

Organisational Factors Impacting Fathers' Use of Parental Benefits in Canada

by

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of organisational factors on fathers' use of parental benefits. Only 9.4% of Canadian fathers outside Quebec claimed or intended to claim parental benefits in 2012. Fathers' stronger labour force attachment and higher earnings contribute to their decreased likelihood of claiming parental benefits compared to mothers. Workplace values and work demands also significantly impact fathers' use of parental benefits. Using a case study analysis of Quebec, the 2011 General Social Survey, and a supplemental online survey, this study evaluates the extent to which work-related and other factors facilitate or hinder fathers' use of parental benefits. The study also estimates the impacts of possible options for reform, including exclusive, non-transferable paternity benefits, part-time parental benefits, and a tax credit for employers who provide top-ups for parental benefits.

Keywords: parental leave; parental benefits; fathers; Canada; work; employment

To my friends and family

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List of Acronyms

CEIC	Canada Employment Insurance Commission
EI	Employment Insurance
EICS	Employment Insurance Coverage Survey
GSS	General Social Survey
HRSDC	Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
NOC	National Occupational Classification
ORE	Office of Research Ethics
QPIP	Quebec Parental Insurance Plan
SFU	Simon Fraser University
UI	Unemployment Insurance
WWC	Working While on Claim pilot project

Glossary

Adoption Benefits	Paid benefits to which adoptive parents are entitled if they meet the eligibility requirements. If both parents are eligible, they may share the benefits as they see fit. If only one parent is eligible, that parent may claim all the benefits.
Adoption/Maternity/Parental/Paternity Leave	Paid or unpaid time off that new parents may take following the birth or adoption of a child.
Employer Benefit (Top-up)	An optional subsidy that an employer may provide to employees while they claim maternity, paternity, parental, or adoption benefits. This subsidy raises the level of benefits employees receive while taking paid leave.
Job Protection	A legal guarantee of reinstatement to the same or a comparable position after an employee returns from leave. Job protection does not guarantee paid leave.
Maternity Benefits	Paid benefits to which birth mothers are entitled if they meet the eligibility requirements.
Parental Benefits	Paid benefits to which all parents are entitled if they meet the eligibility requirements. If both parents are eligible, they may share the benefits as they see fit. If only one parent is eligible, that parent may claim all the benefits.
Paternity Benefits	Paid benefits to which biological fathers or the spouses of birth mothers are entitled if they meet the eligibility requirements.

Executive Summary

Only 9.4% of Canadian fathers outside Quebec claimed or intended to claim parental benefits in 2012 (Statistics Canada, 2013a).¹ This proportion is significantly lower than the proportion of mothers who claimed benefits (68.7%) (Statistics Canada, 2013a). Part of the explanation for this discrepancy is that fathers have stronger labour force attachment than mothers. Fathers' longer working hours and higher earnings create a disincentive for them to claim parental benefits, despite the fact they are more likely to qualify for benefits (HRSDC, 2013). As a result, the Canadian parental insurance program in its current form does little to encourage a more equal allocation of parental benefits between mothers and fathers.

In addition, traditional gender norms have tied fathers' identity to employment and mothers' identity to caregiving (Besen, 2007; Anderson, 2009; Doucet & McKay, 2010). Although there has been a shift toward more fluid gender roles, men often feel more responsible than their partners for supporting their families financially, even as they perform more caring tasks, and even if their partners also work (Kaufman, 2013). Furthermore, dual-earner couples often perceive shared parental benefits to be an extension of maternity leave; couples express leave allocation as the mother giving a portion of her leave to the father, when in fact it belongs to both partners (Doucet & McKay, 2010). This type of essentialist ideology, which assumes different parenting roles and abilities for men and women, limits parents' freedom to construct the best care arrangement for their family based on their own preferences. It also limits the positive impacts of increased father involvement for children, co-parents, and the fathers themselves (Chronholm, 2007; Long, 2008; Wilson & Prior, 2011).

Given fathers' strong attachment to work, this study evaluates the extent to which work-related factors influence fathers' use of parental benefits and identifies effective measures to support and increase fathers' use of parental benefits. The research methodology comprises a case study analysis of Quebec, an analysis of data from the 2011 General Social Survey, and a supplemental online survey.

¹ The majority (80.1%) of fathers in Quebec claimed parental benefits (Statistics Canada, 2013a).

The analysis shows that Quebec's more inclusive, generous, and targeted parental insurance program has contributed to a higher rate of uptake among both mothers and fathers (Statistics Canada, 2013a). Organisational factors such as family-friendliness and support from employers also factor into the leave-related decisions of fathers in Quebec and elsewhere (Tremblay, 2013; Doucet & McKay, 2010). Furthermore, the surveys reveal the importance of financial considerations in both take-up of parental leave and length of leave, and the prioritisation of mothers' use of parental leave over that of fathers. Workplace values, work demands, and gender norms at work also have a significant impact on fathers' use of parental benefits. Additionally, the perceived family-friendliness of a work environment influences both take-up and duration of parental leave, though fathers' perceived that a more family-friendly work environment would be more effective at lengthening their leave duration than increasing their take-up of parental leave.

Three policy options emerge from the analysis as effective strategies to increase fathers' use of parental benefits: exclusive, non-transferable paternity benefits at 70% wage replacement rate, part-time parental benefits, and a tax credit to incentivise employers to offer top-ups. The policy analysis determined that the exclusive paternity benefits would be the most effective at increasing fathers' use of parental benefits among fathers who do not currently claim benefits. Recommendations include implementing exclusive paternity benefits and part-time parental benefits concurrently, lengthening the exclusive paternity benefits after some monitoring, and considering new models of parental leave and complementary family policies to enhance the level of support available to working parents.

1. Introduction

Despite a shift toward more inclusive gender roles, traditional norms regarding employment and childcare still influence the way in which mothers and fathers allocate their time (Besen, 2007; Anderson, 2009; Doucet & McKay, 2010). One reflection of these norms is the imbalance in take-up of parental benefits, in which fathers make up only a small minority (13.7%) of all parental benefits claimants (CEIC, 2013).

The current disparity in leave allocation perpetuates rigid gender norms, which limit the extent to which families may determine caring arrangements based on their own preferences, and makes it more difficult for men to access the parental benefits to which they are entitled. Increasing fathers' use of parental benefits may further deconstruct these norms, encourage the acceptance and legitimacy of fathers' caregiving roles, and generate positive impacts for children, co-parents, and fathers themselves. One Canadian jurisdiction that has successfully increased fathers' use of parental benefits is Quebec. Quebec has operated its own parental insurance program since 2006, and fathers in Quebec have since claimed parental benefits at a significantly higher rate compared to fathers elsewhere in Canada (80.1% compared to 9.4% in 2012) (Statistics Canada, 2013a).

This project focuses on the organisational factors that contribute to this discrepancy, since previous Canadian research in this area (excluding Quebec) does not focus explicitly on work-related factors. Men's stronger labour force attachment and higher earnings make it more difficult for fathers to claim parental benefits, and organisational factors such as work values and workplace demands also influence fathers' use of parental benefits. Through a literature review, case study, and survey analysis, I identify the organisational factors that impact Canadian fathers' use of parental benefits, and make recommendations to facilitate and increase fathers' take-up of parental benefits.

This research paper is organised as follows: Chapter 2 describes parental leave provisions in Canada and summarises its history. Chapter 3 examines social norms in employment and identifies organisational factors that influence fathers' use of parental benefits in Canada and other jurisdictions. Chapter 4 describes the current gender-based discrepancy in the use of parental benefits. Chapter 5 reiterates the policy problem and Chapter 6 presents the project methodology. Chapters 7-9 present the findings from the Quebec case study, 2011 General Social Survey, and online supplemental survey. Chapter 10 presents the policy options and Chapter 11 provides an evaluation framework with which to assess the options. Chapter 12 summarises the policy evaluation. Chapter 13 outlines the recommendations and Chapter 14 concludes.

2. Parental Leave in Canada

This chapter contextualises the policy problem by providing a historical, legislative, and policy framework for parental leave provisions in Canada.

2.1. History and Legislative Amendments

The development of parental benefits in Canada arose from maternity benefits. The expansion of women's roles to include participation in the paid labour market created a need for job-protected maternity leave. In 1971, the federal Unemployment Insurance (UI) Act introduced 15 weeks of maternity benefits, and extended benefits to adoptive parents in 1984 (Lassonde & Côté, 2007; Meehan, 2004). Fathers gained access to parental benefits in 1990, when the federal government added 10 weeks of shared parental benefits for eligible parents (Meehan, 2004). With the 1996 reform, UI was renamed Employment Insurance (EI) and the government tightened eligibility requirements and benefit amounts (Morris, 1996). Parental benefits increased to 35 weeks in 2000 (Meehan, 2004). Finally, as of January 2010, self-employed workers could opt in and pay EI premiums to qualify to receive parental benefits after 12 months (CEIC, 2013).

Despite an increase in the duration of parental benefits, the level of benefits as a proportion of average insurable earnings has decreased over the years. Between 1971 and 1994, the federal government reduced the wage replacement rate three times from 75% to its present level of 55% (Lin, 1998). One exception to the 55% rule is the wage replacement rate for low-income families. If an applicant's net family income is \$25,921 or less per year, he or she may be eligible for the EI Family Supplement. The EI Family Supplement may increase an applicant's benefit rate up to 80% of average insurable earnings depending on the number of dependent children in the family and their ages (Service Canada, 2013a).

2.2. Eligibility Requirements and Leave Provisions

This section describes parental benefits under EI Special Benefits and highlights legislative variations and employer subsidies that contribute to an unequal access to parental benefits among fathers.

2.2.1. *Employment Insurance Special Benefits*

The federal government delivers maternity and parental benefits through the Employment Insurance (EI) program to all provinces and territories except Quebec. Since 2006, the Quebec government has delivered its own maternity, paternity, parental, and adoption benefits through the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP); I discuss QPIP in more detail in Chapter 7 (Service Canada, 2013b). Under EI, applicants must have accumulated at least 600 insurable hours of employment in the preceding 52 weeks and have paid EI premiums to be eligible for maternity and parental benefits (Service Canada, 2013a). For 2014, the maximum level of insurable earnings is \$48,600, at a premium rate of \$1.88 per \$100 of income; employers pay 1.4 times the amount of their employees' premiums (Service Canada, 2014; Canada Revenue Agency, 2013). The maximum income ceiling means that workers pay a maximum annual premium of \$913.68 and receive a maximum weekly benefit of \$514. Employee and employer premiums finance the EI program.

The 15 weeks of maternity benefits are only accessible to birth mothers in the period 8 weeks preceding and 17 weeks following the birth. All birth and adoptive parents may access the 35 weeks of parental benefits during the 52 weeks after the birth or adoption. There are no exclusive, non-transferable paternity benefits under EI.

2.2.2. *Legislative Variations*

Whereas eligibility for EI determines the level of benefits that fathers receive during parental leave, eligibility for job protection during leave falls under Employment Standards (ES) legislation and the Canada Labour Code. Due to differences in legislation, eligibility requirements for job protection and the length of job-protected leave vary across provinces and territories, and also vary based on certain industries under

the Canada Labour Code (Pulkingham & van der Gaag, 2004). Job protection during leave guarantees fathers the same job or a comparable job upon their return, with the same wages and benefits to which they were entitled before taking parental leave. Job protection legislation does not guarantee any paid leave, though employees are entitled to the same non-wage benefits during leave unless otherwise specified in their contract.

The Canada Labour Code applies to industries within the federal government's jurisdiction, including "air, rail and highway transport, pipelines, banks, broadcasting and telecommunications, uranium mines, marine transport and related services" (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2013). The Code also applies to Crown corporations, the federal public service, and Native reserves, and covers approximately 10% of all Canadian workers. Employment Standards legislation applies to the remaining 90% (Pulkingham & van der Gaag, 2004).

Table 2.1 shows the variation in length of available job-protected leave, seniority accumulation during leave, and labour force attachment requirements to qualify for job protection. In instances where there are two leave periods for parental leave, the shorter duration applies to employees who are also taking maternity leave, and the longer duration applies to those who are not. Some jurisdictions also offer additional adoption leave time, such that the total adoption leave time corresponds to the total leave time available to birth parents.

Table 2.1. Job Protected Maternity and Parental Leave Provisions and Eligibility Requirements by Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Maternity Leave	Parental Leave	Seniority	Labour Force Attachment
Federal Government	17 weeks	37 weeks	Accumulates	6 consecutive months with the same employer
British Columbia	17 weeks	35 or 37 weeks	Accumulates	No requirement
Alberta	15 weeks	37 weeks	Maintained	52 consecutive weeks with the same employer
Saskatchewan	18 weeks	34 or 37 weeks	Accumulates	20 total weeks with the same employer within the 52 weeks prior to the leave
Manitoba	17 weeks	37 weeks	Maintained	7 consecutive months with the same employer
Ontario	17 weeks	35 or 37 weeks	Accumulates	13 weeks with the same employer
Quebec	18 weeks	52 weeks	Accumulates	No requirement
New Brunswick	17 weeks	37 weeks	Accumulates	No requirement
Nova Scotia	17 weeks	35 or 52 weeks	Maintained	One year with the same employer
Newfoundland and Labrador	17 weeks	35 weeks	Maintained	20 consecutive weeks with the same employer
Prince Edward Island	17 weeks	35 weeks	Maintained	20 total weeks with the same employer within the 52 weeks prior to the leave
Northwest Territories	17 weeks	37 weeks	Accumulates	12 consecutive months with the same employer
Nunavut	17 weeks	37 weeks	Accumulates	12 consecutive months with the same employer
Yukon	17 weeks	37 weeks	Accumulates	12 consecutive months with the same employer

Note. Adapted from “Maternity / parental leave provisions in Canada: We’ve come a long way, but there’s further to go,” by J. Pulkingham and T. van der Gaag, 2004, *Canadian Woman Studies*, 23(3/4),121. Updated using the Canada Labour Code, 1985; British Columbia Employment Standards Act, 1996; Alberta Employment Standards Code, 2000; Saskatchewan Labour Standards Act, 1978; Manitoba Employment Standards Code, 1998; Ontario Employment Standards Act, 2000; Quebec Act Respecting Employment Standards, 1979; New Brunswick Employment Standards Act, 1982; Nova Scotia Labour Standards Code, 1989; Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Standards Act, 1990; Prince Edward Island Employment Standards Act, 1992; Northwest Territories Employment Standards Act, 2007; Northwest Territories Employment Standards Regulations, 2008; Nunavut Labour Standards Act, 1988; Yukon Employment Standards Act, 2002.

For fathers, the available job-protected leave time ranges from 35 to 52 weeks. Seniority during leave accumulates in nine jurisdictions and remains constant in the other five. Seniority accumulation means that fathers' leave time is counted as time spent working for the purpose of determining any increases to wages, benefits, or other promotions, whereas seniority maintenance does not include leave time in these calculations. Labour force attachment requirements refer to the minimum amount of time an employee must work for the same employer before that employer must guarantee job protection during leave.

Variations in the above legislation, particularly with respect to seniority and labour force attachment, create different incentives for fathers to claim parental benefits. Even if a father qualifies for parental benefits under EI, he may not qualify for job-protected leave under Employment Standards legislation or the Canada Labour Code if he has not worked for his most recent employer for the required amount of time. For example, the minimum requirement of 600 working hours to qualify for EI parental benefits means working 15 weeks for 40 hours per week. However, a father who has worked for 15 weeks for one employer would only qualify for job protection in four of the 14 jurisdictions. In addition, fathers whose seniority does not accumulate during leave may be discouraged from taking it, or from taking it for an extended amount of time.

2.2.3. *Employer Benefits (Top-ups)*

In 1956, the federal government introduced the Supplemental Unemployment Benefits (SUB) program to encourage employers to provide additional financial support to employees while they claim EI benefits (Marshall, 2010). This additional financial support is also called a top-up. For example, since EI benefits provide only 55% of the applicant's average insurable earnings, an employer may offer a top-up of 35% to bring the employee's total benefits up to 90% of earnings. Employers are responsible for financing the program, and they benefit from retaining experienced employees and saving on training and hiring costs. In 2008, over 885,000 employees had access to SUB plans (Marshall, 2010).

Most employers who offer a top-up do so on the condition that employees must return to work within a fixed amount of time and remain with the employer for a period of

time; otherwise, the employee must repay the benefits. In 2008, 96% of mothers who received a top-up returned to the same employer after taking parental leave, compared to 77% of mothers who received EI or QPIP benefits alone, and 46% who did not receive any benefits (Marshall, 2010). Among mothers who received maternity or parental benefits, living in Quebec, working in the public sector, working for an organisation with over 500 employees, and earning at least \$20 an hour significantly increased their likelihood of receiving an employer top-up (Marshall, 2010).¹ Only 20% of mothers who received benefits under EI or QPIP received an employer top-up (28% of women in Quebec received a top-up compared to 17% in the rest of Canada).

Although parental benefits are delivered through the federal EI program, variations in employment legislation and employer contributions create unequal incentives for fathers to take parental leave.

The next chapter describes fathers' labour force attachment and the workplace factors that impact their decision to claim parental benefits. Social norms in employment and work-related factors are important considerations for recommending and assessing options for reform.

¹ Marshall (2010) did not include data for fathers in her study.

3. Social Norms in Employment

Traditionally, men's identities have been strongly tied to their labour force attachment (Besen, 2007; Anderson, 2009; Roy, 2004). The shift towards a more involved parenting role for fathers requires a balance of work and family responsibilities. This chapter discusses the relationship between fatherhood and employment, and the organisational factors that constrain and facilitate fathers' use of parental benefits.

3.1. Gender Discrepancy in Labour Force Participation

Despite the mass entry of women in the labour force, gendered patterns of employment persist. In 2012, the employment rate for men was 65.8% compared to 57.9% for women (HRSDC, 2013). Men also worked 6.4 hours more than women per week (39.6 hours vs. 33.2 hours) and earned an additional \$244 per week (\$988 vs. \$744) (HRSDC, 2013).

Participation in employment outside the home has traditionally been a male domain. In 1961, female workers comprised only 25.1% of the total workforce (Fortin & Huberman, 2002). Although women now make up almost half of all workers, traditional gender norms in which men are expected to be the primary earners and women the primary caregivers still influence the ways in which men and women allocate their time (Doucet & McKay, 2010). Women are more likely than men to work part-time, and to choose to work part-time in order to participate in childcare. In 2012, 19.3% of women aged 25 to 44 worked part-time compared to 5.9% of men, and 34.1% of these women cited caring for children as a reason they worked part-time, compared to 3.9% of men (Statistics Canada, 2013b; Statistics Canada, 2013c).

3.1.1. *Employment and Masculinity*

Many scholars identify the Industrial Revolution as a major factor in producing a gendered division of labour. Men left their homes to find paid work in factories, which created the male breadwinner role and the association between masculinity and employment (Besen, 2007; Anderson, 2009; Roy, 2004). Townsend (2002) writes that “[m]en’s prestige, their value to others, and their self-worth are measured by their identity as workers and their earnings from their work” (p. 117). The separation of labour from the domestic sphere also created the “ideal worker myth,” in which a worker’s dedication is measured by his or her ability to prioritize work obligations before other competing responsibilities (Kossek, Lewis, & Hammer, 2010, p. 4). In the context of fatherhood, providing material support to the family through paid work is central to being a “good” father (Roy, 2004; Yarwood, 2011). While there has been a shift toward a less rigid definition of masculinity and fatherhood, based on employment patterns and the current division of parental leave, fathers still exhibit a much stronger labour force attachment than do mothers.

