis later. You will be asked to complete a background questionnaire and a face-to-face interview. The questionnaire may take 10 to 20 minutes and the interview 60 to 120 minutes. During the interview, you will be audio recorded to ensure accurate transcription. You will be interviewed at a location that is comfortable and convenient to you.

Potential Risks/Discomforts
Risks are minimal for involvement in this study. However, you may feel uncomfortable or emotionally uneasy talking about your work and/or fathering experiences. Although we do not expect any long term emotional harm, you may stop your participation at any point. For example, you may stop or skip answering any interview question at any time you feel uncomfortable.

Benefits to Participate in This Study
Although there are no direct benefits to all participants, some participants may find the experience of participating in social science research enriching and insightful. You will also know that by your participation, you are contributing to the understanding of the experiences and challenges of Chinese immigrant fathers. If you are interested in learning about the results of this study, you can provide your email at the end of this form (in the signature box).

Confidentiality
Every effort will be made to ensure your confidentiality with the exceptions of child abuse or court subpoena. Your responses in the interview may be used as a verbatim quotation but we will not use your name. The hard copy consent forms and payment signature page will be kept in a locked file cabinet at the University of Guelph for approximately 7 years at which point they will be securely shredded.

Compensation
As a token of appreciation for your participation and time, you will receive $30 for participation in the study. You need to provide a signature to acknowledge the receipt of compensation at the end of the interview.
Participation and Withdrawal
Participation in this research study is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any time or refuse to participate without consequences of any kind. 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.

You may exercise the option of removing your data from the study. This will be possible within 2 weeks of our interview. Because to ensure your confidentiality, your personal identifiers such as your name will be removed after your answers have been linked and compiled; and audio recordings permanent erased after being transcribed and checked for accuracy. This means that once this is done, you cannot withdraw your data because we would not know which data belonged to you.

Questions about the Research
If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Zhiyu Weng (Masters’ student, University of Guelph) at zweng@uoguelph.ca, phone number 647-828-9696, or Dr. Susan Chuang (advisor), schuang@uoguelph.ca, 519-824-4120 ext. 58389.

Your Rights as Research Participants
You are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies because of your signing of this informed consent.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Guelph Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact: Sandra Auld, Director, Research Ethics (519) 824-4120, ext. 56606 sauld@uoguelph.ca

Signature of Research Participant
I, (Please print your name) __________________________ have read the information above regarding the details of this study. I have been provided with answers about this study to my satisfaction and been given a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study.

_____________________________ Date (mm/dd/yyyy)
Signature of Participant

_____________________________ Date (mm/dd/yyyy)
Signature of Witness
Payment signature Page

I, (Please print your name) __________________________ have received $30 as reimbursement of participation in the Chinese Immigrant Father Study.

__________________________________
Signature of Participant

__________________________________
Signature of Witness

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

Option to receive study results (aggregate information)

If you are interested in learning about the results of this study, we will be happy to email you once they become available. Your email address will be used only for this purpose:

__________________________ @ ___________________________
Appendix F:

Work-Family Questionnaire

ID #: ___________ Date: _______________ Participant Name

Basic Criteria:

☐ Yes ☐ No (1) Did you come with your spouse from mainland China?
☐ Yes ☐ No (2) Have you been in Canada for 2 years or more?
☐ Yes ☐ No (3) Do you have a university degree?
☐ Yes ☐ No (4) Do you and your spouse both work (including self-employment)?
☐ Yes ☐ No (5) Do you have a child between the ages of 6 and 12?

How many children do you have: ____ and how old are they? ____________________________

1. Which of the following best describes the job/contract that paid you the most in the last 3 months? Please check one only:

☐ (1) casual (on-call, day labour) =10
☐ (2) temporary/short term contract (less than a year) =10
☐ (3) fixed term contract, one year or more =5
☐ (4) self-employed-no employees =7.5
☐ (5) self-employed others work for me
☐ (6) permanent part-time-less than 30 hour per week =2.5
☐ (7) permanent full-time- hours vary from week to week and could sometimes be less than 30 =2.5
☐ (8) permanent full time-30 hours or more a per week

\[
\begin{array}{c}
10 \text{ if } \leq 2 \text{ (casual/temp/short term)} \\
7.5 \text{ if } =4 \text{ (own account self-employed)} \\
5 \text{ if } =3 \text{ (fixed term)} \\
2.5 \text{ if } =6 \text{ or 7 (permanent part-time or permanent hours vary <30)}
\end{array}
\]