3.1.2. *Role Strain*

As men become more involved with childcare, they experience a similar role strain as working mothers. Men experience conflict between their competing roles when workplaces and other social institutions are not in tune with their increased involvement in parenting (Aumann et al. 2011). Aumann et al. (2011) write that “[t]he ‘ideal’ man today is not only a good employee working long hours to be a successful breadwinner, but is also an involved and nurturing husband/partner, father and son” (p. 3). However, men often feel more responsible than their partners for supporting their families financially, even as they perform more caring tasks, and even if their partners also work (Kaufman, 2013).

3.2. Organisational Factors in Leave-taking

Due to fathers’ strong attachment to employment, their workplace characteristics can influence the time they allocate to parenting. Previous research identifies the

following work-related factors as having a significant impact on whether or not fathers take parental leave: working hours, sector affiliation, gender distribution, workplace size, family friendly policies, workplace values, supervisor and colleague support, and occupational category.

3.2.1. Working Hours

Fathers who work longer hours are less likely to take parental leave (Findlay & Kohen, 2012). Findlay & Kohen (2012) found that fathers who work full-time are only 0.34 times as likely to take parental leave compared to fathers who work part-time. In contrast, mothers who work full-time are twice as likely to take parental leave as mothers who work part-time. While longer working hours make a parent more likely to qualify for parental benefits, they also indicate stronger labour force attachment. For fathers, the attachment to work outweighs the increased access to parental benefits, whereas the opposite occurs for mothers.

3.2.2. Sector Affiliation

Fathers who work in the public sector are more likely to take parental leave than those who work in the private sector (Findlay & Kohen, 2012). Work interruptions in the public sector are not tied to economic productivity and will not impact the organization to the same extent as in the private sector, since the organization is not profit-driven (Bygren & Duvander, 2006; Lappegård, 2012). As a result, the organization may be more accommodating of fathers wanting to take parental leave.

In addition, Marshall (2010) found that almost half the mothers working in the public sector received an employer top-up (please refer to Chapter 2.2.3 for more information about top-ups). Because the majority of fathers in dual earner couples are the higher earners, couples lose a higher proportion of household income when the father takes parental leave compared to the mother, which discourages fathers from taking leave. The top-up reduces this effect by decreasing the income lost to the family. Some studies that do not take into account the impact of top-ups may conflate this impact with that of working in the public sector.

3.2.3. Gender Distribution

Based on previous studies, the impact of the gender distribution of the workplace on fathers' leave-taking has been mixed (Bygren & Duvander, 2006; Lappegård, 2012; Haas, Allard, & Hwang, 2002). Researchers hypothesize that the greater the proportion of women in an organisation, the greater the likelihood that fathers will take leave (Bygren & Duvander, 2006; Lappegård, 2012; Haas, Allard, & Hwang, 2002). Organisations with higher proportions of women are likely to be more accustomed to facilitating leave, and may have a more positive view of parental leave (Bygren & Duvander, 2006). However, the impact of gender distribution on fathers' leave-taking has not been statistically significant in all cases; Bygren & Duvander (2006) found a positive relationship between the percentage of women in a fathers' workplace and his use of parental leave using bivariate analysis, though this effect was not significant using multivariate analysis. In contrast, Lappegård (2012) found that fathers were more likely to take a longer leave in gender-neutral workplaces compared to both female-dominated and male-dominated workplaces.

3.2.4. Workplace Size

Previous scholarship shows that workplace size has a positive relationship with fathers' leave-taking, such that fathers are more likely to take parental leaves and longer leaves at larger workplaces (Bygren & Duvander, 2006; Lappegård, 2012). Absences at larger workplaces may have a smaller impact since there are a greater number of people to share work and finding a replacement may be easier (Bygren & Duvander, 2006; Lappegård, 2012). In addition, a precedent of one father taking leave makes it easier for other fathers to request leave in the future, and this occurrence may be more prevalent in larger organisations (Doucet & McKay, 2010).

3.2.5. Family-Friendly Policies

Ferrer & Gagné (2006) classify family-friendly policies into three categories: leave from work for family reasons (e.g. top-ups for parental leave and career breaks), changes in the work schedule (e.g. flexible working hours, telework, reduced work hours), and family support policies (e.g. services or financial aid for child or eldercare

assistance). Work-life balance policies improve firms' competitiveness and attract skilled recruits, reduce hiring costs by improving staff retention, increase productivity, and improve employee wellbeing (Yasbek, 2004). However, a supportive workplace culture is necessary to encourage employees to make use of these policies, for example, through company values or supervisor support (Haas et al., 2002; Beauregard & Henry, 2009). The existence of these policies alone is not enough to encourage fathers to claim parental benefits.

3.2.6. *Workplace Values*

The values of an organisation can have a significant impact on fathers' use of parental benefits. Haas et al. (2002) created an organisational culture index to classify the extent to which organisations promoted a masculine ethic or a caring ethic. Organisations with a masculine ethic promote "competitiveness, aggressiveness, a compulsive orientation to task accomplishment, reliance on rational, unemotional decision making, focus on short-term self-interest and emphasis on individual achievement and material success" (Haas et al., 2002, p. 325). In contrast, organisations with a caring ethic encourage collaboration, respect for employee wellbeing, corporate social responsibility, and focus on the long-term collective interest. Fathers working in caring organisations are more likely to claim parental benefits (Haas et al., 2002).

3.2.7. *Supervisor and Colleague Support*

Perceptions of positive or negative reactions from a father's supervisor or colleagues may also influence his leave-taking. Even when family benefits are available, perceived support from managers affect the extent to which workers actually make use of them (Allan, 2001). Workers who perceive negative impacts for their chances at promotion are also less likely to use available family-friendly policies (Beauregard & Henry, 2009).

3.2.8. *Occupational Category*

There is little comparative research on how a father's occupation impacts his use of parental leave. Studies focus on either one occupation or variables that span across

occupational categories such as the ones mentioned above (Tremblay & Genin, 2011; Bygren & Duvander, 2006; Lappegård, 2012; Haas, Allard, & Hwang, 2002). The present study attempts to explore whether or not different occupational categories impact fathers' use of parental benefits, or if the differences between occupations are due to other factors.

The next chapter describes gender-based differences in the use of parental leave and the social factors that contribute to an essentialist conception of parenting. These factors offer additional explanations for the differential impact of parental leave policies on mothers and fathers.

4. Gender Discrepancy in Leave-taking

Men's stronger labour force attachment compared to women makes them more likely to qualify for parental benefits and job protection, since eligibility for job protection and parental benefits are attached to hours worked. Despite this fact, only 9.4% of fathers outside Quebec took or intended to take parental leave in 2012 (Statistics Canada, 2013a). In contrast, 68.7% of mothers claimed maternity or parental benefits.² The previous chapter summarised how men's higher average earnings and traditional breadwinner role create barriers to their use of parental benefits. A complementary factor is mothers' traditional role as caregivers and a lack of acceptance of fathers in this role.

4.1. Parental Leave as an Extension of Maternity Leave

Dual-earner couples in Canada and elsewhere often perceive shared parental benefits to be an extension of maternity benefits (Doucet & McKay, 2010). Fathers tend to defer to mothers when allocating shared leave between the couple and mothers' ability and desire to breastfeed bolsters their status as primary leave-taker (Doucet & McKay, 2010). Many couples express leave allocation as the mother giving a portion of her leave to the father, when in fact it belongs to both partners based on the eligibility requirements discussed in Chapter 2.2 (Doucet & McKay, 2010). Quebecois fathers who have access to exclusive paternity benefits are supportive of the program because it allows them to claim benefits without feeling that they are taking away leave time from the mother (Doucet & McKay, 2010). Mothers' ineligibility for benefits also significantly increases fathers' likelihood to claim parental benefits and to claim them for a longer period of time (Doucet & McKay, 2010; Marshall, 2008).

² This proportion was calculated using the proportion of insured recent mothers in 2012 multiplied by the proportion of insured recent mothers who received benefits in the 2012.

4.2. Gender Equity and Social Stigma

Similar to the case of employment, caring is also situated within a normative and gendered context. Many fathers who take parental leave and mothers who return to work quickly experience negative reactions from their employers and communities for transgressing behavioural norms (Doucet & McKay, 2010; Whitehouse, Diamond, & Baird, 2007). Employers question the legitimacy of men's requests for parental leave and their commitment to their work (Whitehouse et al., 2007). Friends and family members defer to mothers when asking about their children, even when the fathers are the primary caregivers (Doucet & McKay, 2010). Berdahl and Moon (2013) also found that fathers who spend more time on childcare and domestic activities faced greater workplace mistreatment than men who did not. This type of essentialist ideology, which assumes different parenting roles and abilities for men and women, limits parents' freedom to construct the best care arrangement for their family based on their own preferences. It also limits the positive impacts of increased father involvement for children, co-parents, and fathers themselves.

4.3. Benefits of Increased Fathers' Access to Parental Leave

Increased fathers' access to parental leave may result in wide-reaching positive outcomes. Children who experience positive father involvement develop higher levels of cognitive and social competence, achieve better academic and occupational outcomes, and experience higher levels of emotional and physical wellbeing (Long, 2008; Wilson & Prior, 2011).³ Partners of men who take leave have the opportunity to pursue academic and professional opportunities, and share household chores more equally (Chronholm, 2007). Men who take leave report closer relationships with their children and their families, improved communication skills, and a more positive outlook on marriage and parenting (Long, 2008). Increasing fathers' leave-taking and involvement in childcare on

³ Ball and Daly (2012) note that while fathers may contribute positively to children's development, there is little evidence to suggest that they (or mothers) are essential; they suggest that it is not the gender of the caregiver that matters, but rather their positive presence in children's lives.

a larger scale also has the potential to break down the traditional male breadwinner and female caregiver roles.

The next chapter summarises these issues and identifies the policy problem.

5. Policy Problem

The policy problem that this study examines is: the majority of Canadian fathers outside of Quebec do not claim parental benefits. In 2012, only 9.4% of recent fathers outside Quebec claimed or intended to claim parental benefits, compared to 68.7% of mothers, and 80.1% of Quebecois fathers (Statistics Canada, 2013a). Although the majority of fathers are eligible for parental benefits, their take-up is limited due to their increased labour force attachment and traditional gender roles surrounding paid work and childcare. In addition, the Canadian parental insurance program in its current form does little to encourage a more egalitarian allocation of parental benefits between mothers and fathers. Employers and workplace culture can also perpetuate traditional gender roles when fathers' requests for leave are questioned or discouraged.

While previous research has identified personal and family factors such as educational attainment, partners' relative education and income, and attitude toward parenting as important factors influencing fathers' use of parental benefits, this study focuses on work-related factors as they may be more responsive to policy changes (Haas et al., 2002).

The present study seeks to evaluate the extent to which work-related factors influence fathers' use of parental benefits and to identify effective measures to support and increase fathers' use of parental benefits. The next chapter outlines the methodology that I undertake to address the research objectives.

6. Methodology

In examining the organisational barriers and facilitators that impact fathers' use of parental benefits, two main research objectives arise:

1. Assessing the extent to which organisational factors influence Canadian fathers' use of parental benefits, and
2. Evaluating the policies and programs that are the most effective for reducing work-related barriers to fathers' use of parental benefits

To address these objectives, I employ a research methodology that consists of three stages. First, I examine the case of Quebec to identify the factors that resulted in a much greater proportion of Quebecois fathers claiming parental benefits compared to fathers elsewhere. Then, I analyse the 2011 General Social Survey (GSS) data to examine Canadian fathers' use of parental leave and parental benefits. Finally, I conduct a supplemental survey to ask recent fathers specific questions related to organisational barriers and facilitators to taking parental leave.

All three methodologies address both research objectives to varying degrees. The case study mainly addresses the second research objective by providing a separate policy context for parental leave, but also offers insight about the ways in which organisational factors influence fathers in a different policy context. The GSS provides nationally representative data about fathers' use of parental leave and parental benefits. It also offers insight on their decision to take parental leave and experience after taking parental leave, which relates to both objectives. Lastly, the supplemental survey also addresses both objectives since it contains detailed questions about organisational and other factors impacting fathers' use of parental benefits, and asks respondents to rate the effectiveness of strategies to increase fathers' use of parental benefits.

6.1. Quebec Case Study

In contrast to other Canadian fathers, the majority of fathers in Quebec do claim parental benefits. In 2012, 80.1% of Quebecois fathers claimed paternity or parental benefits compared to just 9.4% of other Canadian fathers (Statistics Canada, 2013a). Although part of this discrepancy is attributable to the exclusive, non-transferable paternity benefits available under the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP), a larger proportion of Quebecois fathers claimed parental benefits even prior to the introduction of QPIP (Marshall, 2008). The separate policy context and potential cultural differences serve as the basis for a case study comparison with the rest of Canada.

A case study is “an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, programme or system in a ‘real life’ context” (Simon, 2009, p. 21). The case of Quebec provides a real context in which policy or other differences from the rest of Canada have resulted in a much higher proportion of fathers claiming parental benefits. The characteristics that the case study examines are: the policy context for parental leave, parents’ use of parental benefits, parents’ labour force attachment, the impact of organisational culture on the use of parental benefits, and the cultural context.

Table 6.1 presents the comparative characteristics that the case study entails.

Table 6.1. Case Study Framework

Characteristic	Measurement	Sources
Policy context for parental leave	Eligibility requirements Financing structure Leave time available to fathers Leave time available to mothers Leave time available to both parents Wage replacement rate	Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale website Service Canada website Marshall (2008)
Use of parental leave	Proportion of mothers who receive benefits Mothers' average leave time Proportion of fathers who receive benefits Fathers' average leave time	Statistics Canada (2013a) GSS data
Labour force attachment	Employment rate for mothers Employment rate for fathers	Findlay and Kohen (2012)
Organisational culture	Perceived barriers and facilitators to work-life balance	Doucet and McKay (2010) Tremblay (2013)
Cultural context (other factors not captured by the above characteristics)	Fertility rate Availability and accessibility of daycare services	Tremblay (2010) Friendly et al. (2013) Kozhaya (2006) Lefebvre et al. (2011)

6.2. 2011 General Social Survey Data

The General Social Survey (GSS) is a Statistics Canada survey that collects household-level data about social life. The 2011 cycle focuses on family structures, fertility intentions, and parental leave. The GSS collects data from the 10 Canadian provinces using Random Digit Dialing and Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) methods, and the entire dataset contains 22,435 respondents. Researchers have previously used national survey data in parental leave studies in Sweden, Norway, and Canada, though the latter has not expressly focussed on workplace factors (Bygren & Duvander, 2006; Lappegård, 2012; Marshall, 2008; Findlay & Kohen, 2012). The analysis of GSS data is useful for this project since it offers a representative Canadian

sample of recent fathers, and asks respondents for the main reason they do not take parental leave. The GSS data is a good reference point for the supplemental survey data.

6.2.1. GSS Subsample

After filtering for males who have at least one child aged one or younger, whose main activity in last 12 months was either working at a paid job or business, or maternity/paternity leave, my dataset contained 313 observations.⁴ I limited the data to the last 12 months because the GSS groups the respondents in National Occupational Classification (NOC) categories based on the employer for whom they worked for the longest time in the past 12 months. In addition, since the respondents only indicate their current province of residence, I limited the timeframe of the survey with the assumption that they had not moved to or from another province in the last year. The subsample contains 67 respondents living in Quebec and 246 respondents living in the rest of Canada. I analyse the responses from Quebec separately due to their much higher take-up of parental leave. I use descriptive statistics, z-tests for proportions, independent-sample t-tests, and chi-square and Fisher's exact tests in SPSS to analyse the GSS data.

6.3. Supplemental Survey

While the GSS provides a more nationally representative sample, it does not include detailed questions about the gender distribution of the workplace, perceived supervisor or colleague attitudes toward parental leave, or the family friendliness of the work environment. To address these limitations, I adapted Haas et al.'s (2002) survey of Swedish fathers and Tremblay and Genin's (2011) survey of a police service in Quebec. Both of their surveys include a variety of measures for organisational culture as well as examples of barriers and facilitators to claiming parental benefits. The primary investigators of each study sent me their survey questionnaires after I contacted them

⁴ None of the fathers in the GSS sample identified their main activity in the last 12 months as maternity/paternity leave.

via email. Dr. Haas translated the survey questionnaires from Swedish and I translated Tremblay and Genin's questionnaire from French.

6.3.1. Survey Design

The target population for the supplementary survey consists of recent fathers who have at least one child born or adopted since 2010, who worked in the 12 months prior to the birth or adoption, and who lived in Canada at the time. I selected a three-year time frame in the hopes that respondents could still clearly remember their work environments and decision-making processes regarding parental leave. The survey includes only working fathers who lived in Canada since the study focuses on work-related factors in the Canadian policy context. I included fathers living in Quebec as a comparison group, but did not collect enough responses from these fathers to make an informative comparison.

The survey begins with an introduction describing the purpose of the survey, the target population, and information regarding ethics and confidentiality. The next section contains screening questions to ensure that the respondents fulfil the target population characteristics. These questions comprise questions 1 to 6. For multiple children, respondents are instructed to answer the questions in reference to their youngest child, since their decision-making process about leave and opinions about their employer would be the most recent in this case.

Questions 7 to 15 relate to the employment situation of the respondent and his partner, if applicable, in the 12 months prior to the birth or adoption. These questions cover the number of employers for which the respondent worked, his hours worked, his sector of work, his occupation, the gender distribution of his workplace, and his workplace size. Questions about the respondent's partner ask about his or her number of employers and hours worked.

Questions 16 to 22 focus on workplace culture. This section includes the availability of family-friendly policies, the employer's values, perceived supervisor and colleague attitudes about parental leave and work-life balance, and the ease or difficulty

with which the respondent and other male employees balanced work and family responsibilities.

The last set of questions (Q23 to Q32) address the decision-making process surrounding parental leave. Respondents indicated whether they took paid leave under EI or QPIP and/or unpaid leave, the duration of their paid and/or unpaid leave, whether they received an employer top-up, and the extent to which a variety of factors influenced their decision to claim or not claim parental benefits under EI or QPIP. Many of these factors reiterate the variables in Q16 to Q22, with some additional options that examine fathers' family situation and personal values. Respondents who indicated that they claimed benefits under EI or QPIP also described their experience after taking leave. All respondents indicated their desired leave duration and identified factors that would have made it possible to take parental leave or lengthen their leave duration.

The last question (Q33) gives respondents the option to enter their email address if they are interested in participating in future studies on this topic. I created this question in order to contact respondents for interviews in the event that there were not enough survey responses. Since the number of responses reached the expected range, I deleted the email addresses to protect respondents' privacy.

Haas et al.'s (2002) survey informs questions 17 to 22, and 30. Tremblay and Genin's (2011) survey informs questions 28 and 29. The remaining questions arise from the literature review and other quantitative studies from Europe and Canada (Statistics Canada, 2013d; Bygren & Duvander, 2006; Lappegård, 2012; Marshall, 2008; Findlay & Kohen, 2012). Appendix A contains the survey questionnaire.

6.3.2. Participant Recruitment

Prior to commencing recruitment, I applied for ethical approval through the SFU Office of Research Ethics (ORE). The ORE approved the study and categorised it as minimal risk. I used the Qualtrics online survey tool to make the survey available to the public. I distributed the survey to my personal contacts through email and social media. In addition, I posted links to the survey on online Canadian parenting forums after obtaining approval from the website moderators. I also contacted Canadian father

bloggers and asked them to share my survey with their readers. Finally, I contacted three organisations in a father involvement network with offices in BC, Alberta, and Ontario. Due to the specific characteristics of the sample, the expected number of responses was between 40 and 80; however, there was no cap on the maximum number of respondents since a larger sample is preferable.

Appendix B contains a list of the online forums whose moderators I contacted. I chose these forums because they are inclusive of all Canadian parents, whereas many online forums specifically for fathers target divorced or single fathers, which would bias the sample and responses. In addition, a preliminary search of the forums showed a variety of parenting issues, including accessing parental benefits. I successfully posted the survey link in seven forums.

Appendix C includes a list of the bloggers I contacted. I selected these bloggers based on their readership numbers, use of social media, reviews, and frequency of posts. Five bloggers responded to my email and shared the survey with their contacts, on their blogs, or through social media.

I also contacted three non-profit organisations that are part of a network formerly known as the Father Involvement Initiative. The organisations provide resources and workshops to engage fathers and are located in BC, Alberta, and Ontario. All three organisations responded to my email and offered to share the survey with their network.

Near the end of the data collection period, I examined the responses and attempted to address geographic imbalances in the sample by sharing the survey with personal contacts that have lived or currently live in underrepresented areas. I use descriptive statistics, z-tests for proportions, independent-sample t-tests, and chi-square and Fisher's exact tests in SPSS to analyse the survey data.

The next chapter describes the findings from the Quebec case study.

7. Quebec Case Study Analysis

This chapter describes the context from which the discrepancy in the use of parental benefits between fathers in Quebec and fathers in the rest of Canada emerged. I provide an overview of the policy context, use of parental leave, parents' labour force attachment, organisational culture, and cultural context surrounding children in both jurisdictions.

7.1. Policy Context for Parental Leave

The Quebec government has delivered the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP) since 2006. Compared to EI, QPIP's eligibility requirements are more inclusive, its benefit rates are higher, and its plans are more flexible. Unlike EI, applicants do not have to have accumulated a minimum number of insurable hours of employment during the qualifying period. Instead, applicants only need to have accumulated \$2,000 of income during the 52 weeks preceding the benefit period. In addition, the maximum level of insurable earnings for 2014 is \$69,000 compared to \$48,600 under EI. Parents can also choose between a basic plan that provides benefits for a longer period of time and a special plan that provides benefits at a higher rate. Table 7.1 outlines the two separate plans and their provisions for each type of parent.

Table 7.1. QPIP Benefit Plans

Type of Benefits	Basic Plan		Special Plan	
	Duration (weeks)	Wage replacement rate (%)	Duration (weeks)	Wage replacement rate (%)
Maternity	18	70	15	75
Paternity	5	70	3	75
Parental	7 25 (32 total)	70 55	25	75
Adoption	12 25 (37 total)	70 55	28	75

Note. Adapted from *Choice of Benefit Plan*, by Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, 2009, retrieved from http://www.rqap.gouv.qc.ca/travailleur_salarie/choix_en.asp.

QPIP's maternity provisions under both its basic and special plans are more financially generous than provisions under EI, and the basic plan offers parental benefits for three additional weeks. Unlike EI, it also offers biological fathers and female partners of birth mothers exclusive paternity benefits that cannot be shared with or transferred to their partners. QPIP's parental benefits are shorter but offered at a higher rate. Additionally, it has separate provisions for adoptive parents that are slightly longer than parental benefits, since adoptive parents do not have access to maternity or paternity benefits.

QPIP is financed separately from EI such that contributors pay into the program at a different rate. Salaried workers contribute 0.559% of their insurable income, employers contribute 0.782% on behalf of their employees, and self-employed workers contribute 0.993% (Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, 2013a). Based on the maximum insurable earnings for 2014, salaried workers pay up to \$385.71 in QPIP premiums and may receive a maximum weekly benefit of \$995.19 under the special plan. Quebecois workers still pay into the federal EI program since it covers job loss and other types of leave unrelated to parental insurance, but those who pay into QPIP receive a reduction in their EI premiums of 0.35% of insurable earnings, and employers receive 1.4 times this amount for each of their employees. This deduction means that Quebecois workers pay a maximum annual premium of \$743.58 for EI instead of the

\$913.68 that other Canadian workers pay (Canada Revenue Agency, 2013). The maximum total amount that salaried workers in Quebec pay for both QPIP and EI is \$1,129.29. Table 7.2 compares the parental insurance plans under EI and QPIP.

Table 7.2. Parental Benefits under EI and QPIP

	Employment Insurance	QPIP Basic Plan	QPIP Special Plan
Eligibility	600 hours of insurable earnings	\$2,000 of income	\$2,000 of income
Duration of benefit plans	15 weeks maternity 25 weeks parental	18 weeks maternity 5 weeks paternity 32 weeks parental 37 weeks adoption	15 weeks maternity 3 weeks paternity 25 weeks parental 28 weeks adoption
Wage replacement rate and maximum benefit period for dual-earner birth parents	55% for 50 weeks	70% for 30 weeks 55% for 25 weeks	75% for 43 weeks
Maximum insurable earnings	\$48,600	\$69,000	\$69,000
Maximum weekly benefit	\$514	\$928.85 at 70% \$729.81 at 55%	\$995.19
Maximum annual premium (for salaried workers)	\$913.68	\$385.71 (and \$743.58 for EI)	\$385.71 (and \$743.58 for EI)

Note. Information for EI from Canada Revenue Agency (2013), Service Canada (2013a) and Service Canada (2014); information for QPIP from Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale (2009) and Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale (2013a). Author's calculations for QPIP maximum weekly benefits based on wage replacement rate and maximum insurable earnings.

The impact of QPIP on fathers' take-up of parental benefits is significant. In 2005, before the implementation of QPIP, 27.8% of fathers in Quebec claimed parental benefits for an average of 13 weeks (Statistics Canada, 2007; Marshall, 2008). When QPIP was introduced the following year, 48.4% of fathers claimed benefits for an average of 7 weeks, and 75% of these fathers claimed benefits for 5 weeks or less (Statistics Canada, 2007; Marshall, 2008). 11% of fathers elsewhere in Canada claimed parental benefits for an average of 17 weeks in 2006 (Marshall, 2008). Although fathers in Quebec claimed parental benefits at a higher rate even before the implementation of QPIP, their take-up increased significantly after its introduction.

7.2. Use of Parental Leave

The differences between the parental insurance plans under EI and QPIP have resulted in discrepancies in eligibility and use of parental benefits. In 2012, 77.9% of recent mothers outside Quebec were eligible to claim maternity or parental benefits under EI, and 88.2% of these mothers claimed benefits (68.7% of all mothers claimed benefits) (Statistics Canada, 2013a). In Quebec, 85.7% of mothers were eligible to claim benefits, and 96.9% of these mothers received benefits (83.0% of all mothers). The Employment Insurance Coverage Survey publication did not report on the proportion of fathers who were eligible for benefits; however, based on men's labour force participation compared to women, it is likely that this proportion was higher than that of mothers. However, only 9.4% of fathers outside Quebec claimed or intended to claim parental benefits, compared to 80.1% of fathers in Quebec (Statistics Canada, 2013a).

In Quebec and elsewhere in Canada, women not only claim benefits at a higher rate, but also for a longer period of time compared to men. The 2011 GSS data shows that women outside Quebec claimed an average of 28.8 weeks, compared to 9.5 weeks for men. Quebecois mothers claimed an average of 33.1 weeks and fathers claimed 8.1 weeks. Mothers in Quebec claimed benefits at a higher rate and for a longer period of time compared to mothers elsewhere in Canada; Quebecois fathers claimed benefits at a higher rate, but they claimed them for a slightly shorter period of time than other fathers. I discuss fathers' use of parental leave based on GSS data in more detail in Chapter 8.

7.3. Labour Force Attachment

Labour force attachment impacts mothers' and fathers' use of parental benefits differently. Findlay and Kohen (2012) found that mothers working full-time were more likely to take parental leave than mothers working part-time, while the opposite was true for fathers. Longer working hours make a parent more likely to qualify for parental benefits, but also create a stronger attachment to work. For fathers, the attachment to work outweighs the increased access to parental benefits, whereas the opposite occurs for mothers.

Another measure of labour force attachment is employment status. Mothers and fathers in Quebec are less likely to have worked in the 12 months prior to the birth or adoption compared to parents elsewhere in Canada (Findlay & Kohen, 2012). In 2010, 69.4% of Quebecois mothers with children aged 1 to 3 worked in the 12 prior to the birth or adoption, compared to 72.9% of mothers elsewhere; for fathers, these proportions were 90.4% and 95.2% respectively (Findlay & Kohen, 2012). Mothers and fathers who did not participate in paid work would not qualify for parental benefits under EI or QPIP; however, the data from the Employment Insurance Coverage Survey shows that coverage and take-up of parental benefits in Quebec is still higher due to QPIP's more inclusive eligibility requirements (Statistics Canada, 2013a). These more inclusive eligibility requirements increases Quebecois parents' likelihood to claim benefits despite their decreased labour force attachment.

7.4. Organisational Culture

For both fathers in Canada and in Quebec, workplace support or discouragement plays an important role in their decision to take parental leave. While mothers' leave-taking is an accepted and expected practice among most employers, fathers' use of parental leave sometimes requires more negotiation (Doucet & McKay, 2010). Doucet and McKay (2010) found that fathers who wanted to take parental leave sometimes reduced their desired duration and attempted to accommodate the employer's schedule rather than their family's needs. They note that, "[w]ithout leave being seen as necessary for them, fathers needed either a supportive workplace and/or a legal right to take individual entitlement leave," i.e. exclusive paternity leave (Doucet & McKay, 2010, p. 311). Doucet and McKay (2010) argue that individual entitlement leave provides fathers with leverage and legitimizes their request for leave for employers. Without exclusive paternity leave, a supportive workplace culture can also facilitate fathers' use of parental leave (Doucet & McKay, 2010).

Even when exclusive paternity benefits are available, many fathers opt to use other types of leave in addition to or in lieu of parental benefits (Tremblay, 2013). Tremblay (2013) interviewed lawyers in Quebec and found that men preferred to take personal leaves rather than paternity or parental leaves after a birth or adoption.

Although there is variation in organisational culture among different employers, the profession is characterised by long working hours and minimal workplace supports (Tremblay, 2013). She contends that fathers may prefer to take personal leaves due to the difference in pay, as employees often receive their full salary during personal leave, but they may also avoid taking parental leave due to the perceived negative impacts that taking family leave may have on their career outcomes (Tremblay, 2013). While exclusive paternity benefits facilitate fathers' use of parental leave, workplace culture may still impede or further support fathers' leave-taking.

7.5. Cultural Context

Before the introduction of the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP), Quebec had a consistently lower fertility rate compared to the national average since 1960 (Institut de la Statistique du Québec, 2013). Tremblay (2010) writes that factors contributing to the development of family policy in Quebec include a drop in fertility, increased marital instability, an increasing proportion of working mothers, and the mobilisation of social actors such as unions and women's groups. In 2000, the fertility rate in Quebec was 1.43 compared to a national average of 1.49. Both rates increased steadily, and when QPIP was introduced in 2006, Quebec's fertility rate surpassed the national average and has been higher ever since (Institut de la Statistique du Québec, 2013; Statistics Canada, 2013f). Table 7.3 compares Quebec's fertility rate to that of the national average from 2000 to 2011.

Table 7.3. Total Fertility Rate for Quebec and Canada, 2000-2011

Year	Canada (including Quebec, per 1000 women)	Change from previous year (%)	Quebec (per 1000 women)	Change from previous year (%)
2000	1,488.0	-	1,431.2	-
2001	1,510.4	1.51	1,470.2	2.72
2002	1,501.4	-0.60	1,460.5	-0.66
2003	1,525.1	1.58	1,484.4	1.64
2004	1,525.8	0.05	1,477.1	-0.49
2005	1,543.4	1.15	1,515.9	2.63
2006	1,586.2	2.77	1,616.5	6.64
2007	1,658.9	4.58	1,686.1	4.31
2008	1,680.8	1.32	1,738.1	3.08
2009	1,668.0	-0.76	1,737.1	-0.06
2010	1,626.9	-2.46	1,706.2	-1.78
2011	1,610.0	-1.04	1,692.2	-0.82

Note. Data from Statistics Canada (2013f) and author's calculations for change from previous year.

The biggest difference between the two jurisdictions occurred in 2006, where the difference in the change in fertility rate from the previous year was almost 4% higher in Quebec compared to the national average. This sharp increase may be an indication that the introduction of QPIP significantly impacted women's fertility decisions.

In addition to increasing parental leave provisions, the Quebec government has also introduced universal childcare to support working parents. Since 1997, the Quebec government has subsidized childcare providers such that parents pay only \$7 dollars a day (\$5 before 2004) (Kozhaya, 2006). Quebec has invested considerably in their universal childcare program, such that the number of regulated childcare spaces has grown by 260.31% since 1995, compared to 132.02% nationally (Friendly et al., 2013). In 2012, Quebec's childcare spaces accounted for over 40% of all regulated childcare spaces in Canada and almost 60% of total national expenditures on regulated childcare (Friendly et al., 2013). Table 7.4 compares the accessibility and expenditures of the childcare program in Quebec with the national average.

Table 7.4. Childcare Accessibility and Expenditures, Canada and Quebec, 2012

	Canada (including Quebec)	Quebec
Children 0-5 for whom there is a regulated childcare space	22.5%	36.3%
Median full-time monthly parent fees in full-day centres for:		
Infants	\$761	\$152
Toddlers	\$701	\$152
Preschoolers	\$674	\$152
Median gross hourly wages for:		
Program directors	\$22	\$32.64
Program staff	\$16.50	\$19.13
Total number of regulated childcare spaces	986,842	401,568
Total allocations for regulated childcare	\$4.02 million	\$2.39 million
Allocation for each regulated childcare space	\$4,070	\$5,958

Note. Data compiled by Friendly et al. (2013).

Despite Quebec's investment in childcare, the program has also faced criticism (Kozhaya, 2006; Lefebvre et al., 2011). Although it has successfully raised the labour force participation of mothers with young children, it has not improved children's learning outcomes, which has produced doubt about the quality of the childcare facilities (Lefebvre et al., 2011; Kozhaya, 2006). As a result, critics question whether the benefits justify the high costs of the program (Kozhaya, 2006). However, the evaluation of Quebec's childcare program is beyond the scope of this project. Regardless of its deficiencies, the Quebec government's substantial investment in programs that facilitate work-family balance may contribute to a cultural context in which participating in these programs has become the norm for Quebecois parents. As a result, the normalization of expectations of work-life balance may also contribute to fathers' high take-up of parental leave.

7.6. Summary of the Case Study Analysis

Quebec's more inclusive and generous parental insurance program has contributed to a higher rate of uptake among both mothers and fathers. Moss (2013) notes that fathers' use of parental leave is high when they have access to an exclusive

paternity leave that is also well paid, as is the case in many Nordic countries with take-up rates around 90%.

Organisational factors such as family-friendliness and support from employers also factor into the leave-related decisions of fathers in Quebec and elsewhere. Supportive workplace environments and individual entitlement leave facilitate fathers' requests for leave when employers do not always perceive fathers' leave as necessary (Doucet & McKay, 2010). Even in Quebec, where fathers' use of QPIP paternity benefits is the norm, the workplace culture may still impact their take-up and length of leave (Tremblay, 2013).

Lastly, the cultural context surrounding children and childcare in Quebec differs from the rest of Canada due to the Quebec government's greater spending on programs for working parents. Fathers' use of parental leave may also be high due to the normalisation of expectations of work-life balance.

The next chapter describes the findings from the General Social Survey data.

8. General Social Survey Analysis

This chapter presents the findings from the 2011 General Social Survey data. The final GSS subsample in this study contains 313 respondents; 67 respondents lived in Quebec and 246 respondents lived in the rest of Canada at the time of the survey. I analyse the responses from Quebec separately due to their much higher take-up of parental leave.

8.1. Demographic Information

8.1.1. Age

Respondents from Quebec and from the rest of Canada are approximately the same age, with slightly less variation in Quebec. The mean age of the respondents outside Quebec was 33.6 compared to 33.4 in Quebec. The youngest respondent was 21 and the oldest was 45.

8.1.2. Marital Status

Marital status differed widely between Quebecois and Canadian respondents; the majority of respondents outside Quebec were married (81.7%) whereas the majority of respondents in Quebec were common-law (64.2%). In both jurisdictions, all respondents living with a partner in the household had a female partner. Less than 3% of respondents in both jurisdictions were single or separated.

8.1.3. Education

The majority of respondents in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada had completed some post-secondary education (86.6% and 78.5%, respectively). 10.2% of Canadian respondents did not complete high school compared to 6% in Quebec.

8.1.4. Income

Respondents in Quebec earned less income compared to respondents in the rest of Canada. 61.2% of Quebecois respondents earned \$59,999 or less per year, compared to 36.6% of other Canadian respondents. 31.3% of Canadian respondents earned \$80,000 or more per year compared to 16.5% of Quebecois respondents.

Table 8.1 provides additional details about the sample demographics.

Table 8.1. GSS Sample Demographics

Characteristics	Canada (Excluding Quebec) n = 246	Quebec n = 67
Age		
Min	21	24
Max	45	43
Med	34	34
Mean	33.6	33.4
21 - 24	4 (1.6%)	1 (1.5%)
25 - 34	138 (56.1%)	37 (55.2%)
35 - 44	103 (41.9%)	29 (43.3%)
45	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)
Marital Status		
Married	201 (81.7%)	23 (34.3%**)
Common-law	38 (15.4%)	43 (64.2%**)
Separated	3 (1.2%)	0 (0.0%)
Single, never married	4 (1.6%)	1 (1.5%)
Living with female partner	238 (96.7%)	65 (97.0%)
Living alone	8 (3.3%)	2 (3.0%)
Education		
Bachelor's degree and higher	79 (32.1%)	24 (35.8%)
Certificate/Diploma	79 (32.1%)	30 (44.8%)
Some college/university	35 (14.2%)	4 (6.0%)
High School	25 (10.2%)	5 (7.5%)
No high school	25 (10.2%)	4 (6.0%)
Not stated/Not asked	3 (1.2%)	0 (0.0%)
Income		
<\$19,999	7 (2.8%)	3 (4.5%)
\$20,000 - \$39,999	38 (15.4%)	11 (16.4%)
\$40,000 - \$59,999	45 (18.3%)	27 (40.3%**)
\$60,000 - \$79,999	48 (19.5%)	11 (16.4%)
\$80,000 - \$99,999	39 (15.9%)	5 (7.5%)
\$100,000+	38 (15.4%)	6 (9.0%)
Not stated/Do not know	31 (12.6%)	4 (6.0%)

* significantly different at 5% ** significantly different at 1%

The above summary of demographic information serves as a description of the sample. However, the relationship between socio-economic characteristics and use of parental leave is not the focus of this project. For this reason, there is minimal analysis pertaining to these characteristics in this paper.

8.1.5. Geographic Distribution

Provinces with the highest number of respondents were Ontario (30.7%), Quebec (21.4%), Alberta (17.6%) and British Columbia (9.3%). The remaining provinces each accounted for less than 5% of the survey respondents, with the exception of Manitoba with 5.8%. Compared to the actual Canadian population, Ontario is underrepresented, while Alberta, Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador are overrepresented. The GSS did not collect data from the territories. Table 8.2 compares the geographic distribution of the sample to that of the Canadian population.