Q1. Score _____

2. In the last 3 months, what portion of your paid hours came from temporary employment agencies?

☐ (1) all =10
☐ (2) most =10
☐ (3) half =10
☐ (4) some =0
☐ (5) none =0

If the answer is from 1 to 3, this person will be classified as a temp agency worker regardless of how they responded to question 1.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
10 \text{ if } \leq 3 \text{ (all/most/half)}
\end{array}
\]

Q2. Score _____
3. Does the following describe your current employment relationship?

   I have one employer, who I expect to be working for a year from now, who provides at least 30 hours of work a week, and who pays benefits.

   □ (1) yes =0
   □ (2) no =10

   10 if =2

   Q3. Score ______

4. Do you receive any other employment benefits from your current employer(s) such as a drug plan, vision, dental, life insurance etc.?

   □ (1) yes
   □ (2) no (skip to Q.80 if no)
   □ (7) does not apply
   □ (8) don't know

5. Does your current employer(s) provide a private retirement income plan such as a pension plan, or a contribution to an RRSP (CPP does not count)?

   □ (1) yes
   □ (2) no
   □ (7) does not apply

Full benefits (1): Report yes to both question 4 and question 5. =0
Part benefits (2): Report yes to either question 4 or question 5. =5
No benefits (3): All others =10

10 if =3 (no pension/no benefits)
5 if =2 (one of pension/benefits)  

Q4 & 5. Score ______

6. Do you usually get paid if you miss a day's work?

   □ (1) yes =0
   □ (2) no (miss) =10

   10 if=2 (Not paid if miss work)  

   Q6. Score ______

7. In the last 12 months, how much did your income vary from week to week?

   □ (1) a great deal =10
   □ (2) a lot =7.5
   □ (3) some =5
   □ (4) a little =2.5
   □ (5) not at all

10 if =1 (Income varies a great deal)
7.5 if =2 (income varies a lot)
5 if =3 (income varies some)
2.5 if =4 (income varies a little)  

Q7. Score______
8. How likely will your total hours of paid employment be reduced in the next 6 months?

- (1) very likely = 10
- (2) likely = 7.5
- (3) somewhat likely = 5
- (4) not likely
- (5) not likely at all

10 if = 5 (paid hours very likely reduced)
7.5 if = 4 (paid hours likely reduced)
5 if = 3 (paid hours somewhat likely reduced)

Q8. Score ______

9. In the last 3 months, how often did you work on an on-call basis? (That is, you have no set schedule, and your employer calls you in only when there is work)

- (1) all the time = 10
- (2) most of the time = 7.5
- (3) half the time = 5
- (4) some of the time = 2.5
- (5) never

10 if = 1 (on call all the time)
7.5 if = 2 (on call most of the time)
5 if = 3 (on call half the time)
2.5 if = 4 (on call some of the time)

Q9. Score ______

10. Do you know your work schedule at least one week in advance?

- (1) always
- (2) most of the time = 2.5
- (3) half the time = 5
- (4) some of the time = 7.5
- (5) never = 10

10 if = 5 (never know schedule one week in advance)
7.5 if = 4 (some of the time know schedule one week in advance)
5 if = 3 (half the time know schedule one week in advance)
2.5 if = 2 (most of the time know schedule one week in advance)

Q10. Score ______

11. In the last 3 months, what portion of your employment income was received in cash?

- (1) most = 10
- (2) about half = 7.5
- (3) less than half = 5
- (4) none

10 if = 1 (paid in cash most of the time)
7.5 if = 2 (paid in cash about half)
5 if = 3 (paid in cash less than half)

Q11. Score ______
12. Would your current employment be negatively affected if you raised a health and safety concern or raised an employment rights concern with your employer(s)?

- (1) very likely = 10
- (2) likely = 7.5
- (3) somewhat likely = 5
- (4) not likely
- (5) not likely at all

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>(Raising H&amp;S or emp. standards very likely affect employment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>(Likely affect employment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>(somewhat likely)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q12. Score ______

Thank you very much for your time!