Table 8.2 GSS Geographic Distribution

Province	Sample (%) n = 313	Canada (%) n = 35.2 million
Newfoundland and Labrador	3.5**	1.5
Prince Edward Island	2.2**	0.4
Nova Scotia	2.2	2.7
New Brunswick	2.9	2.2
Quebec	21.4	23.2
Ontario	30.7**	38.5
Manitoba	5.8*	3.6
Saskatchewan	4.5	3.2
Alberta	17.6**	11.4
British Columbia	9.3	13.0
Yukon	-	0.1
Northwest Territories	-	0.1
Nunavut	-	0.1

Note. Canadian proportions from Statistics Canada (2013e).
* significantly different at 5% ** significantly different at 1%

8.2. Use of Parental Leave

The use of parental leave and parental benefits differed significantly between fathers in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada. 83.6% of Quebecois fathers in the sample had taken either paid or unpaid leave with the birth or adoption of their child, compared to 62.2% of other Canadian fathers, $z = -3.294$, $p < 0.01$. Only 8.1% of Canadian fathers received parental benefits under EI while 68.7% of Quebecois fathers received paternity or parental benefits under QPIP, $z = -10.7672$, $p < 0.01$. These proportions are lower than the proportions Statistics Canada (2012) reported based on the 2011 Employment Insurance Coverage Survey (EICS), which stated that 11.0% of fathers outside Quebec and 83.9% of Quebecois fathers claimed or intended to claim parental benefits. This discrepancy could be a result of over-reporting in the EICS or differences between the samples.⁵

Of fathers who received benefits, Quebecois fathers received benefits for between 1 and 32 weeks, with a mean of 8.1 weeks and a median of 5 weeks. Canadian fathers received benefits for between 1 and 35 weeks, with a mean of 9.5 weeks and a median of 6.5 weeks. A quarter (25%) of Canadian fathers who received benefits received them for two weeks. 15.2% of Quebecois fathers who received benefits received them for 3 weeks, and almost half of the fathers (45.7%) received them for 5 weeks. These three and five-week periods correspond to the two benefit plans for exclusive paternity leave under QPIP (Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, 2013b). Although a much larger proportion of Quebecois fathers claimed benefits, fathers outside of Quebec claimed benefits for a longer period of time.

Table 8.3 compares the use of parental leave, parental benefits, and length of paid leave under EI or QPIP between respondents in Quebec and the rest of Canada.

⁵ Questions on maternity and parental benefits in the EICS are only asked of recent mothers, who answer on behalf of their spouses, such that the data about men's use of parental leave do not come from the fathers themselves.

Table 8.3. Use and Duration of Parental Leave, GSS

	Canada (Excluding Quebec) n = 246	Quebec n = 67
Took paid or unpaid leave	153 (62.2%)	56 (83.6% ^{**})
Claimed benefits under EI or QPIP	20 (8.1%)	46 (68.7% ^{**})
Min	1 week	1 week
Max	35 weeks ⁶	32 weeks
Med	6.5 weeks	5 weeks
Mean	9.5 weeks	8.1 weeks

* significantly different at 5% ** significantly different at 1%

8.3. Organisational Factors in Leave-Taking

8.3.1. Hours worked

Two hundred and thirty-seven Canadian fathers worked full-time (96.3%), while six fathers (2.5%) worked part-time and three fathers (1.2%) performed on-call or contract work. In Quebec, 91% of fathers (61) worked full-time while 9% (six fathers) worked part-time and on-call.

Only nine Canadian fathers did not work full-time and none of them collected parental benefits, whereas 8.7% of fathers who worked full-time collected benefits. Although this finding contradicts the results in Findlay and Kohen (2012), in which fathers who worked full-time were less likely to claim benefits than fathers who worked part-time, Fisher's exact test was not significant due to the small number of non-full-time workers, $p = 1.000$.

For Quebecois fathers, five of six (83.3%) fathers who did not work full-time collected parental benefits, compared to 41 fathers (67.2%) who worked full-time. Again,

⁶ Three respondents indicated that they had received benefits for 52 weeks; however, the maximum length of time applicants may receive parental benefits under EI is 35 weeks. Therefore, those three responses were not included in the maximum, median, or mean calculations.

the Fisher's exact test was not significant due to the small number of non-full-time workers, $p = 0.657$.

8.3.2. Occupational Category

The GSS categorises respondents using general National Occupational Classification (NOC) categories. The largest occupational category among Canadian fathers outside Quebec is trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations at 30.9%. 14.6% of Canadian respondents worked in natural and applied sciences and related occupations, and 11.8% worked in sales or service occupations. 10.6% worked in management occupations across all sectors. The largest occupational category among Quebecois respondents is also trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations at 28.4%. 19.4% of Quebecois respondents worked in natural and applied sciences and sales and service occupations. 9.0% worked in management occupations and health occupations.

The small number of fathers who had claimed parental benefits in the Canadian sample ($n = 20$) limits the possibility of testing the relationship between occupational category and claiming benefits. Fisher's exact tests show that the only occupational category in which fathers claimed benefits at a significantly different rate was in business, finance, and administration occupations, $p = 0.039$. Fathers working in this sector are 3.4 times more likely to claim benefits than other fathers. A possible explanation is that this sector is female-dominated, as men comprised only 30.4% of workers in 2011 (Statistics Canada, 2014a). However, many of the other occupational sectors are also female-dominated and those fathers did not claim benefits at a significantly different rate, though the small sample size may compromise the accuracy of test results. None of the occupational categories in the Quebec sample included fathers who claimed benefits at a significantly different rate.

8.4. Reasons for Not Taking Leave or Claiming Benefits

Eleven fathers (16.4%) in Quebec did not take any type of paid or unpaid leave following the birth or adoption of their child compared to 87 fathers (35.4%) in Canada.

The majority (63.6%) of Quebecois fathers indicated “other” as the main reason they did not take leave; however, the public use microdata file does not contain any of these qualitative responses. 21.8% of Canadian fathers answered the same. The two main reasons that Canadian fathers did not take any time off were that they could not afford to lose their salary (39.1%), and the other parent took leave (24.1%).

Assuming that the “other” responses do not encompass any of the available options, Quebecois fathers appear to have a much more varied set of reasons for not taking leave.⁷ Canadian fathers, on the other hand, are mainly constrained by the financial cut that comes with parental benefits, and the fact that his female partner is the one taking leave. For the first reason, this discrepancy may reflect QPIP’s higher wage replacement rate and higher earnings ceiling, or the fact that Canadian fathers earned higher salaries than Quebecois fathers in the sample and had more income to lose. For the second reason, an explanation for the difference between the two jurisdictions is that the exclusive, non-transferable paternity leave that QPIP offers provides a way for Quebecois fathers to take some form of paid parental leave that does not “take away” from the mother’s leave time (Doucet & McKay, 2010).

Ten fathers (14.9%) in Quebec took some time off but did not claim parental benefits compared to 133 fathers (54.1%) elsewhere in Canada.⁸ 60% of Quebecois fathers and 12% of Canadian fathers indicated “other” as the main reason he did not receive benefits, the details of which were not specified in the data. No fathers indicated that the main reason he did not collect benefits was that he did not work enough. This finding indicates that the majority of fathers did work enough to qualify for parental benefits. The main reason that Canadian fathers did not collect parental benefits was that the other parent claimed benefits (38.3%). 12% of fathers did not claim benefits because they were self-employed, 11.3% of fathers stated that they did not know enough about the program, and another 11.3% said they did not apply because it was too much trouble.

⁷ The Quebecois fathers who indicated “other” as the main reason they did not take leave may also share one or several common reasons, but further exploration of the unpublished qualitative responses is necessary to determine whether this is the case.

⁸ Two of these fathers indicated that they did not know whether they received parental benefits, so I counted them as not having received them.

Among fathers who took leave but did not claim benefits, fathers in Quebec appear to have more varied reasons for which they did not receive benefits compared to fathers outside Quebec. The main reason that Canadian fathers do not claim benefits reiterates the prioritisation of mothers' leave in shared leave allocation when both partners are eligible for benefits (Doucet & McKay, 2010).

Table 8.4 summarises the different reasons why fathers did not take leave or claim benefits. Only a few of the available options in the survey were related to employment factors. The supplemental survey offers more insight on this question in Chapter 9.

Table 8.4. Reasons for Not Taking Leave or Claiming Benefits, GSS

	Canada (Excluding Quebec) n = 246	Quebec n = 67
Did not take any time off	87 (35.4%)	11 (16.4%**)
Main Reason		
Could not afford to lose salary	34 (39.1%)	1 (9.1%*)
Other parent took leave	21 (24.1%)	1 (9.1%)
Job permitted to care for child and work	6 (6.9%)	1 (9.1%)
Preferred to work	4 (4.6%)	0 (0%)
Family or friends take care of child	2 (2.3%)	0 (0%)
Not eligible for leave	1 (1.1%)	1 (9.1%)
Worried of losing job	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Found available/convenient daycare	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Quit job due to pregnancy/adoption	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Other	19 (21.8)	7 (63.6%**)
Did not claim parental benefits	133 (54.1%)	10 (14.9%**)
Main Reason		
Other parent claimed benefits	51 (38.3%)	1 (10.0%)
Self-employed	16 (12.0%)	1(10.0%)
Benefits too low (not worth it)	7 (5.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Not contributing to the program	2 (1.5%)	0 (0.0%)
Did not know enough about the program	15 (11.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Did not apply for benefits (too much trouble)	15 (11.3%)	2 (20.0%)
Did not need benefits (have other sources of income)	3 (2.3%)	0 (0%)
Don't know	6 (4.5%)	0 (0%)
Did not work enough	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Other	16 (12.0%)	6 (60.0%**)

* significantly different at 5% ** significantly different at 1%

8.5. After Parental Leave

This section describes fathers experience after parental leave, including their retention rate, their desire and ability to modify their work hours, and their desire to take a longer leave. The majority of fathers in Quebec (94.6%) and elsewhere in Canada (91.5%) returned to work after taking parental leave. Although the GSS asked

respondents the main reason they did not go back to work, this information was not available in the data file. The majority of fathers in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada who returned to work worked full-time (90.6% and 97.1%).

About half of Canadian fathers (54.3%) had the option to modify their work hours or have flexible hours when they returned from leave, though only 23.2% modified their hours. In Quebec, 54.9% of fathers had the option modify their work hours, and 29.4% did so. 18.8% of Canadian fathers also had the option to work from home, compared to 13.7% of Quebecois fathers.

Over one fifth (23.5%) of Canadian fathers and 20.8% of Quebecois fathers who worked full-time had the choice to work part-time, but did not. The main reasons fathers returned to work full-time for both Canadian and Quebecois fathers were an insufficient salary (64.0% and 70.8%) and the job required that they work full-time (25.7% and 18.8%). Over a third (34.6%) of Canadian fathers and 18.8% of Quebecois fathers would have liked to work part-time.

The majority of fathers in Quebec (66.0%) and elsewhere in Canada (75.7%) who took parental leave wished they had stayed home for longer. The main factors that would have allowed fathers to stay home longer were financial: 53.8% of Canadian fathers and 40.0% of Quebecois fathers indicated that they would have taken a longer leave if their financial situation had permitted and 23.6% of Canadian fathers and 45.7% of Quebecois fathers stated that higher benefits would have allowed them to take a longer leave. Another factor for 40.0% of fathers in Quebec was if benefits were offered for a longer period of time, which reiterates the fact that these fathers generally do not take more leave time than their allocated paternity leave time. About a fifth (21.7%) of Canadian fathers and 37.1% of Quebecois fathers also cited factors related to their employer: they would have stayed home for longer if their employer had permitted and if their employer offered them part-time or flexible hours. Table 8.5 summarises fathers' experience after taking parental leave.

Table 8.5. Fathers' Experience After Parental Leave, GSS

	Canada (Excluding Quebec) n = 246	Quebec n = 67
Took paid or unpaid leave	153 (62.2%)	56 (83.6% ^{**})
Returned to work	140 (91.5%)	53 (94.6%)
Full-time or part-time	138 (98.6%)	51 (96.2%)
Full-time	136 (97.1%)	48 (90.6%)
On call or other	2 (1.4%)	2 (3.8%)
Of those who worked full-time or part-time	n = 138	n = 51
Modified work hours/worked flexible schedule	32 (23.2%)	15 (29.4%)
Had the choice to modify work hours (but did not)	43 (31.2%)	13 (25.5%)
Had the choice to work from home	26 (18.8%)	7 (13.7%)
Of those who worked full-time	n = 136	n = 48
Had the choice to work part-time (but did not)	32 (23.5%)	10 (20.8%)
Would have liked to work part-time	47 (34.6%)	9 (18.8%)
Main reason for working full-time	n = 136	n = 48
Salary not sufficient to work part-time	87 (64.0%)	34 (70.8%)
Job requirement	35 (25.7%)	9 (18.8%)
Not to lose job/to safeguard career	5 (3.7%)	2 (4.2%)
Employer asked	1 (0.7%)	3 (6.3%)
Other	8 (5.9%)	0 (0.0%)
Wished to stay home longer	106 (75.7%)	35 (66.0%)
Factors that would have allowed him to stay home longer (not mutually exclusive)	n = 106	n = 35
Higher benefits	25 (23.6%)	16 (45.7% ^{**})
Benefits offered for longer period of time	16 (15.1%)	14 (40.0% ^{**})
If my employer permitted	21 (19.8%)	9 (25.7%)
If my employer offered me part-time or flexible hours	3 (2.8%)	4 (11.4%)
If financial situation had permitted	57 (53.8%)	14 (40.0%)
Other	16 (15.1%)	2 (5.7%)

* significantly different at 5% ** significantly different at 1%

8.6. Summary the GSS Analysis

This section presents the factors from the General Social Survey data that impact Canadian fathers' take-up and length of leave. The focus is on fathers outside Quebec.

Financial considerations play a major role in both take-up of parental leave and length of leave. For fathers who did not take any type of leave, the most commonly cited reason was that they could not afford to lose their salary (39.1%). Similarly, over half (53.8%) of fathers who did take leave indicated that they could have taken a longer leave if their financial situation had permitted.

The GSS data also reveals the prioritisation of mothers' use of parental leave over that of fathers. The most common reason why fathers took parental leave but did not claim benefits was because the other parent claimed benefits (38.3%). Almost a quarter (24.1%) of fathers who did not take any type of leave also indicated that the other parent took leave as their main reason.⁹

The next chapter presents the findings from the supplemental survey.

⁹ All fathers in the sample who lived with their partners had female partners; these fathers represent 96.7% of the sample.

9. Supplemental Survey Analysis

The supplemental survey was live between January 3, 2014 and February 12, 2014. Potential respondents accessed the survey link 169 times, resulting in a total of 72 useable responses after filtering out terminated and incomplete responses. I also removed one respondent whose answers showed signs of respondent fatigue, bringing the total down to 71. Nine respondents lived in Quebec at the time of the birth or adoption of their youngest child, while the remaining 62 lived elsewhere in Canada. Due to the small number of Quebecois respondents, I removed them instead of using them as a comparison group. I conducted statistical tests where possible but the small number of respondents limits the accuracy of the tests.

9.1. Sample Demographics

The only demographic data that the survey collected were gender, age range, and province of residence at the time of the birth or adoption of the respondents' youngest child. I did not include other demographic questions because these variables are not the focus of the study and I also wanted to keep the survey as short as possible. In retrospect, data on income and education could have been useful in determining the representativeness of the sample; however, some of the survey questions can still allow for comparison between this sample and the GSS sample.

9.1.1. Gender

Since this study focuses on fathers and considers the impact of gender norms in the use of parental leave, respondents had to select male as their gender in order to

proceed with the survey.¹⁰ I did not want mothers to fill out the survey on behalf of their male partners in order to increase the validity of the responses. As a result, all respondents identified as male.

9.1.2. Age Range

All respondents were between 25 to 54 years old. 50% of the respondents were aged 25 to 34, and 48.4% were aged 35 to 44. One respondent was between 45 and 54 years old. This distribution suggests that the sample is similar to the GSS respondents in terms of age. Table 9.1 compares the age distribution in this sample to the GSS sample.

Table 9.1 Respondent Age Distribution, Supplemental Survey

Age Range	GSS Data	Supplemental Survey Data
	Canada (Excluding Quebec) n = 246	Canada (Excluding Quebec) n = 62
21 - 24	4 (1.6%)	0 (0.0%)
25 - 34	138 (56.1%)	31 (50.0%)
35 - 44	103 (41.9%)	30 (48.4%)
45 - 54	1 (0.4%)	1 (1.6%)

* significantly different at 5% ** significantly different at 1%

9.1.3. Geographic Distribution

The provinces with the highest number of respondents are Ontario (46.5%), British Columbia (25.4%), Quebec (12.7%), and Alberta (11.3%). The remaining provinces each account for less than 3% of the survey respondents. Compared to the actual Canadian population, BC is overrepresented, while Quebec is underrepresented. The overrepresentation of respondents from BC is expected as the majority of my personal contacts are based in the Metro Vancouver area. The underrepresentation of respondents in Quebec is likely due to the fact that the survey was only available in English, and the online forums and blogs that linked to the survey were also in English.

¹⁰ While some individuals may identify as fathers without identifying as male, the present study does not attempt to explore the impact of gender fluidity on parenting roles or use of parental benefits.

Respondents are missing from four of the provinces and the three territories, though these areas comprise only 8.0% of the Canadian population and are not significantly different from 0. Table 9.2 compares the geographic distribution of the survey sample to that of the Canadian population.

Table 9.2 Supplemental Survey Geographic Distribution

Province	Sample (%) n = 71	Canada (%) n = 35.2 million
Newfoundland and Labrador	0	1.5
Prince Edward Island	0	0.4
Nova Scotia	1.4	2.7
New Brunswick	0	2.2
Quebec	12.7*	23.2
Ontario	46.5	38.5
Manitoba	0	3.6
Saskatchewan	2.8	3.2
Alberta	11.3	11.4
British Columbia	25.4**	13.0
Yukon	0	0.1
Northwest Territories	0	0.1
Nunavut	0	0.1

Note. Canadian proportions from Statistics Canada (2013e).
* significantly different at 5% ** significantly different at 1%

9.2. Use of Parental Leave

The use of parental benefits is much higher in the sample compared to published statistics and the GSS data. The overrepresentation of fathers who have taken parental leave and claimed parental benefits could be the result of a self-selection bias; fathers interested in the study topic, who read parenting blogs, or participate in online parenting forums are more likely to be active and involved parents, which increases their likelihood of claiming parental benefits. In this sample, 40.3% fathers outside Quebec claimed

parental benefits, and 79.0% of fathers took other types of leave.¹¹ About half (53.2%) of respondents only took alternative types of leave and did not claim benefits, and the remaining 25.8% claimed parental benefits in addition to other types of leave. 14.5% fathers only claimed parental benefits and did not use other types of leave. Fathers who only took alternative types of leave had the shortest average duration of 3.3 weeks. Table 9.3 summarises fathers' use of parental leave, parental benefits, and leave duration.

¹¹ This question is different from that in the GSS, as this question excludes leave under EI or QPIP whereas the question in the GSS includes it.

Table 9.3. Use and Duration of Parental Leave, Supplemental Survey

	Canada (Excluding Quebec) n = 62
Claimed benefits under EI or QPIP	25 (40.3%)
Min	3 weeks
Max	35 weeks ¹²
Med	20 weeks
Mean	20.6 weeks
Only claimed benefits under EI or QPIP and did not take other types of leave	9 (14.5%)
Min	3 weeks
Max	35 weeks ¹³
Med	28 weeks
Mean	24.1 weeks
Took other paid or unpaid leave	49 (79.0%)
Only took other types of leave	n = 33 (53.2%)
Min	1 week
Max	16 weeks
Med	2 weeks
Mean	3.3 weeks
Claimed benefits under EI or QPIP and took other types of leave	n = 16 (25.8%)
Min	7 weeks
Max	44 weeks
Med	17.5 weeks
Mean	21.2 weeks
Did not claim parental benefits or take any type of leave	3 (4.8%)

¹² Four respondents indicated that they had received benefits for 37 weeks; however, the maximum length of time applicants may receive parental benefits under EI is 35 weeks. Fathers perhaps indicated 37 weeks due to the two-week waiting period before the receipt of benefits. Therefore, these responses were changed to 35 weeks for the maximum, median, and mean calculations.

¹³ Three respondents indicated that they had received benefits for 37 weeks; however, the maximum length of time applicants may receive parental benefits under EI is 35 weeks. Fathers perhaps indicated 37 weeks due to the two-week waiting period before the receipt of benefits. Therefore, these responses were changed to 35 weeks for the maximum, median, and mean calculations.

9.3. Organisational Factors

This section describes the extent to which organisational factors impacted respondents' use of parental benefits.

9.3.1. *Work for Multiple Employers*

Six respondents (9.7%) worked for more than one employer in the 12 months preceding the birth or adoption of their child. Although eligibility for EI parental benefits is based on hours worked within the qualifying period, job protection during parental leave varies across provinces and territories and is sometimes only provided to employees after they have worked for one employer for a specified length of time. This requirement may make it more difficult for fathers who work for multiple employers to qualify for job protection, and may deter them from claiming parental benefits. However, in this sample, Fisher's exact test shows that there is no relationship between working for multiple employers and claiming parental benefits, $p = 0.687$.

9.3.2. *Hours Worked*

All respondents worked at least 31 hours per week in the 12 months prior to the birth or adoption on their child. 59.7% worked between 31 and 40 hours per week, and the remaining 40.3% worked 41 or more hours per week. Consistent with Findlay & Kohen (2012), fathers who worked 41 or more hours are significantly less likely to claim parental benefits than fathers who worked fewer hours, $X^2(1, N = 62) = 10.299, p < 0.01$. Fathers' higher working hours may indicate more attachment to work, more demanding work, and a less supportive working environment, which decreases their likelihood of claiming parental benefits. These fathers use other types of leave at a slightly higher rate to compensate for not claiming parental benefits. Table 9.4 compares fathers' use of parental benefits and other leave based on their hours worked.

Table 9.4. Working Hours and Use of Parental Benefits and Other Leave, Supplemental Survey

	Worked 31-40 hours n = 37	Worked 41 or more hours n = 25
Claimed parental benefits	21 (56.8%)	4 (16.0%**)
Took other types of leave	27 (73.0%)	23 (92.0%)

* significantly different at 5% ** significantly different at 1%

9.3.3. Sector of Work

Twenty-nine (46.8%) fathers worked in the private sector and the same number worked in the public sector, while four fathers worked in the non-profit sector. None of the respondents were self-employed. For the chi-square test, I combined the fathers who worked in the public sector with those in the non-profit sector as their use of parental benefits are similar (51.7% compared to 50.0%). Only 27.6% of fathers working in the private sectors claimed parental benefits, though this discrepancy is only significant at the 6% level, $X^2(1, N = 62) = 3.673, p = 0.055$.

9.3.4. Management Role

Fathers working in a management role are less likely to claim parental benefits than other fathers. Only 10.0% of fathers in management claimed parental benefits, compared to 46.2% of other fathers. Fisher's exact test confirms that this relationship is significant at the 5% level, $p = 0.04$. Fathers who are managers use other types of leave at the same rate as non-managers; these alternative types of leave (vacation days, flex time, etc.) tend to be higher paid and for a shorter duration. Fathers working in management positions may have a stronger labour force attachment due to more demanding work tasks. These fathers may also be more difficult to replace during leave, which may deter them from taking leave for a long period of time. Additionally, they may be more concerned than other fathers about the impact of extended leave on their career outcomes, given that they have already advanced to a supervisory role. Lastly, management positions tend to have higher salaries, so the greater loss of income due to the low wage replacement rate associated with parental benefits may be an additional deterrence.

Table 9.5. Use of Parental Benefits and Other Leave Among Fathers Working in Management Positions, Supplemental Survey

	Managers n = 10	Non-managers n = 52
Claimed parental benefits	1 (10.0%)	24 (46.2%*)
Took other types of leave	8 (80.0%)	42 (80.8%)

* significantly different at 5% ** significantly different at 1%

9.3.5. Occupational Category

The most common occupational categories in the sample are business and finance (22.6%), legal, social, community, and government services (16.5%), and natural and applied sciences (14.5%). These categories are not consistent with the GSS sample, and may signify that the sample is more highly educated than the Canadian population. Occupational category does not have a significant impact on whether fathers claim benefits, though the small sample size limits the accuracy of the tests.

9.3.6. Gender Distribution

About half of respondents (51.6%) worked in gender-neutral workplaces, followed by male-dominated (37.1%) and then female-dominated (11.3%) workplaces. Female-dominated workplaces have the highest proportion of fathers who claimed parental benefits at 71.4%, whereas gender-neutral and male dominated workplaces have similar proportions (37.5% and 34.8% respectively). These last two categories are grouped together for Fisher's exact test, which is not significant, $p = 0.107$. However, the test result may not be accurate due to the small number of fathers working in female-dominated workplaces ($n = 7$).

9.3.7. Workplace Size

The impact of workplace size on fathers' use of parental benefits is not consistent with previous research (Bygren & Duvander, 2006; Lappegård, 2012). In this sample, smaller workplaces have higher proportions of fathers who claimed parental benefits. 50% of fathers claimed benefits in workplaces with 0 to 20 employees, and workplaces

with 21 to 40 people have the highest proportion of fathers who claimed benefits at 66.7%. The remaining four workplace sizes (41-60, 61-80, 81-100, 101+) had between 25% to 37.1% of fathers who claimed benefits, with the smallest proportion in workplaces with 81 to 100 people and the highest proportion in workplaces with 101 or more employees. For the chi-square test, the first two categories with under 40 employees were combined, and the last four categories with 41 or more employees were combined. The relationship is not significant, $X^2(1, N = 62) = 2.126, p = 0.145$.

9.4. Workplace Culture

The supplemental survey assesses fathers' workplace culture through questions that examine the availability of family-friendly policies, the values of the organisation, general perceptions of gender equity and work-life balance, perceptions of supervisor and colleague support, actual work demands, and perceptions of work-life balance for male employees specifically.

9.4.1. Family-Friendly Policies

Respondents indicated whether a selection of family-friendly policies were available at their workplaces. These policies include: top-ups for parental leave, flexible working hours, the option to work from home, the option to reduce working hours, daycare on the premises, and an option to enter other types of support. The small sample size may have limited the accuracy of statistical tests as none of the policies had a significant impact on fathers' use of parental benefits. In addition, some family-friendly policies actually decreased fathers' use of benefits if they allowed fathers to care for their children without taking full-time parental leave. This finding reiterates fathers' strong attachment to work, which may be due to financial constraints or social factors, or both.

50% of fathers in the sample had access to employer top-ups. However, fathers who had access to top-ups did not claim parental benefits at a significantly different rate than other fathers, $X^2(1, N = 62) = 1.676, p = 0.196$. 48.4% of fathers who had access to top-ups claimed benefits, compared to 32.3% of other fathers.

35.5% of fathers had access to flexible working hours. Flexible working hours did not significantly impact fathers' use of parental leave, as fathers who had access to them and those who did not claimed benefits at almost the same rate (40.9% compared to 40%).

Eleven fathers (17.7%) had the option to work from home. Fathers who had this option actually claimed parental benefits at a slightly lower rate (27.3%) compared to other fathers (43.1%). Fathers who exercise this option may prefer to work and care for their child at the same time and earn a full salary rather than claim parental benefits. However, Fisher's exact test shows that this impact is not statistically significant, $p = 0.501$.

Seven fathers (11.3%) had the option to reduce working hours, and these fathers were less likely to claim benefits than other fathers (14.3% compared to 43.6%). Fathers who have the option to reduce working hours may prefer to do so rather than claim parental benefits full-time in order to keep on top of their work responsibilities. Fisher's exact test shows that this impact is not statistically significant, $p = 0.225$.

Only one father indicated that he had access to childcare on the premises, and he did not claim parental benefits. Other benefits included a \$1000 baby bonus, full pay for one month, and a corporate membership with a daycare program. The fathers who received the baby bonus and the month of full pay did not claim parental benefits, whereas the father with the childcare membership did claim benefits. The fact that fathers who were offered financial incentives did not claim benefits may indicate that financial incentives from employers improve employee retention, and that fathers prefer to use employer benefits rather than government benefits. For example, the father who received a month of full pay from his employer did not claim benefits and only took one month off work.

These findings also suggest that fathers do want to take time off following the birth or adoption of their child, though some may prefer to keep working while they do so. As a result, the full-time parental leave that is currently available under EI may not be the preferred option for all fathers.

9.4.2. Workplace Values

I adapted the Organisational Ethic variable in Haas and Hwang (2002) by asking respondents to indicate the validity of statements pertaining to the values at their workplace (Appendix A, Q18). I recoded and tallied the statements such that a low score indicates an unsupportive workplace and a high score indicates a supportive workplace. I recoded statements containing values that are unsupportive so that they could be accurately tallied with statements containing supportive values. I excluded 12 respondents who answered “I do not know.” The scores ranged from 16 to 41 out of a possible 48 points. Due to the small sample size, I could not use binary regression analysis to examine the relationship between workplace values and the use of parental benefits. Instead, I grouped the scores into three ranges to see if there were different proportions of fathers who claimed parental benefits. Nine fathers (18%) scored 16 to 24 (low support), 27 fathers (54%) scored 25 to 33 (medium support), and 14 fathers (28%) scored 34 to 41. Surprisingly, fathers were less likely to claim parental benefits with increasingly supportive workplace values (46.2% for low support, 40.6% for medium support, and 31.2% for high support). However, none of these groups claimed parental benefits at a significantly different rate.

Due to the inconclusive findings, I assessed the impact of each workplace value individually. I recoded the presence of the value to include “very important” and “important,” and combined “somewhat important” and “not at all important” to indicate the absence of that value. I excluded respondents who answered that they did not know. Fathers who indicated that their workplace values high demands for achievement, social responsibility, competitiveness, organisational priorities, or stress reduction for employees were significantly less likely to claim parental benefits compared to other fathers (Table 9.6 summarises the results). As with the presence of family friendly policies, the negative impact of some values on the use of parental benefits is counterintuitive (social responsibility and stress reduction¹⁴), whereas other values (competitiveness, high demands for achievement, organisational priorities) may indicate a high-pressure work environment. The counterintuitive results also explain the

¹⁴ Workplaces that value reducing stress and pressure on employees may indicate a workplace that values work-life balance, but may also indicate a demanding, high stress workplace.

inconclusive tests using the ranges of respondents' scores. Therefore, despite those results, some workplace values do significantly impact fathers' use of parental benefits.

Table 9.6. Workplace Values with Significant Impacts on Fathers' Use of Parental Benefits, Supplemental Survey

Workplace Value	Fathers who indicated the presence of the value	% of fathers who claimed parental benefits compared to other fathers	Chi-square test	Fisher's exact test
High demands for achievement	41 (68.3%)	26.8% vs. 68.4%	n = 60 $\chi^2 = 9.358$ p < 0.01	-
Social responsibility	41 (67.2%)	29.3% vs. 60%	n = 61 $\chi^2 = 5.320$ p = 0.021	-
Competitiveness	39 (66.1%)	28.2% vs. 65%	n = 59 $\chi^2 = 7.417$ p < 0.01	-
Organisational priorities	49 (80.3%)	32.7% vs. 66.7%	-	n = 61 p = 0.047
Stress reduction for employees	16 (26.7%)	18.8% vs. 47.7%	n = 60 $\chi^2 = 4.105$ p = 0.043	-

9.4.3. General Employee Perceptions

Three statements assess general employee perceptions of gender equity and workplace culture (Appendix A, Q19). I recoded the three statements to indicate negative or positive employee perceptions by combining "strongly agree" and "agree," and combining "strongly disagree and disagree." I excluded respondents who indicated "neither agree nor disagree" or "I do not know."

Twenty-nine respondents (46.7%) felt that it was easier for female employees to take parental leave than male employees. Only 17 respondents (27.4%) disagreed with the statement and the remaining 16 (25.8%) either did not know or did not feel strongly about the statement. Fathers who felt that it was easier for female employees to take

parental leave were significantly less likely to claim parental benefits (34.5% compared to 64.7%), $X^2(1, N = 46) = 3.946, p = 0.047$. The large proportion of fathers who feel that it is harder for male employees to take parental leave is an indication of the prevalence of gender norms in the workplace.

Fathers who agreed that employees who worked overtime were more likely to be promoted also claimed benefits at a lower rate than other fathers (26.1% compared to 52.2%), though this relationship is only significant at the 7% level, $X^2(1, N = 46) = 3.286, p = 0.070$. Twenty-three respondents (37.1%) agreed with this statement, and the same number of respondents disagreed. The large proportion of fathers who agree with this statement shows that many fathers think that work-life balance is incompatible with career advancement.

A slightly higher proportion of fathers who agreed that the workplace culture made it easy to balance work and family life claimed parental benefits (42.9% compared to 37.5%), but this relationship is not significant, $X^2(1, N = 44) = 0.121, p = 0.761$. Twenty-eight respondents (45.1%) felt that the workplace culture made it easy to balance work and family life, while 16 fathers (25.8%) disagreed. These proportions indicate that more workplace support is needed to help many fathers balance work and family life.

9.4.4. Supervisor Support

Three statements assess respondents' perceptions of the extent to which their supervisors support their attempts at work-life balance and use (or hypothetical use) of parental leave (Q20). Due to the similarity of the statements, I tallied the responses and excluded six respondents who answered "I do not know" and "Not Applicable." Respondents' scores ranged from 3 to 15 points. Six respondents (10.7%) scored between 3 and 7 points (low support), nine (16.1%) respondents scored 8 to 10 points (medium support), and 41 respondents (73.2%) scored 11 to 15 points (high support).¹⁵ No fathers with low supervisor support claimed parental benefits, 55.6% of fathers with

¹⁵ The ranges are not uniform because they reflect the fact that "strongly disagree" counts for 1 point, "disagree" counts for 2 points, "neither agree nor disagree counts" for 3 points, "agree" is 4 points, and "strongly agree" is 5 points.

medium support claimed benefits, and 39% of fathers with high support claimed benefits. However, none of Fisher's exact tests for each group had p-values that were significant at the 5% level, though the low supervisor support group had $p = 0.074$.

I examined the impact of the statements separately due to the inconclusive results. Fathers who indicated that their supervisor cared about how his work affected his family life were less likely to claim parental benefits (31.7% compared to 44.4%), though Fisher's exact test shows this impact is not significant, $p = 0.467$. Almost 70% of fathers (41 fathers) indicated that their supervisor cared about their family lives. This statement was the only one that produced counterintuitive results.

37.5% of fathers who stated that their supervisors would have supported their decision to take parental leave claimed benefits, compared to 27.3% of fathers who disagreed, though Fisher's exact test shows that this relationship is not significant, $p = 0.726$. As with the above statement, almost 70% of fathers (40 fathers) felt that their supervisor would have been supportive had they taken parental leave, whereas only 19.3% of fathers disagreed.

Forty-seven fathers (78.3%) agreed that their supervisor would have treated them fairly if he had taken parental leave. Fathers who agreed claimed parental benefits at a higher rate than fathers who did not agree (38.3% compared to 25%). However, Fisher's exact test shows that this relationship is not significant, $p = 0.696$.

Although the relationship between supervisor support and use of parental benefits was not statistically significant, it appears that fathers who had supportive supervisors claimed benefits at a slightly higher rate than fathers who did not.

9.4.5. *Colleague Support*

Three statements assess respondents' perceptions of the extent to which their colleagues supported their attempts at work-life balance and use (or hypothetical use) of parental leave (Q21). As with supervisor support, I tallied the responses and excluded eight respondents who answered "I do not know" and "Not Applicable," and recoded one negative statement so that the answers were compatible with the other two positive statements. Respondents' scores ranged from 5 to 15 points out of a possible 3 to 15

points. Five fathers (9.3%) indicated low colleague support (5-7 points), 18 respondents (33.3%) indicated medium support (8-10 points), and 31 fathers (57.4%) indicated high support (11-15 points). No fathers who perceived low colleague support claimed benefits, compared to 38.9% who perceived medium support, and 54.8% who perceived high support. Fisher's exact test shows that low colleague support significantly impacts fathers' use of parental benefits at the 6% level, $p = 0.059$.

9.4.6. Workplace Demands

Respondents indicated the frequency with which they had to participate in work activities outside of regular business hours, work overtime, and stay overnight for business. I tallied and recoded the scores to indicate participation in low demand, medium demand, and highly demanding work. Scores ranged from 4 to 16 out of a possible 3 to 18. Twenty-four respondents (38.7%) scored 7 or fewer points (low demand work), 27 respondents (43.5%) scored 8 to 11 points (medium demand), and 11 fathers (17.7%) scored 12 or more points (highly demanding work). 70.8% of fathers with low demand work claimed parental benefits, 22.2% with medium demand work claimed benefits, and 18.2% of fathers with highly demanding work claimed benefits. The impact of workplace demands on fathers' use of parental benefits is significant, $X^2(2, N = 62) = 15.201, p < 0.01$.

9.4.7. Work-Life Balance for Male Employees

Respondents indicated the difficulty or ease with which male employees at their workplace could put family responsibilities ahead of work responsibilities. Ten statements assessed men's ability to balance work and family life. I tallied and recoded the scores to indicate low (10-14), medium (15-25), and high (26-30) work-life balance and excluded 22 respondents who answered "I do not know" or "Not applicable."¹⁶ Scores ranged from 10 to 29: 5 in the low group (12.5%), 28 in medium (70%), and 7 in high (17.5%). No fathers who indicated low work-life balance claimed parental benefits, compared to 39.3% in the medium group and 71.4% in the high work-life balance group.

¹⁶ The ranges are not uniform because they reflect the fact that "difficult" counts for 1 point, "neutral" counts for 2 points, and "easy" counts for 3 points.

Fisher's exact test shows that low work-life balance significantly impacts fathers' use of parental benefits at the 8% level, $p = 0.071$, while the impact of high work-life balance is significant at the 10% level, $p = 0.094$.

9.5. Factors Impacting Fathers' Decision to Claim Parental Benefits

Fathers who claimed and did not claim parental benefits indicated the extent to which two different sets of factors impacted their decision. To identify the level of importance of organisational factors in this decision, I also included other factors pertaining to respondents' family situation and personal beliefs.

9.5.1. *Fathers who Claimed Parental Benefits*

The most important factors impacting fathers' use of parental benefits are: wanting to take on an active parenting role (88%), viewing parental leave as a right (56%), no perception of negative impacts for their career (52%), and being able to be absent from work for a long period of time (52%). The first two factors indicate a shift toward a normalisation of fathers' active involvement in parenting and use of parental benefits. The last two factors are work-related factors and reflect the importance of fathers' work situation in their decision to claim parental benefits. Table 9.6 presents the number and proportion of fathers who indicated that a factor was "important" or "very important" in their decision.