Total score for Employment Precarity Index Q1-12 ______ *(eligible if over 38 points)*

*(If not meeting criteria) Thank him for his time and ask him to pass on my contact information to potential candidates in his personal network.*

Great! You meet all the criteria for this study. When is convenient for you to have an interview with me? *(Book in 2 weeks’ time)*

______________________________________________________________________________  
______________________________________________________________________________

To save participants’ time and trip, I usually visit them at their home for our interview. No one other than me will have your information and once our interview is completed, your address will be deleted from my record. Would home visit be convenient for you?

If yes, home address: ____________________________________________________________  
______________________________________________________________________________

*If not, let participant choose a public location:*

______________________________________________________________________________  

*(Alternative location)*

Okay! I look forward to seeing you soon on appointment time!  

Appendix F

Background Questionnaire (Immigration-Family-Work)

Below you will find a series of questions used to understand your family and your life in Canada. Your answers will be kept CONFIDENTIAL and only the researcher of this study can see it. Your answers will be assigned an identification number (ID #). After that, your name will be taken off this questionnaire. Please fill out the answers as accurate as you can to help the quality of the study. Thank you!

ID #: __________ (To be entered by researcher)  Date: ____________

1. What is your age? ______  What is the year and month you came to Canada? _________  
   Canadian citizenship:  □ Obtained  □ Not intended  □ Expected

2. Below are some of reasons for immigrating to Canada. Check all that applies to you AND rank order them with 1 as the most important to you:
   □ #_____ Economic and employment opportunities
   □ #_____ Different way of life
   □ #_____ A better physical, political and social environment
   □ #_____ Spouse’s idea
   □ #_____ Relative(s)/friend(s) in Canada
   □ #_____ Other reasons (Specify): ________________

3. Your immigration status when you came to Canada?
   □ Humanitarian and Refugee  □ Permanent resident: I was the principal applicant
   □ Family sponsorship  □ Permanent resident: my spouse was the principal applicant

4. How well do you speak English? (Please circle one number)
   1 2 3 4 5
   Completely fluent  Not fluent at all

5. How well does your spouse speak English? (Please circle one number)
   1 2 3 4 5
   Completely fluent  Not fluent at all

6. What is your family’s current housing arrangement?
   □ Rent apartment/house  □ Own condo/house
   □ Other housing arrangements (Specify): _________________________
   Regardless of rent or own, does your family live with:
   □ Grandparents  □ Other relatives  □ Friends  □ Other unrelated individuals

7. How many times have your family moved in Canada, not including the interim houses and hotels after initial arrival at Canada?
   □ 1  □ 2  □ 3  □ 4  □ 5  □ 6  □ 7 or more

8. How many cars does your family own or lease:  □ 0  □ 1  □ 2 or more
9. How many jobs do you currently have (including self-employment)?

□ 1 □ 2 □ 3 □ > 4

10. To better understand your employment situation, please write down your current job title/s; average # hours worked per week in the past 6 months; and choose from the boxes below: the industry, work schedules and work days that best describe each job.

Main job title: _______; Average # hours worked per week: _______; Industry: _______; Work schedules: _______; and Work days: _______.

2nd Job title: ________; Average # hours worked per week: _______; Industry: _______; Work schedules: _______; and Work days: _______.

3rd Job title: ________; Average # hours worked per week: _______; Industry: _______; Work schedules: _______; and Work days: _______.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industries</th>
<th>Work Schedules</th>
<th>Work Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Retail, hospitality</td>
<td>a. Fixed day: At least half the hours worked most days fall between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.</td>
<td>i. Weekdays only, 5 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Communications</td>
<td>b. Fixed evening: At least half the hours worked most days fall between 4 p.m. and midnight.</td>
<td>ii. Weekdays only, &lt; 5 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Manufacturing</td>
<td>c. Fixed night: At least half the hours worked most days fall between midnight and 8 a.m.</td>
<td>iii. Weekdays only, 5 days plus weekends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Construction</td>
<td>d. Rotating: Schedules change periodically from days to evenings and/or nights.</td>
<td>iv. Some weekdays and some weekends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Primary Industry</td>
<td>e. Restaurant Hours: Most of the hours worked fall around meal times with time in-between</td>
<td>v. Weekends only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Transportation</td>
<td>f. Hours vary: An irregular schedule that cannot be classified in any of the above categories.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Science, Technology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) Health</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) Financial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11) Public Service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12) Other:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. How many current jobs does your spouse have (including self-employment)?