Table 9.7. Factors Impacting Fathers' Decision to Claim Parental Benefits, Supplemental Survey

Factors	Canada (Excluding Quebec) n = 25
Organisational factors	
Could be absent from work for a long period of time	13 (52%)
No negative impacts for career	13 (52%)
Had supervisor support	12 (48%)
Had colleague support	8 (32%)
Parental leave is part of work culture	5 (22%)
Family situation	
Partner not eligible for parental leave	11 (44%)
Partner did not want to take parental leave	4 (16%)
Harder for partner to take parental leave	4 (16%)
No other options for childcare	2 (8%)
Financially preferable for him to take parental leave	10 (40%)
Personal beliefs	
Wanted to take on active parenting role	22 (88%)
Parental leave is a right	14 (56%)

9.5.2. Fathers who did not Claim Parental Benefits

Fathers did not identify organisational factors as the most important factors influencing their decision to not claim parental benefits. The three most important factors that 67.6% of fathers identified are related to their family situation: it was not financially preferable for them to take parental leave, their partners wanted to take parental leave for as long as possible, and it was easier for their partners to take parental leave. These findings reiterate the findings from the GSS in which financial considerations and the prioritisation of mothers' use of parental leave result in many fathers foregoing their right to parental benefits and opting to use other leave time instead. Table 9.7 presents the number and proportion of Canadian fathers who indicated that a factor was "important" or "very important" in their decision.

Table 9.8. Factors Impacting Fathers' Decision to Not Claim Parental Benefits, Supplemental Survey

Factors	Canada (Excluding Quebec) n = 37
Organisational factors	
Wanted to keep up-to-date with work	12 (32.4%)
Got satisfaction from working	12 (32.4%)
Felt pressure from supervisor(s) not to take leave	10 (27%)
Felt pressure from colleagues not to take leave	5 (13.5%)
Work responsibilities were difficult to transfer	10 (27%)
Work responsibilities too important to be absent	9 (24.3%)
Parental leave not part of work culture	11 (29.7%)
Perception of negative impact on career	9 (24.3%)
Right to parental leave difficult to exercise at work	9 (24.3%)
Family situation	
Not financially preferable for him to take parental leave	25 (67.6%)
Partner wanted to take leave for as long as possible	25 (67.6%)
Easier for partner to take leave	25 (67.6%)
Personal beliefs	
Perception of inadequate parenting skills	0 (0%)
Did not feel the need to be home full-time	7 (18.9%)
Believe parental leave is primarily for women	4 (10.8%)
Other	
Did not know he was eligible for parental leave	1 (2.7%)
Not eligible for parental leave	4 (10.8%)
Not eligible for job protection during leave	4 (10.8%)

9.6. After Parental Leave

Respondents selected from a list of experiences to indicate whether these occurred after their parental leave. The majority of respondents did not experience workplace discrimination after returning from parental leave, though 16% decided to pursue other employment opportunities. Sixty percent of respondents also indicated that their employers were accommodating of their new family responsibilities. These findings

suggest that the majority of fathers return to the same employer after parental leave and do not encounter mistreatment from supervisors or colleagues. However, a large proportion of employers are not accommodating to family responsibilities, and as a result, some fathers may decide to pursue different employment opportunities.

Table 9.9. Fathers' Experience after Parental Leave, Supplemental Survey

	Canada (Excluding Quebec) n = 25
Got new and worse work tasks	1 (4%)
Some coworkers did not take his work seriously	0 (0%)
Had worse chances at promotion	1 (4%)
Employer thought his taking parental leave made him more dedicated to work	0 (0%)
Laid off after taking leave	1 (4%)
Decided to pursue another employment opportunity	4 (16%)
Employer accommodating to new family responsibilities	15 (60%)
Exited labour market to care for child	0 (0%)
None of the above	6 (24%)

9.7. Strategies to Increase or Lengthen Fathers' Use of Parental Benefits

For the majority of fathers who did not claim parental benefits, the top four strategies they felt would have effectively facilitated their leave-taking are: a higher wage replacement rate for parental benefits under EI (59.5%), the option to take part-time parental leave (56.8%), an employer subsidy (56.8%), or an exclusive, non-transferable paternity leave (54.1%). 40.5% of fathers also indicated that a more family-friendly work environment would have facilitated their leave-taking. Only one father (2.7%) indicated that he would not take parental leave under any circumstances. These findings indicate that many fathers who do not claim parental benefits would do so under a different policy context or workplace situation.

For those who claimed parental benefits, the majority of respondents perceived that the most effective strategies to lengthen their leave duration are: a higher wage replacement rate for parental benefits under EI (60%), an employer subsidy (60%), and

a more family friendly work environment (56%). Large proportions of fathers also indicated that the option to take part-time leave (48%) and more support from their direct supervisor (44%) would have allowed them to take a longer leave. These findings suggest that organizational factors play a larger role in lengthening fathers' leave duration than increasing their take-up of parental benefits. Table 9.9 presents the number and proportion of fathers who indicated that a strategy would be "effective" or "very effective."

Table 9.10. Strategies to Increase or Lengthen Fathers' Use of Parental Benefits, Supplemental Survey

	Canada (Excluding Quebec) n = 37
Strategies to Increase Fathers' Use of Parental Benefits	
Higher wage replacement rate for EI or QPIP	22 (59.5%)
Option to take part-time parental leave	21 (56.8%)
Employer subsidy (top-up)	21 (56.8%)
More family-friendly work environment	15 (40.5%)
More support from direct supervisor	11 (29.7%)
More support from colleagues	10 (27%)
More support from partner	7 (18.9%)
Exclusive, non-transferable paternity leave	20 (54.1%)
Would not take parental leave under any circumstances	1 (2.7%)
Strategies to Lengthen Fathers' Use of Parental Benefits	
	n = 25
Higher wage replacement rate for EI or QPIP	15 (60%)
Option to take part-time parental leave	12 (48%)
Employer subsidy (top-up)	15 (60%)
More family-friendly work environment	14 (56%)
More support from direct supervisor	11 (44%)
More support from colleagues	8 (32%)
More support from partner	7 (28%)
Exclusive, non-transferable paternity leave	7 (28%)

9.8. Desired Duration of Parental Leave

Respondents' mean desired duration of parental leave is 23 weeks. Fathers who did not claim benefits had a lower desired duration of 14.4 weeks, while fathers who

claimed benefits had a higher duration of 35.3 weeks. Only one father indicated that his desired leave duration is 0 weeks. 24.3% of fathers who did not claim benefits stated that they would have liked to take parental leave for 12 weeks, while almost half (44%) of fathers who claimed benefits stated that they would have liked to take parental leave for 52 weeks. These findings indicate that the majority of fathers would like to take a much longer parental leave than they currently do. Table 9.10 summarises respondents' desired duration of parental leave.

Table 9.11. Desired Duration of Parental Leave, Supplemental Survey

	Canada (Excluding Quebec) n = 61 ¹⁷
All respondents	
Min	0 weeks
Max	52 weeks
Med	12 weeks
Mean	23 weeks
Respondents who did not claim parental benefits	36 (59.0%)
Min	0 weeks
Max	52 weeks
Med	8 weeks
Mean	14.4 weeks
Respondents who claimed parental benefits	25 (41.0%)
Min	3 weeks
Max	52 weeks
Med	37 weeks
Mean	35.3 weeks

9.9. Summary of Supplemental Survey Analysis

Fathers who work longer hours, work in a management position, and perform highly demanding work are significantly less likely to claim parental benefits. Workplace

¹⁷ One respondent did not answer.

values and gender norms at work also have a significant impact on fathers' use of parental benefits. However, the existence of family-friendly policies is not enough to significantly impact fathers' use of parental benefits. Changes to the federal parental insurance program or workplace culture are necessary in order to facilitate fathers' use of parental benefits.

The findings also reiterate the importance of financial considerations in fathers' decisions to claim parental benefits and the prioritisation of mothers' leave time. The perceived family-friendliness of a work environment also influences fathers' take-up and duration of parental leave, though fathers' perceived that a more family-friendly work environment would be more effective at lengthening their leave duration than increasing their take-up of parental benefits.

The majority of fathers' perceived that a higher wage replacement rate, the ability to take parental leave part-time, and an exclusive, non-transferable paternity leave would be effective in facilitating their use of parental benefits. Fathers who claimed parental benefits also stated that the first two strategies would be effective at increasing the duration of their parental leave.

The next chapter describes the policy options that developed from the analysis.

10. Policy Options

Three policy options emerged from the analysis as effective strategies to increase fathers' use of parental benefits. The first two alternatives involve reforming the current parental insurance program under EI. The third option incentivises employers to offer top-ups at their workplaces.

10.1. Exclusive, Non-Transferable Paternity Benefits at 70% Wage Replacement Rate

Exclusive, non-transferable paternity benefits are benefits that are reserved for biological fathers (or partners of biological mothers). QPIP reserves exclusive paternity benefits for biological fathers and partners of biological mothers because adoptive parents have access to separate adoption benefits that take into account the difference in available leave duration between biological and adoptive parents. In addition, if these benefits were extended to adoptive fathers, then adoptive fathers in same-sex couples would have access to a longer leave duration than adoptive mothers in same-sex couples, as they do not have access to the maternity benefits reserved for biological mothers.

Seventeen of 34 selected countries offer statutory paternity leave, and other countries reserve a portion of parental leave for fathers' exclusive use (Moss, 2013). Countries with high rates of take-up (around 90%) such as Norway, Iceland, and Sweden offer fathers individual entitlement leave at a replacement rate of 80% or higher (Moss, 2013; Marshall, 2008). Exclusive paternity benefits also legitimise and normalise fathers' decisions to take leave in negotiations with their employers (Doucet & McKay, 2010).

Moss (2013) defines a "well paid" parental leave program as one that offers a flat rate of at least €1000 (\$1500) per month or at least 66% of earnings. The recommended

wage replacement rate for this alternative is a minimum of 70%, in line with the rate offered under the QPIP basic plan.

Although it is below the average desired leave duration respondents indicated in the supplemental survey, the recommended initial leave time is 5 weeks. Fathers in Quebec have been highly responsive and supportive of their individual entitlement leave, and since this exclusive leave time already exists in a Canadian jurisdiction, the policy is likely to produce similar results elsewhere in Canada. However, after this initial implementation, the government should extend the leave duration to reflect fathers' desired duration of leave and to encourage a more balanced distribution of parental leave between mothers and fathers. In Sweden, Norway, and Iceland, fathers' exclusive leave duration have all been extended since its initial implementation (Haas & Rostgaard, 2011).

One equity issue with this policy option is that the wage replacement rate for maternity benefits is currently only 55% under EI. If exclusive paternity benefits were introduced with a wage replacement rate of 70%, the wage replacement rate for maternity benefits would also have to be raised to 70%, as it is in Quebec. In addition, Canadian fathers have expressed discomfort with taking leave time away from their partners, which is why the majority do not use the shared parental benefits (Doucet & McKay, 2010). As a result, these five weeks should be added to the total available leave time, rather than reallocated from the shared parental leave time.

10.2. Part-time Parental Benefits

Part-time benefits allow fathers to claim parental benefits on a part-time basis in order to extend their time at home without completely relinquishing their work responsibilities. While claiming EI parental benefits, parents may currently earn up to the higher amount between \$50 a week or 25% of their weekly benefit (Service Canada, 2013a). Parents receiving the maximum weekly benefit may earn up to \$128.50 per week. Between August 5, 2012 and August 5, 2015, there is also a pilot program called Working While on Claim (WWC) that allows recipients to keep 50 cents of every dollar

they earn up to 90% of their weekly insurable earnings (Service Canada, 2013c). Any earnings above 90% are deducted from their benefits.

The examples on the Service Canada website include earnings from temporary jobs, but did not specify whether applicants could continue working for their original employer while claiming parental benefits. One of the eligibility requirements for EI parental benefits is that applicants' normal weekly earnings must be reduced by more than 40%, so fathers wanting to work part-time may be restricted a maximum of 2½ workdays per week. An applicant who works 2½ workdays per week would make 80% of his weekly insurable earnings, though only part of his income would come from EI benefits. Making this pilot program part of the permanent provisions under parental benefits may increase fathers' use of parental leave, as 56.8% of fathers in the supplemental survey said that the ability to take parental leave part-time would be effective in facilitating their use of parental benefits. Twelve of the 34 countries in Moss (2013) allow fathers to take parental leave on a part-time basis.

10.3. Employer Tax Credit

A tax credit may incentivise employers to offer top-ups. Based on the supplemental survey, this type of family-friendly policy is the only one that increased fathers' use of parental benefits; although the impact was not significant, it may increase fathers' use of parental benefits through both the additional financial incentive and the normalisation of fathers' use of parental benefits in the workplace. This policy option is in line with a Ministerial Advisory Committee on the Government of Canada's Child Care Spaces Initiative recommendation (Ministerial Advisory Committee, 2007). This policy option could entail a similar delivery mechanism as the Investment Tax Credit for Child Care Spaces, in which the federal government offers employers a tax credit for 25% of expenditures associated with creating a new childcare space up to a value of \$10,000 (HRSDC, 2012).

The next chapter presents the evaluation criteria that I use to rank the policy options.

11. Evaluation Criteria

I undertake a multi-criteria evaluation to rank the proposed alternatives. The criteria that I consider are: effectiveness, cost, acceptability among fathers and employers, and implementation feasibility. Each criterion is worth three points and the policy options receive a ranking based on a tally of their scores.

11.1. Effectiveness

The measure for effectiveness is the percentage increase in fathers' use of parental benefits that occurs five years after the implementation of the policy. The percentage increase only includes fathers who otherwise would have not claimed parental benefits without the policy. A greater increase in uptake translates into a higher score: an increase of less than 33% after five years is low (one point), an increase of 34% to 66% is medium (two points), and an increase of over 67% is high (three points). I selected these three ranges because I could not find any measures of effectiveness for parental leave policies.

11.2. Cost

The cost criterion measures the incremental costs of the policy or program from the federal government's perspective, excluding administrative costs. The two measures are whether the option requires an increase in EI premiums or a reallocation of existing government funds. Both measures are weighted equally. An alternative that requires neither of these measures scores three points (high), one measure scores 1.5 points (med), and both measures score zero points (low).

11.3. Acceptability

The major stakeholders that the policy options impact are fathers and employers. Three measures from the GSS and supplemental survey stand out as important factors influencing fathers' decision to claim parental benefits. The measures are whether the option decreases their partners' available leave time¹⁸, whether it ameliorates fathers' financial situation compared to the current policy, and whether it supports fathers who are highly attached to work (0.5 points each).

For employers, the measures for acceptability are whether the policy or program improves or maintains employee retention, whether it requires that temporary replacement workers be hired, and whether it is a voluntary measure. Employer and father acceptability are weighted equally.

11.4. Implementation Feasibility

The implementation feasibility criterion refers to the administrative costs associated with the policy option. An alternative scores highly if the costs related to implementation are low, medium administrative costs indicate medium feasibility, and high administrative costs means low implementation feasibility. Table 11.1 below summarises the evaluation criteria.

¹⁸ I considered including mothers' acceptability separately, but decided against it. While not all fathers would be raising children with female partners, the vast majority do. I included mothers' acceptability in the first measure of fathers' acceptability by using a more inclusive measure that also considers male partners.

Table 11.1. Evaluation Criteria

Criterion	Definition	Measurement	Score
Effectiveness (3)	Increase in fathers' use of parental benefits after 5 years	<33% increase 34-66% increase >67% increase	Low (1) Medium (2) High (3)
Cost (3)	Requires EI premium increase	Yes No	Yes (0) No (1.5)
	Requires reallocation of government funds	Yes No	Yes (0) No (1.5)
Acceptability (3)	Number of key factors that influence fathers' leave-taking that the option addresses	Does not decrease parental benefits from partner Ameliorates financial situation Supports fathers who are highly attached to work	Low (0-0.5) Medium (1) High (1.5)
	Number of employer concerns that the option addresses	Maintains or increases employee retention rate Does not require hiring a temporary replacement worker Is a voluntary measure	Low (0-0.5) Medium (1) High (1.5)
Implementation Feasibility (3)	Administrative cost related to implementation	High administrative cost Medium administrative cost Low administrative cost	Low (1) Medium (2) High (3)

The next section presents an analysis of the three policy options from Chapter 10.

12. Policy Analysis

This chapter assesses the policy options based on the evaluation criteria. I award partial scores where the impacts of the options are unclear.

12.1. Exclusive, Non-Transferable Paternity Benefits with 70% Wage Replacement Rate

I use data from QPIP to estimate the impact of this policy option. Appendix D contains a detailed description of my calculations.

12.1.1. Effectiveness

The effectiveness of this policy option may be comparable to QPIP since its basic plan offers fathers five weeks of non-transferable benefits at 70% wage replacement rate. QPIP significantly increased fathers' use of parental benefits from 27.8% to 48.4% in the first year, and to 77.6% in the fifth year (Statistics Canada, 2007; Statistics Canada, 2013g). The five-year increase corresponds to a 69% increase in take-up by fathers who did not claim parental benefits before the implementation of the policy. In the supplemental survey, 54.1% of fathers who did not claim parental benefits indicated that exclusive paternity benefits would facilitate their use of parental leave. It is likely that this proportion will increase after five years, since only 35.3% of Quebecois fathers who did not previously claim parental benefits claimed benefits under QPIP in the first year of its implementation. Therefore, this policy option scores highly for effectiveness (3 points). Assuming a 69% increase among fathers who otherwise would not claim benefits, fathers' use of parental benefits outside Quebec would increase from 9.4% to 71.9% in five years.

12.1.2. Cost

In 2012, 59,718 fathers received \$175.2 million in QPIP paternity benefits (Conseil de gestion de l'assurance parentale, 2013a). The same year, 25,631 fathers claimed parental benefits under EI (CEIC, 2013).¹⁹ A 69% increase in the use of parental benefits by fathers who would otherwise have not claimed benefits corresponds to 170,457 additional fathers claiming parental benefits after five years. Using the payment amounts that fathers received under QPIP (approximately \$2,900 per father), this option would entail an additional cost of \$494.3 million in the fifth year. Taking into account the additional cost of offering mothers on maternity leave a 70% wage replacement rate, the total incremental cost of the policy is \$748.9 million in the fifth year and less than this amount in previous years.

Quebec residents and employers pay higher premiums than other Canadians when taking into account the sum of their parental insurance premiums and EI premiums. However, this option would not entail the full premium increase that Quebec residents pay, since QPIP offers a higher wage replacement rate for parental leave for the first seven weeks, offers maternity leave for three weeks longer under the basic plan, and has a higher maximum insurable income. The difference per \$100 of insurable income that salaried workers in Quebec currently pay is \$0.21; therefore, the increase in premiums necessary to cover the costs of the policy is less than this amount. However, the 2014 federal budget has forecasted a surplus of over \$2 billion in the cumulative balance of the EI Operating Account between 2015 and 2018, which will be enough to offset the costs of the policy option, even with a forecasted premium rate of \$1.88 (the current rate) for 2015 and 2016, and \$1.47 for 2017 and 2018 (Department of Finance Canada, 2014). In 2019, the government expects that the premium rate will rise, though it cannot change by more than \$0.05 per year (CEIC, 2013).

As a result, this option will not immediately entail an EI premium increase, though the surplus in the EI Account will be reallocated to pay for the benefits. Therefore, the option scores 1.5 points for cost.

¹⁹ This number does not include adoptive fathers, though adoptive claims comprise less than 1% of all EI parental benefits claims.

12.1.3. Acceptability

Fathers are likely to be supportive of this program since it does not decrease their partner's parental benefits, it ameliorates their financial situation compared to the status quo, and supports fathers who are highly attached to work by providing them with leverage in negotiating parental leave with their employers (1.5 points). Employers are likely to demonstrate low support for the policy because they would have to hire additional temporary employees if fathers go on leave, and the policy is not voluntary if it becomes part of EI benefits. However, there is no evidence that the policy would decrease employee retention, since 94.6% of fathers in Quebec returned to work after taking parental leave, whereas the average employee turnover rate was 12% (8.6% left voluntarily) in 2003 and 2004 (Mann et al., 2011) (0.5 points). This option scores two points for acceptability.

12.1.4. Implementation Feasibility

Implementation feasibility is high. The increase in fathers' parental benefit claims would require more administrative processing and additional staff, but the increase would comprise less than 6% of the total number of EI claims (2.9 million in 2012) over a five-year period, 60% of which involve full or partial automated processing (CEIC, 2013). The policy option scores three points for implementation feasibility.

12.2. Part-time Parental Benefits

The evaluation of this policy option is an approximate estimation due to the lack of comparable secondary data. Please refer to Appendix E for detailed calculations.

12.2.1. Effectiveness

The effectiveness of part-time parental benefits is difficult to estimate because parents can currently claim benefits on a part-time basis under EI and the Working While on Claim (WWC) pilot program. WWC is more favourable for fathers because it allows them to earn a higher proportion of their regular income. However, there is no evidence that the proportion of fathers who claim parental benefits has increased since this

program began in 2012 (Statistics Canada, 2013a). A possible explanation for the low take-up is that fathers do not know about the program, either because it is not well advertised or because it is fairly new. Another explanation is that fathers are still reluctant to use the shared parental benefits despite being able to work part-time while doing so. Other jurisdictions that offer part-time parental benefits also offer exclusive paternity leave (Moss, 2013).

Given the dearth of information, a conservative estimate is that the effectiveness of this policy option on its own may be low (one point). Only seven fathers in the supplemental survey (18.9%) indicated that part-time benefits would facilitate his leave-taking and did not indicate that prioritising his partner's leave would also be important; this small proportion of fathers suggests that offering part-time benefits without exclusive paternity leave may not be very effective in increasing fathers' use of benefits. Overall, 21 fathers (56.8%) who did not claim benefits indicated that part-time benefits would be effective, but two thirds of these fathers also indicated that his partner wanting to take parental leave for as long as possible was important or very important. Assuming the same rate of increase in fathers' use of this policy after five years as in the first policy option (27.5% increase in five years), 24.1% of fathers who would otherwise not have claimed parental benefits would claim them under this policy after five years. This increase translates into 33.5% of all fathers claiming parental benefits after five years.

12.2.2. Cost

This option scores medium (1.5) for cost because it does not require an increase in EI premiums, though it does entail a reallocation of government funds from the EI Account to pay for the increase in fathers' use of parental benefits (Department of Finance Canada, 2014). EI premiums will not have to increase because this option is cost-effective in the sense that fathers who work part-time while claiming benefits will not receive their full benefit amount from EI, since their additional income from work will entail a claw-back for a portion of their benefits. Assuming the new fathers claiming under this policy would only receive 50% of their average benefits, the incremental cost would be \$120.8 million in the fifth year.

12.2.3. Acceptability

Part-time benefits fulfil two of the three measures for fathers' acceptance: they support fathers who are highly attached to work by allowing them to stay in the labour force while claiming parental benefits (0.5 points), and they ameliorate fathers' financial situation due to the additional income from their part-time employment (0.5 points). However, fathers who claim parental benefits on a part-time basis will be decreasing the parental leave time available to their partners, which is an important reason why the majority of fathers do not currently claim parental benefits (Doucet & McKay, 2010).

Employers are likely to be moderately supportive of this policy, since it will either increase or maintain employee retention since they will still be working part-time during leave (0.5 points), and employers may not have to hire a replacement employee if the leave is only taken on a part-time basis (0.25 points).²⁰ However, this policy is still mandatory for employers if it becomes part of EI parental benefits. This option scores 1.75 points for acceptability.

12.2.4. Implementation Feasibility

Implementation feasibility is high (3 points) because the increase in EI claims is only 2%, which is no greater than the increase in overall applications between 2011 and 2012 (CEIC, 2013).

12.3. Employer Tax Credit

The evaluation for this policy option provides rough estimates of effectiveness and cost due to a lack of comparable secondary data. Appendix F contains detailed calculations for this policy option.

²⁰ Part-time benefits may also decrease the number of replacement hours.

12.3.1. Effectiveness

The effectiveness of this program depends on the proportion of employers who make use of the subsidy. Marshall (2010) estimates that 3000 employers provided 885,000 employees with top-ups in 2008. Since there were 17.1 million employed persons in 2008, approximately 5.2% of workers had access to top-ups (Statistics Canada, 2014b). Assuming the same proportion of employers offered benefits, 3000 out of 58,000 employers offered supplemental benefits in 2008, which means that 55,000 employers did not. Of the employers who paid benefits to mothers in 2008, average payments to each mother were \$300 per week (Marshall, 2010). Assuming that employers' willingness-to-pay for top-ups is linear, 35,000 additional employers would be willing to offer top-ups if their average payments were reduced by 25% to \$225 per week. This number means that an additional 63.6% of employees would have access to employer benefits. In the supplemental survey, fathers who had access to top-ups were 1.5 times more likely to claim parental benefits as were other fathers. If an additional 63.6% of fathers had access to employer benefits, and benefits increased fathers' likelihood of claiming parental benefits by 1.5 times, 24,452 additional fathers would claim benefits in the first year, increasing to 31,176 in five years. This growth constitutes a 12.6% increase in the proportion of fathers who would not otherwise claim parental benefits, bringing the total up to 22% of all fathers. Therefore, the effectiveness of this program is low after five years (1 point).

12.3.2. Cost

The incremental cost of the program includes the payments to the additional fathers who would otherwise not claim parental benefits, and the cost of the subsidy to employers who offer top-ups to both mothers and fathers. Assuming an additional 31,176 fathers claim benefits after five years, EI payments would increase by \$126.7 million. These fathers' employers would receive another \$27.1 million in tax credits. Both employers who always offered top-ups and ones who offer them under the new policy would also receive tax credits for mothers and fathers who would otherwise still claim parental benefits, totalling \$40.7 million. The total incremental cost of the program is \$194.5 million in the fifth year.

This option will not require an increase in EI premiums, though funding for this program may come from the EI Account surplus or from general revenues (Department of Finance Canada, 2014). This option scores 1.5 for cost.

12.3.3. Acceptability

Fathers are likely to be moderately supportive of this program because it improves their financial situation (0.5 points), and fathers who are highly attached to work may benefit from this policy if they receive adequate support and encouragement from their managers (0.5 points) (Beauregard & Henry, 2009). However, the policy does not offer additional leave time that fathers can use instead of the shared parental leave.

Employers are also likely to be moderately supportive of this program because it will increase employee retention since top-ups entail payback clauses if employees do not return to work (0.5 points), and it is a voluntary program (0.5 points) (Marshall, 2010). However, employers will have to hire temporary workers to replace fathers on parental leave. This option scores two points for acceptability.

12.3.4. Implementation Feasibility

The implementation feasibility of this program is high, since it will only require IT related costs to include and process the new tax credit on tax returns. The increase in EI claims and associated processing costs is negligible at 1%.

Table 12.1 summarises the policy evaluation. The exclusive paternity benefits score the highest, whereas the other two policy options have comparable scores.

Table 12.1. Policy Evaluation

Criteria	Exclusive, Non-transferable Paternity Benefits at 70% wage replacement level	Part-time Parental Benefits	Employer Tax Credit
Effectiveness Increase in fathers' use of parental benefits after 5 years	3 69% (High)	1 24.1% (Low)	1 12.6% (Low)
Cost Requires EI premium increase Requires reallocation of government funds	1.5 No (1.5) Yes (0)	1.5 No (1.5) Yes (0)	1.5 No (1.5) Yes (0)
Acceptability Fathers Employers	2 1.5 (High) 0.5 (Low)	1.75 1 (Med) 0.75 (Med)	2 1 (Med) 1 (Med)
Implementation Feasibility Administrative costs	3 Low costs (High)	3 Low costs (High)	3 Low costs (High)
Total	9.5	7.25	7.5

The next section describes the policy recommendations.

13. Recommendations

The recommendations are separated into short-term, medium-term, and long-term recommendations. The federal government should implement exclusive paternity benefits and part-time benefits immediately, and then lengthen exclusive paternity benefits after some monitoring. Long-term recommendations consist of new models of parental leave and complementary family policies that federal and provincial governments should consider as a future direction for family policy.

13.1. Short-Term: Exclusive Paternity Benefits and Part-time Benefits

The federal government should implement exclusive paternity benefits and part-time benefits immediately due to their high feasibility and complementary qualities. Neither option would require raising EI premiums since the forecasted surplus in the EI Account is enough to cover the program costs (Department of Finance Canada, 2014). Although the additional program costs would entail an opportunity cost, the use of paternity leave among fathers in Sweden has resulted in savings related to a significant decrease in their use of sick days, and a significant decrease in their use of in-patient care, which contributed to an overall reduction in mortality risk (Månsdotter et al., 2007). Månsdotter et al. (2007) attribute some of this discrepancy to paternity leave leading to the development of healthier lifestyles, more risk-averse behaviour, and more stable marital relationships; however, part of the explanation may also be due to self-selection, in which fathers who took paternity leave were not as likely to subscribe to health-damaging masculinity. Therefore, the potential savings to the healthcare system and to employers reduces the net cost of the program, and may even offset the costs depending on the proportion of savings attributed to behavioural change rather than self-selection.

Many jurisdictions provide evidence of the effectiveness of exclusive paternity benefits in increasing fathers' use of parental benefits (Moss, 2013). Offering part-time benefits in addition to exclusive paternity benefits would allow fathers who are highly attached to work to keep working while on paternity leave, and more fathers would choose to take benefits part-time if the benefits were part of individual entitlement leave rather than shared leave, as they currently are (McKay & Doucet, 2010). In combination, these two policy options could raise fathers' use of parental benefits to an even higher level than exclusive paternity benefits alone. Furthermore, offering part-time benefits in conjunction with exclusive paternity benefits will reduce the cost of the program for the federal government, since some of the benefits will be clawed back due to fathers' income from part-time work. However, there may have to be some promotion of these policies in order for take-up rates to increase. The promotion of these programs does not necessarily have to be expensive, as program information can be successfully disseminated through the current EI website if the information is presented in a user-friendly manner.

13.2. Medium-Term: Lengthen Exclusive Paternity Benefits

After some monitoring of the new policies and additional research, the federal government should consider lengthening the exclusive paternity benefits to reflect fathers' desired duration and to encourage a more equal allocation of parental benefits between mothers and fathers. Iceland's parental leave program has transformed dramatically within just three years: fathers received one month of exclusive parental benefits which increased each year by a month for three years (Kamerman & Moss, 2009). Both fathers and mothers now receive three months of individual entitlement leave and three months of shared leave time. Sweden and Norway have also extended fathers' exclusive parental leave time over a period of several years (Haas & Rostgaard, 2011). Sweden offers eight weeks of exclusive parental benefits for fathers and two weeks of paternity benefits (10 weeks total) while Norway offers 12 weeks as of 2011. As such, the duration before which the government extends paternity leave may vary, but I recommend that the extension take place within five years of the initial implementation.

13.3. Long-Term: New Models of Parental Leave and Family Policy

13.3.1. Parental Leave

Canada's parental leave policy is just one component of its family policies, all of which interact to facilitate work-life balance for families. For example, the duration of parental leave should be closely related to the availability of childcare spaces in order for parents to be able to return to work and easily find high quality childcare options for their children (Ministerial Advisory Committee, 2007). Given that infant spaces for children aged 0 to 18 months are the most expensive to create and maintain, and that demand for these spaces significantly exceeds the supply, the Ministerial Advisory Committee on the Government of Canada's Child Care Spaces Initiative (2007) recommends that the parental benefit period be extended to 18 months. The Committee (2007) also supports allocating mothers and fathers individual entitlement leave rather than shared leave, providing incentives to employers to offer top-ups, and offering support to small businesses to help them manage employee absences during leave.

Kershaw and Andersen (2011) also advocate for an extension of parental benefits to 18 months, with six months of the duration reserved for fathers. Kershaw (2005) also recommends that the government should make parental benefits more accessible and generous, by introducing a flat-rate for parents who do not qualify under the eligibility requirements, and by raising the wage replacement rate and maximum insurable earnings ceiling. These recommendations are just two examples of ways in which the federal government can reform parental benefits in the long-term, with other countries providing examples of other models.

13.3.2. Complementary Policies and Programs

While parental leave provisions are an important part of family policy, parents need more support to facilitate work-life balance over the course of their children's lives. Several policies and programs may be useful in achieving this balance, though they require coordination between multiple levels of government. For example, legislated breastfeeding breaks at work may allow fathers to take parental leave and mothers to

return to work without sacrificing breastfeeding their child, which is one of the main reasons couples prioritise mothers' leave time (Doucet & McKay, 2010). The availability and accessibility of regulated childcare spaces also impacts parents' ability to balance work and family responsibilities. In 2012, only 22.5% of children under five had access to a full-time or part-time space at a regulated childcare facility, with large variations across provinces and territories (Friendly et al., 2013). Kershaw (2005) also suggests that the governments should subsidize 80% of the costs of childcare for children under six, in line with expenditures in Denmark, France, and Quebec. Lastly, some countries have legislated flexible work provisions and the ability to reduce working hours for parents with young children (Kamerman & Moss, 2009; Moss, 2013). In sum, there are many policies and programs that are worthy of consideration for the future development of Canada's family policy.

The next chapter summarises and concludes the study.

14. Conclusion

Parental leave policies impact mothers and fathers differently due to traditional gender roles and fathers' stronger labour force attachment. As a result, the parental insurance program under EI is ineffective at producing a more equal distribution of parental benefits between mothers and fathers. The low wage replacement rate for parental benefits discourages fathers from claiming benefits due to their higher average earnings, and employers do not always recognise the legitimacy of fathers' requests for leave (Marshall, 2008; Doucet & McKay, 2010). Most dual-earner couples also perceive shared parental benefits to be an extension of maternity leave, rather than benefits that belong to both parents. Additionally, full-time parental leave may not be suitable for fathers who are highly attached to work.

This study finds that the introduction of exclusive paternity benefits and part-time benefits at a higher wage replacement rate have the potential to significantly increase fathers' use of parental benefits. Fathers could work part-time while claiming benefits, would have more leverage to negotiate parental leave with their employers, and would not have to feel guilty about decreasing their partners' available leave time (Doucet & McKay, 2010). Employers may also benefit from reduced hiring costs if parents maintain part of their work responsibilities while on parental leave. Lastly, neither of the policy options requires an increase in EI premiums due to the projected surplus in the EI Account (Department of Finance Canada, 2014).

Although this study focuses on parental leave policies, they are only part of a collection of family policies that work together to support families. Additional workplace and childcare support and changes to work culture are necessary to facilitate work-family balance in the long run.

14.1. Limitations

The small sample size in the GSS made it difficult to accurately test the impact of work hours and occupational category on fathers' use of parental benefits. In addition, the mutual exclusiveness of some questions created a forced choice between different factors that impacted fathers' decisions to not take parental leave.

In the supplemental survey, respondents' use of parental benefits is considerably higher compared to published statistics and the GSS data. This discrepancy is likely due to self-selection bias, as fathers who are interested in the study topic are more likely to be active and involved parents, which increases their likelihood of taking parental leave. In addition, the accuracy of the statistical tests is limited due to the small sample size. Fathers from BC are also overrepresented in the sample, and the most common occupational categories are inconsistent with the GSS data, which suggests that the fathers in the supplemental survey are more educated. As a result, the sample may not be representative of the Canadian population. However, the data offers important insight on work-related and other factors that influence fathers' decisions to take parental leave.

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Appendices

Appendix A.

Survey Questionnaire

Introduction

The purpose of this survey is to explore fathers' use of parental leave in Canada since 2010. In particular, this survey focuses on the extent to which employment and organisational factors impact fathers' decisions to take parental leave. By examining work-related barriers and facilitators, this study seeks to identify ways to better support fathers who want to take parental leave. All recent fathers aged 19 and over are encouraged to participate in the survey regardless of whether or not they have taken parental leave in the past. For fathers who live in Quebec, the terms *parental leave* and *parental benefits* include paternity leave and paternity benefits.

Since the study focuses on employment factors, the questions apply only to recent fathers who worked in paid employment in the 12 months preceding the birth or adoption of their child. In the case of multiple children, please respond in relation to your youngest child born or adopted in 2010 or later.

This study has received research ethics approval from Simon Fraser University's Office of Research Ethics. The survey should take 10 to 15 minutes to complete. By completing the survey, you are consenting to participate in the study. The survey data will be used for a graduate thesis and may also be published in journal articles or presented at conferences. Your answers will be kept completely confidential. The final report will not contain any identifying information. Should you wish to participate in future studies on this topic, you may enter your email at the end of the survey. This email will be separated from your survey responses and will not be shared with any third parties.

Because the Qualtrics survey tool is registered in the US, it is subject to US laws such as the US Patriot Act. This Act allows US authorities to access to the records of Internet service providers. As mentioned above, the email you may choose to enter at the end of the survey will be the only identifying information that this survey collects. You may still

complete the survey without entering your email, and you may also email the principal investigator directly at [REDACTED] if you wish to participate in future studies on this topic, instead of entering your email at the end of the survey.

There are no foreseeable risks of participating in this study; you do not have to answer any questions with which you do not feel comfortable, and you may terminate the survey at any time. You will not be compensated for your participation; however, your responses will contribute to increasing knowledge about ways to better support work-life balance for Canadian fathers. Your opinions are very much appreciated.

If you have any questions about the study or the research findings, you may contact the principal investigator, Xiaoyang Luo, at [REDACTED]. If you have any concerns about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, you may contact Dr. Jeffrey Toward, Director, Office of Research Ethics at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

Thank you for your time and participation.

1. What is your gender?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female (termination point)

2. What is your current age?
 - a. 18 or under (termination point)
 - b. 19 to 24
 - c. 25 to 34
 - d. 35 to 44
 - e. 45 to 54
 - f. 55 to 64
 - g. 65 or over

3. Was at least one of your children born or adopted in 2010 or later?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No (termination point)

4. Were you living in Canada at the time of the birth or adoption of your child?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No (termination point)

5. In which province or territory did you live at the time of the birth or adoption of your child?
 - a. British Columbia
 - b. Alberta
 - c. Saskatchewan
 - d. Manitoba
 - e. Ontario
 - f. Quebec
 - g. Newfoundland and Labrador
 - h. Prince Edward Island
 - i. Nova Scotia
 - j. New Brunswick
 - k. Yukon
 - l. Northwest Territories
 - m. Nunavut
 - n. I was living outside of Canada. (termination point)

6. Were you working in paid employment in the 12 months **prior** to the birth or adoption of your child?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No (termination point)

Employment questions

The following questions relate to your or your partner's employment situation **in the 12 months prior** to birth or adoption of your child.

If you worked for more than one employer in that period of time, please respond in reference to the employer for whom you worked closest to the time of the birth or adoption of your child.

If you worked for multiple employers at the same time, please respond in reference to the employer for whom you worked for the greater number of hours per week. If you worked for multiple employers for an equal number of hours per week, please respond in reference to the employer of your choice.

Questions about your partner refer to another adult who also shared in the parenting of your child as a legal guardian. These questions also provide an option for single fathers to indicate that they were the sole caregivers for their child.

7. Did you work for more than one employer in the 12 months prior to the birth or adoption of your child?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

8. How many hours per week did you work on average **in the 12 months prior** to the birth or adoption of your child (excluding leave time)?
 - a. 20 and under
 - b. 21 to 30
 - c. 31 to 40
 - d. 41 or over
 - e. I was unemployed.
 - f. I exited the labour market to stay home with my child.

9. Did **your partner** work for more than one employer in the 12 months prior to the birth or adoption of your child?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I was a single parent. (Skip Q10 if selected)

10. How many hours per week did **your partner** work on average **in the 12 months prior** to the birth or adoption of your child (excluding leave time)?
 - a. 20 and under
 - b. 21 to 30
 - c. 31 to 40
 - d. 41 and over
 - e. My partner was unemployed.
 - f. My partner exited the labour market to stay home with our child.