□ 1 □ 2 □ 3 □ > 4

Average # hours your spouse worked per week in the past 6 months from all jobs: _____

From the box above, choose an answer for each of her job/s for the following:

Your spouse’s main job: work schedules: _______; and work days: _______.

2nd job: work schedules: _______; and work days: _______.

3rd job: work schedules: _______; and work days: _______.
About your child/ren

12. Working families often need to coordinate parents’ work schedules and their children’s school schedules. Please tell us a bit about your family arrangement around your children’s school for the most recent semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Before school care</th>
<th>After school care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youngest</td>
<td>☐ M</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Mostly me Half-half</td>
<td>Mostly me Half-half</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ F</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Mostly mom Paid formal care</td>
<td>Mostly mom Paid formal care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ M</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Mostly mom Paid formal care</td>
<td>Mostly mom Paid formal care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oldest</td>
<td>☐ F</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Mostly mom Paid formal care</td>
<td>Mostly mom Paid formal care</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. Children are also often enrolled in organized activities outside school such as piano lesson and soccer. Please fill in the total # organized activities for each child and choose 1 drop-off/pick-up arrangement for each activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Total # activities per child</th>
<th>Each activity of the child</th>
<th>Drop-off/Pickup Arrangement for each activity of the child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youngest</td>
<td>Child 1</td>
<td>Activity 1 Mostly me Mostly mom Both parents Others At home (i.e. tutoring)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td># _____</td>
<td>Activity 2 Mostly me Mostly mom Both parents Others At home (i.e. tutoring)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Activity 3 Mostly me Mostly mom Both parents Others At home (i.e. tutoring)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Activity 4 Mostly me Mostly mom Both parents Others At home (i.e. tutoring)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child 2</td>
<td>Activity 1 Mostly me Mostly mom Both parents Others At home (i.e. tutoring)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># _____</td>
<td>Activity 2 Mostly me Mostly mom Both parents Others At home (i.e. tutoring)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activity 3 Mostly me Mostly mom Both parents Others At home (i.e. tutoring)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child 3</td>
<td>Activity 1 Mostly me Mostly mom Both parents Others At home (i.e. tutoring)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># _____</td>
<td>Activity 2 Mostly me Mostly mom Both parents Others At home (i.e. tutoring)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activity 3 Mostly me Mostly mom Both parents Others At home (i.e. tutoring)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activity 4 Mostly me Mostly mom Both parents Others At home (i.e. tutoring)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. Whether you will access them or not, how many individuals, would your family call on for helping with unexpected caretaking needs?  

15. Does any of your children have any serious illness or disability?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No

16. Was there any extended time (non-vacations) when your youngest child was away from you?  ☐ No  ☐ Yes  

If yes, please check all that applies:

☐ Difficulty in providing care due to work schedules
☐ Childcare fees are too high.
☐ Workplace related health issues such as an injury, stress, or mental health issues.
☐ Limited time due to training, skill upgrading, taking courses etc.
☐ Limited energy due to training, skill upgrading, taking courses etc.
☐ Other reasons:  ___________________________________________________________________
About your education, time, and financial situation

17. What were the highest level of education you and your spouse had before immigration?

**You:**
- Elementary school
- High school or technical high school diploma
- Community or technical college diploma
- Some university
- University degrees
  - Bachelors
  - Master’s
  - Ph.D

**Your spouse:**
- Elementary school
- High school or technical high school diploma
- Community or technical college diploma
- Some university
- University degrees
  - Bachelors
  - Master’s level
  - Ph.D

18. Have you and/or your spouse taken any professional training, license, or other post-secondary education (completed or in progress) after coming to Canada? (Please check all that applies.)

**You:**
- Employer-paid training courses
- Government-funded training courses
- Self-funded training courses
- University degrees
  - Bachelors
  - Master’s
  - Ph.D
- Others ________________
- None

**Your spouse:**
- Employer-paid training courses
- Government-funded training courses
- Self-funded training courses
- University degrees
  - Bachelors
  - Master’s level
  - Ph.D
- Others ________________
- None

19. In the past 6 months, how often did you spend time look for work?

1. Never
2. Very Rarely
3. Rarely
4. Occasionally
5. Very frequently
6. Always

20. If you are not actively looking for work, how often did you worry about your future work?

1. Never
2. Very Rarely
3. Rarely
4. Occasionally
5. Very frequently
6. Always

21. In the past 6 months, how often did you spend unpaid time on work-related training?

1. Never
2. Very Rarely
3. Rarely
4. Occasionally
5. Very frequently
6. Always

22. In the past 6 months, how often were you preoccupied with thoughts about your work (current and/or future work), and/or your training/upgrading/school work when you were also interacting with your children?

1. Never
2. Very Rarely
3. Rarely
4. Occasionally
5. Very frequently
6. Always

23. In the past 6 months, how often did your family worry about paying the bills and purchasing the goods and services your child/ren need?

1. Never
2. Very Rarely
3. Rarely
4. Occasionally
5. Very frequently
6. Always
24. In the past 6 months, how often did you family have difficulty planning your children’s activities, out-of-school care, and various appointments around your family’s work schedules?

   1  2  3  4  5  6
   Never  Very Rarely  Rarely  Occasionally  Very frequently  Always

25. In the past 2 years, how often have you or your spouse avoided a health maintenance or treatment (physical and mental) for any family member to prevent incurring expenses?

   □ 1 time  □ 2 times  □ 3 times  □ 4 times  □ ongoing  □ never

26. In the past 2 year, how easy was it for you to get time off to attend to personal matters such as doctors’ appointments, an ill child etc.?

   1  2  3  4  5
   Very easy  Easy  Somewhat easy  Difficult  Very difficult

27. What was your total household income for the last 12 months, before taxes? Include the incomes of all household members. Also include any pensions, investments and government transfers in your calculations.

   3 Persons Household  4 Persons Household  5 Persons Household
   □ Less than $37,000  □ Less than $45,000  □ below $51,000
   □ $37,000 - $49,999  □ $45,000 - $49,999  □ $51,000 - $59,999
   □ $50,000 - $59,999  □ $50,000 - $69,999  □ $60,000 - $77,999
   □ $60,000 or more  □ $70,000 or more  □ $78,000 or more

28. Reflecting on your life in Canada, what are the three biggest challenges you faced in fulfilling your fathering role?

   a. ________________________________________________________________
   b. ________________________________________________________________
   c. ________________________________________________________________

   Thank you very much for your participation!

   I look forward to our interview!
Appendix G

Interview Guide and Questions

Now I will be asking you five questions related to your work and family. Your answer to these questions are only used to help me understand the topic of my research. All the information are kept strictly confidential and used only for the purpose of research as mentioned in the consent form. I will refer to your answers in research using a pseudo name to protect your identity.

As mentioned in the telephone screening and in the consent form, I need to transcribe our interview to written words. So to ensure accuracy, our interview will be audio recorded. It will be permanent erased once I transcribe them to remove your identity.

If, at any time, you feel uncomfortable during the interview, we can either take a break for as long as you need, or you have the option of skipping questions or stopping the interview. Do you have any questions before we begin?

1. a) What are your roles and responsibilities in the family?
   
   b) What are those of your spouse’s?

2. What do you do with your youngest child? That is when you are in presence of and interacting with each other. Please provide some examples.

3. What do you do for your youngest child? That is when you do things that serve his or her well-being but not involving interacting with your child.

4. How does your employment influence your fathering role? (both positively or negatively)

5. What challenges does your family routinely face in:
   
   a) responding to short-noticed child care needs such as snow day, ill child, etc.?
   b) scheduling events such as doctor’s appointment, attending school events?
   c) planning routines such as before-after school care, transportation to routine activities?
   d) deciding your children’s after-school extracurricular activities?
   e) being involved in your children’s schooling?
6. What are the strategies you use in improving your employment situation if so wish?

7. What are the strategies you use in making your employment and parenting needs work?

Is there anything else you want to add? Comments and suggestions?
Great! Thank you so much for your kind participation and time!
Appendix H

Research Assistant Confidentiality Agreement

I, _____________________ (print name), understand that all the information pertaining to this study and its participants are confidential. I will not disclose any information to anyone outside of the research team of the Chinese Immigrant Fathers Study.

I understand that I will only be working on hard copies during data analysis.

________________________________  ______________________________
Signature of Research Assistant         Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

________________________________  ______________________________
Signature of Witness                 Date (mm/dd/yyyy)