11. In what sector did you work at the time of the birth or adoption of your child?
 - a. Private
 - b. Public
 - c. Non-profit
 - d. Self-employed

12. Were you in a management position?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

13. In what type of employment did you work at the time of the birth or adoption of your child?
 - a. Business and finance (e.g. accountants, professionals in human resources, marketing, public relations, financial analysts)
 - b. Administrative and office support occupations (e.g. receptionists, data entry clerks, records management technicians)

- c. Natural and applied sciences (e.g. scientists, engineers, architects, computer programmers)
- d. Health (e.g. nurses, physicians, dentists, veterinarians)
- e. Legal, social, community, and government services (e.g. lawyers, policy researchers, social workers)
- f. Education services (e.g. teachers, professors, instructors, counsellors)
- g. Protective services (e.g. firefighters, police officers, correctional service officers)
- h. Home care providers (e.g. caregivers, respite workers, housekeepers)
- i. Art, culture, recreation, and sport (e.g. librarians, journalists, performers, athletes, technical and design occupations)
- j. Sales and service occupations (e.g. occupations in real estate, tourism, food preparation and service, cleaners, hairstylists, tailors, excluding retail)
- k. Retail salespeople, sales clerks, cashiers, and supervisors
- l. Trades, transport, and equipment operation (e.g. electricians, plumbers, contractors, automotive service technicians, drivers, labourers)
- m. Natural resources, agriculture, and related production (e.g. occupations in logging, mining, farming, fishing)
- n. Processing, manufacturing and utilities (e.g. occupations in food, textile, plastic processing, assemblers, machine operators, inspectors)

14. Approximately what proportion of employees were men?

- a. 0-33%
- b. 34-66%
- c. 67-100%

15. Approximately how many people worked at your place of employment?

- a. 1 to 20
- b. 21 to 40
- c. 41 to 60
- d. 61 to 80
- e. 81 to 100
- f. 101 and over

Workplace culture questions

The following question relate to your work environment **at the time of the birth or adoption of your child.**

Please respond in reference to the same employer as the previous questions.

For the next question, a top-up during parental leave refers to additional financial support that an employer provides while an employee claims parental benefits under

Employment Insurance (EI) or the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP). For example, since EI benefits generally provide only 55% of the applicant's average insurable earnings, an employer may offer a top-up of 35% to bring the employee's total parental benefits up to 90% of earnings.

16. What type of family-friendly policies did your place of employment offer? Please select all that apply.

- a. Top-up during parental leave
- b. Flex-time or flexible working hours
- c. Option to work from home
- d. Option to reduce working hours
- e. Daycare on the premises
- f. Other, please specify:
- g. None of the above
- h. I do not know

17. Please indicate the extent to which your workplace valued the following goals.

(Very important, important, somewhat important, not at all important, I do not know)

- a. Encourage collaboration within the workplace
- b. Give opportunities for employees to advance
- c. Have high demands for achievement
- d. Show respect for individual rights
- e. Take social responsibility
- f. Be competitive
- g. Prioritize organisational goals
- h. Offer good pay and benefits
- i. Put profits before everything
- j. Encourage discussion about company policy among the employees
- k. Take employees' viewpoints seriously
- l. Reduce stress and pressure on employees

18. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about **the workplace culture** at your work. (Strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree, I do not know)

- a. It was easier for female employees to take parental leave than male employees.
- b. Employees who worked overtime were more likely to be promoted.
- c. The workplace culture made it easy for employees to balance work and family life.

19. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about **your closest supervisor**. If you did not have a supervisor,

please select “Not Applicable.” (Strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree, do not know, not applicable)

- a. My supervisor cared about how my work affected my family life.
- b. My supervisor would have supported my decision to take parental leave.
- c. My supervisor would have treated me fairly if I had taken parental leave.

20. Please indicate to what degree you agree with the following statements about **your colleagues**. If you did not have any colleagues, please select “Not Applicable.” (Strongly agree, agree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, strongly disagree, do not know)

- a. My colleagues supported fathers’ attempts to combine employment and parenthood.
- b. My colleagues would not have liked to work extra hours so that I could care for my child.
- c. My colleagues would have treated me fairly if I had taken parental leave.

21. How often during your employment did the following occur? (Never, rarely, once a month, 2-3 times a month, once a week, 2 or more times a week)

- a. I participated in work activities outside of regular business hours.
- b. I worked overtime.
- c. I was away overnight for business.

22. How easy or difficult was it for men at your workplace to:
(Easy, neutral, difficult, not applicable, I do not know)

- a. Take time off during the workday in order to take a child to the doctor or school
- b. Adjust one’s work hours to their children’s times at daycare or school
- c. Refuse to work overtime
- d. Avoid taking overnight business trips
- e. Take leave to care for a sick child
- f. Work from home to care for a sick child
- g. Use parental leave for a month
- h. Use parental leave for three months
- i. Use parental leave for six months
- j. Reduce work hours in order to care for children

Parental Leave questions

The following questions seek to identify the factors that are the most important to fathers when deciding to take or not take parental leave. Fathers who took parental leave will be asked additional questions about their experience after taking parental leave.

For fathers living in Quebec, the terms *parental benefits* and *parental leave* include paternity benefits and paternity leave.

23. Did you receive paid parental benefits under Employment Insurance (EI) or the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP) following the birth or adoption of your child?
- Yes (answer all subsequent questions except Q29 if selected)
 - No (answer questions 24, 26, 29, 31-33 if selected)
24. Did you use other leave time (vacation time, sick days, etc.) following the birth or adoption of your child?
- Yes
 - No (skip to Q29 if selected)
25. What was the duration of your parental leave under EI or QPIP (**excluding** other paid or unpaid leave time)? One month is equal to approximately 4 weeks.
- # of weeks
26. What was the **total** duration of your parental leave (**including** leave under EI or QPIP and other paid or unpaid leave time such as vacation time or sick days)? One month is equal to approximately 4 weeks.
- # of weeks
27. Did you receive a top-up from your employer when you took parental leave? A top-up is additional financial support that is delivered at the same time as your parental benefits under EI or QPIP.
- Yes
 - No
 - I do not know.

28. You indicated that you claimed parental benefits under EI or QPIP. How important were the following factors in your decision to take leave? (Very important, important, somewhat important, not at all important, not applicable, do not know)

Please select "Not Applicable" for the last option if you do not want to specify any other factors.

- I could organise myself to be absent from work for a long period of time.
- There would be no negative impacts for my career.
- I had the support of my supervisor(s).
- I had the support of my colleagues.
- Taking parental leave was part of the work culture.
- My partner was not eligible for parental leave.
- My partner did not want to take parental leave.

- h. I wanted to take on an active parenting role.
- i. I had no other options for childcare.
- j. It is a right to take parental leave.
- k. It was financially preferable that I take parental leave.
- l. It was easier for me than for my partner to take parental leave.
- m. Other, please specify:

29. You indicated that you did **not** claim parental benefits under EI or QPIP. How important were the following factors in your decision **not** to take leave?

Please select "Not Applicable" for the last option if you do not want to specify any other factors. (Very important, important, somewhat important, not at all important, do not know, not applicable)

- a. I wanted to keep up-to-date with my work.
- b. I got satisfaction from working.
- c. I felt pressure from my supervisor(s) to not take leave.
- d. I felt pressure from my colleagues to not take leave.
- e. My work responsibilities were difficult to transfer.
- f. My work responsibilities were too important for me to be absent.
- g. I did not feel like I had adequate parenting skills.
- h. I did not feel the need to be at home full-time.
- i. Taking parental leave was not part of the work culture.
- j. There would have been negative impacts for my career.
- k. The right to parental leave was difficult to exercise at my work.
- l. It would not have been financially preferable for me to take parental leave.
- m. My partner wanted to take parental leave for as long as possible.
- n. It was easier for my partner to take parental leave.
- o. I believe that parental leave is primarily for women.
- p. I did not know that I was eligible for parental leave.
- q. I was not eligible for parental leave.
- r. I was not eligible for job protection during leave.
- s. Other, please specify:

30. When you returned to work after parental leave, did any of the following occur?
Please select all that apply.

- a. I got new and worse work tasks when I came back after leave.
- b. Some of my coworkers did not take my work seriously.
- c. I had worse chances for promotion.
- d. My employer thought that my taking parental leave made me more dedicated to my work.
- e. I was laid off after taking leave.
- f. I decided to pursue another employment opportunity.
- g. My employer was very accommodating to my new family responsibilities.
- h. I exited the labour market to care for my child.
- i. None of the above
- j. Other, please specify:

31. Which of the following factors would have made it possible for you to take parental leave or take a longer leave? Please indicate how effective these factors would be in facilitating your leave-taking.

Please select "Not Applicable" for the Other, please specify option if you do not want to specify any other factors.

If you would not take parental leave under any circumstances, please select "Very Effective" for the last option and "Not at all Effective" for the other options. (Not at all effective, somewhat effective, effective, very effective, not applicable, I do not know)

- a. A higher wage replacement rate for parental benefits under EI or QPIP
 - b. The option to take part-time parental leave
 - c. A financial subsidy or top-up from my employer
 - d. A more family-friendly work environment
 - e. More support from my direct supervisor
 - f. More support from my colleagues
 - g. More support from my partner
 - h. An exclusive, non-transferable paternity leave
 - i. Eligibility for parental benefits
 - j. Eligibility for job protection during leave
 - k. Other, please specify:
 - l. I would not take parental leave under any circumstances.
32. For how long would you have liked to take parental leave? One month is equal to approximately 4 weeks.
- a. # of weeks
33. Would you be interested in participating in future studies on this topic?
- a. Yes, please enter your email:
 - b. No

Message to respondents who were screened out:

Thank you for your interest in this study. Due to the specific study parameters, the survey questions apply only to **fathers** who:

- are currently aged 19 or over
- have at least one child who was born or adopted in 2010 or later
- lived in Canada at the time of the birth or adoption of their child
- worked in paid employment in the 12 months prior to the birth or adoption

If you know anyone who fits the study parameters, please feel free to pass along this survey link:

https://sfufas.eu.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_9XOT7svsoeoKVVz

Your help is greatly appreciated.

Message to all respondents:

You have reached the end of the survey. Thank you very much for your time and participation.

If you know anyone who fits the study parameters, please feel free to pass along this survey link:

https://sfufas.eu.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_9XOT7svsoeoKVVz

Your help is greatly appreciated.

Appendix B.

Canadian Online Parenting Forums

Name	Website
Babycenter	http://www.babycenter.ca/community
Canadian First Time Parents	https://www.facebook.com/groups/bccftp/
ParentTalk Forums	http://forums.parentscanada.com/
Red Flag Deals: Parenting	http://forums.redflagdeals.com/parenting-f78/
Smart Canucks: Canadian Parents	http://forum.smartcanucks.ca/canadian-parents/
The Meeting Place: Family Matters	http://themeetingplace.freeforums.org/family-matters-f15.html
Today's Parent	http://community.todayparent.com/
What to Expect	http://www.whattoexpect.com/forums/canadian-parents.html

Appendix C.

Canadian Father Bloggers

Name	Website
Canadad	http://www.canadad.net/
Canadian Dad	http://canadiandad.com/
Dad Camp	http://www.dad-camp.com/
Daddy Blogger	http://daddyblogger.com/
Enviro Dad	http://envirodad.com/
Fodder for Fathers	http://www.fodder4fathers.com/
Home made dad	http://homemadedad.ca/
I used to have hair	http://iusedtohavehair.com/
Like a Dad	http://likeadad.net/
Men Get Pregnant Too	http://mengetpregnanttoo.com/
Puzzling Posts	http://puzzlingposts.com/
Shooting the Breeze	http://kevinmartineau.ca/
The Urban Daddy	http://urbandaddy.wordpress.com/
Wormald Words	http://wormaldwords.com/

Appendix D.

Calculations for Exclusive, Non-transferable Paternity Benefits at 70% Wage Replacement Rate

To find the five-year increase in take-up by fathers who would not have claimed parental benefits before the implementation of QPIP, I used the 27.8% take-up rate for 2005 in Statistics Canada (2007) and the 2010 take-up rate of 77.6% from Statistics Canada (2013g). I deducted 27.8% from 100% to find that 72.2% of fathers did not claim parental benefits before QPIP. I deducted 27.8% from 77.6% to find that QPIP produced a 49.8% increase in the proportion of fathers who claimed parental benefits. I divided 49.8% by 72.2% to estimate the proportion of fathers who claimed benefits in 2010, who otherwise would not have claimed benefits without QPIP. This division produced the five-year increase of 69%.

To estimate fathers' use of parental benefits outside Quebec in five years under the new policy, I deducted 9.4% from 100% to find that 90.6% of fathers do not currently claim parental benefits. I multiplied 90.6% by 69% to find that the new policy would produce a 62.5% increase in the proportion of fathers who claim benefits. I added 62.5% to the current proportion of 9.4% to find that 71.9% of all Canadian fathers outside Quebec would claim parental benefits under the new policy in 5 years.

To calculate the cost of the policy option, I used the total number of biological parental benefits claimants according to CEIC (2013) and multiplied it by the proportion of claimants who were fathers ($187,090 \times (100\% - 86.3\%$ (proportion of female claimants))) to find the total number of male claimants (25,631). I divided 25,631 by the proportion of fathers who claimed benefits (9.4%) to find that there were 272,670 fathers that year. I deducted 25,631 from 272,670 to find the number of fathers who did not claim benefits (247,039). I multiplied 247,039 by 69% to find the number of additional fathers who would claim benefits under the new policy (170,457). I calculated the average amount of paternity benefits paid to each father in Quebec (\$175.2 million divided by roughly 60,000 fathers in 2012) to find that each father received roughly \$2,900. I multiplied 170,457 by \$2,900 to find the incremental amount of benefits paid to

fathers under the new policy would who would not have claimed benefits under the old policy (\$494.3 million).

I also calculated the cost of raising the wage replacement rate for maternity benefits. In 2012, 167,540 maternity claims received \$933.6 million (CEIC, 2013). I divided the benefit amount by 55% to find the total insurable income for the maternity claims (\$1.7 billion). I then multiplied the total insurable income by the new wage replacement rate (70%) to find the new total benefit amount (\$1.2 billion). I then deducted \$933.6 million from \$1.2 billion to find the incremental cost of the new policy (\$254.6 million). I added this cost to the fathers' cost (\$494.3 million) to find the total incremental cost of the new policy (\$748.9 million).

I calculated the difference per \$100 of insurable income that salaried workers in Quebec pay by dividing their maximum annual parental insurance premium (\$385.71) by the maximum insurable earnings ceiling (\$69,000). I multiplied this number by 100 to find that salaried workers pay \$0.56 per every \$100 of insurable income under QPIP. I then divided their maximum EI premium (\$743.58) by the maximum insurable earnings under EI (\$48,600), and multiplied this number by 100 to find that salaried workers pay \$1.53 in EI premiums per \$100 of insurable income. I added the QPIP premium to the EI premium to find that salaried workers in Quebec pay a total of \$2.09 per \$100 of insurable income for EI and QPIP. I deducted the amount that Canadian salaried workers pay (\$1.88) to find the difference between the two premium rates (\$0.21). EI premiums should increase by \$0.21 to cover the costs of the policy; however the 2014 federal budget has forecasted a surplus for 2015-2018, so a premium increase is not necessary at this time.

Appendix E.

Calculations for Part-time Benefits

To calculate the effectiveness of the policy, I took the proportion of fathers who indicated that the policy would be effective in facilitating their use of parental benefits, who had not claimed parental benefits, and who did not indicate that letting their partner to take the longest leave possible was important in the supplemental survey (18.9%). I multiplied this proportion by the same five-year increase as in the first option (27.5%) and found that 24.1% of fathers who would otherwise not claim parental benefits would claim benefits after five years. I added 24.1% to the current proportion of 9.4% to find that 33.5% of all Canadian fathers outside Quebec would claim parental benefits under the new policy in 5 years.

For the cost, I multiplied 24.1% by 247,039 (number of fathers who did not claim benefits in 2012) to find the number of additional fathers who would claim benefits under the new policy after five years (59,536). Assuming that fathers work 2½ days and claim benefits the rest of the time, fathers would receive half their average weekly benefit ($\$427 \times 0.5$) for 9.5 weeks (mean leave time based on GSS data). I multiplied this number ($\$2,028.25$) by the number of additional fathers to find the cost of the program after five years: \$120.8 million.

Appendix F.

Calculations for Employer Tax Credit

I made many assumptions due to the lack of available data about employers' willingness to pay for top-ups and their take-up rates for subsidies supporting work-life balance. I also generalised the distribution of top-ups among employers and workers for simplicity, even though Marshall (2010) shows that they are concentrated among well-paid, public sector workers in large organisations.

Approximately 5.2% of workers had access to top-ups in 2008 (885,000 divided by 17.1 million workers) (Marshall, 2010; Statistics Canada, 2014b). Assuming the same proportion of employers offered benefits, 3000 out of 58,000 employers offered supplemental benefits in 2008, which means that 55,000 employers did not. Of the employers who paid benefits to mothers in 2008, average payments to each mother were \$300 per week (Marshall, 2010). I assumed employers' willingness-to-pay for top-ups is linear and that the 58,000th employer would not be willing to pay anything for top-ups. I calculated the slope and y-intercept using two points ((300, 3000) and (0, 58,000)) and used $y = mx + b$, where $m = 0.00545$ and $b = 316.35$. Assuming average top-ups would be reduced by 25% to \$225 per week, I solved for x when $y = 225$ and found that 35,000 additional employers would be willing to offer top-ups. 35,000 divided by 55,000 (employers who would otherwise not offer top-ups) means that an additional 63.6% of employers would offer top-ups and the same proportion of employees would have access to employer benefits. In the supplemental survey, fathers who had access to top-ups were 1.5 times more likely to claim parental benefits as were other fathers. If an additional 63.6% of fathers had access to employer benefits, and benefits increased fathers' likelihood of claiming parental benefits by 1.5 times, 24,452 additional fathers would claim benefits in the first year ($1.5 \times 0.094 \times 0.636 \times 272,670$ total fathers in 2012), increasing to 31,176 in five years ($24,452 \times 1.275$ (five-year growth)). This growth constitutes a 12.6% increase in the proportion of fathers who would not otherwise claim parental benefits (31,176 divided by 247,039 fathers) bringing the total up to 22% of all fathers (9.4% plus 12.6%).

The incremental cost of the program includes the payments to the additional fathers who would otherwise not claim parental benefits, and the cost of the subsidy to employers who offer top-ups to both mothers and fathers. Assuming an additional 31,176 fathers claim benefits after five years, EI payments would increase by \$126.7 million ($31,176 \times \427×9.5 weeks). Using the average top-up that mothers received in 2008 (\$300) and the average benefit amount they received that year (\$350), I calculated the top-ups are on average 85.7% of benefit amounts ($\$300$ divided by $\$350$) (CEIC, 2012). Therefore, the fathers' employers would receive another \$27.1 million in tax credits ($\$126.7$ million \times 25% \times 85.7%). Both employers who always offered top-ups and ones who offer them under the new policy would also receive tax credits for mothers and fathers who would otherwise still claim parental benefits, totalling \$40.7 million ($(\2.2 billion in parental benefits + $\$933.6$ million in maternity benefits) \times 0.052 (proportion of employees who already had access to top-ups) \times 0.25 (tax credit). The total incremental cost of the program is \$194.5 million in the fifth year ($\$126.7$ million + $\$27.1$ million + $\$40.7$ million).