

# 10th International Community, Work and Family Conference

## Conference Programme

# Welcome to ICWF25

Dear participants,

Welcome to the 10<sup>th</sup> International Community, Work and Family Conference!

As organizers – and in close partnership with the *Community, Work and Family* journal and under the leadership of Rector Professor Angelika Epple and Dean Oliver Flügel-Martinsen – we are very pleased to welcome you to Bielefeld!

Nestled in Germany's heart and amidst Teutoburg Forest, Bielefeld is a destination for outdoor adventures, ancient and modern exploration. Its pivotal industrial role in **fabric manufacturing and food production can be explored through the conference's** social activities, such as a visit to the Dr. Oetker World. Today, Bielefeld University (**founded in 1969 during Germany's 'educational expansion'**) is an important academic hub, and we are looking forward to foster intellectual exchange over the four days of our conference.

The 10<sup>th</sup> ICWF will bring together our global multidisciplinary community of scholars and practitioners to contribute to debates on changing structures, policies and practices of community, work and family (CWF) and to stimulate further research in this regard. We are currently witnessing simultaneous and ongoing dynamics of change at the global level. Prime examples are the COVID-19 pandemic, digitalization, climate change, migration, and ongoing armed conflicts. Papers will focus on the meaning of these global change dynamics for CWF and their intersections. Moreover, presentations will address public policies, inequality structures, and organizations as filters of attenuation and acceleration of global change. Papers on agency in CWF shed light on individual strategies in managing the risks and opportunities involved in different dynamics of global change.

The conference will include the keynotes "Climate Change and Community, Work & Family" by Professor Tanja van der Lippe and "Finding a Safe Haven: The Role of Community, Work, and Family for Sexual and Gender Minority People" by Lisa de Vries.<sup>1</sup>

Welcome to all, and wishing you inspiring days and conversations!  
Anja-Kristin Abendroth, Sonja Blum, Mareike Reimann, and Antje Schwarz  
(Organizing Committee at Bielefeld University)

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that unfortunately the keynote by Professor Juliana Martínez-Franzoni cannot take place.

# ICWF25

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## Conference Schedules

## Schedule for Tuesday, 25.03.2025

	X-E1-201	X-E1-200
11:30-13:00	Registration PhD Workshop (main entrance building X)	
13:00-14:00	Welcome   Talk M. Grau-Grau & C. Engeman	
14:00-16:00	PhD Workshop 1: Gender, Work and Family Life	PhD Workshop 2: The Politics and Policies of Community, Work and Family
16:00-16:30	Coffee Break (X-E1-203)	
16:30-18:30	PhD Workshop 1: Gender, Work and Family Life	PhD Workshop 2: The Politics and Policies of Community, Work and Family
19:00	PhD Workshop Dinner at "Hofbräu am Alten Rathaus" (Niederwall 25, 33602 Bielefeld)	

## Schedule for Wednesday, 26.03.2025

	X-E1-200	X-E1-201	X-E1-202	X-E1-107
10:15-12:00	Social Activity (Historisches Museum Bielefeld)			
11:30-18:00	Registration (11:30-15:00 - main entrance building X / 15:00-18:00 - X-E1-203)			
13:00-14:30	Welcome   Keynote by Tanja van der Lippe "Climate Change and Community, Work & Family" (X-E0-001)			
14:30-15:00	Coffee Break (X-E1-203)			
15:00-16:30	1.1 Policy Contexts, Normative Policy Feedback, and Changing Gender Norms - Part I	1.2 New Work - New Inequalities?	1.3 Normative Expectations and Attitudes at <b>Fathers'</b> Workplaces	1.4 Parenting Leaves, Care Leaves and (In)Equalities - Part I (Fathers)
16:30-18:00	2.1 Policy Contexts, Normative Policy Feedback, and Changing Gender Norms - Part II	2.2 Working from Home, Gender and Family	2.3 Changing Norms on Fatherhood - Part I (Involvement)	2.4 Parenting Leaves, Care Leaves and (In)Equalities - Part II (Wage and Labour Market Impacts)
19:00-22:00	Conference Dinner at "Hechelei" (Ravensberger Park 6, 33602 Bielefeld)			

## Schedule for Thursday, 27.03.2025

	X-E1-200	X-E1-201	X-E1-202	X-E1-107
9:00-10:30	3.1 Changing Norms on Fatherhood - Part II (Practices, Policies and Norms)	3.2 Working from Home and Work-Related Outcomes	3.3 Parenting Leaves, Care Leaves and (In)Equalities - Part III	3.4 In-Between Family, Work and Company: Can Organizational Arrangements Help to Reconcile Family and Work Life?
10:30-11:00	Coffee Break (X-E1-203)			
11:00-12:30	Keynote by Lisa de Vries "Finding a Safe Haven: The Role of Community, Work, and Family for Sexual and Gender Minority People" (X-E0-001)			
12:30-13:30	Lunch Break (Canteen Building X)			
13:30-15:00	4.1 Alternative Work Models & Inclusion in the Future of Work	4.2 Flexibility, Working Time Pattern and COVID-19	4.3 Global and Comparative Perspectives on Work-Family Issues	4.4 Politics and Policymaking Processes of Community, Work and Family
15:00-15:30	Coffee Break (X-E1-203)			
15:30-17:00	5.1 Community, Care and Work		5.2 Social Inequalities, Infrastructure and Resilience	
15:30-20:00	Social Activities (Kunsthalle Bielefeld / Dr. Oetker World / Network Walk)			

## Schedule for Friday, 28.03.2025

	X-E1-200	X-E1-201	X-E1-202	X-E1-107
9:00-10:30	6.1 Elderly Life and Care	6.2 Gender Norms and the Division of Labour	6.3 Community, Work and Family	6.4 Organisations, Behaviour and Work Devotion
10:30-11:00	Coffee Break (X-E1-203)			
11:00-12:30	7.1 Policies and Outcomes of Community, Work and Family	7.2 Work, Family and the Division of (In)Formal Care	7.3 Flexible Working Arrangements, Boundary Management and Work-Life Balance	7.4 Entrepreneurship, Career and Work Trajectories
12:30-13:00	Farewell (X-E0-001)			

# General Information

## Arrival

The University is looking forward welcoming you at the campus. Sessions, talks and lunch will take place in the **building X (“Gebäude X”) Universitätsstraße 24, 33615 Bielefeld.**



(Copyright: Universität Bielefeld – photo by Nina Hinkers)

At the beginning of the conference, the registration desk is located right at the entrance of the **“Gebäude X” (level 0)**. You will also find a **cafeteria and the canteen (lunch)** as well as the room for the keynotes on level 0. All sessions and coffee breaks will take place on level 1. To reach level 1, you can use the stairs behind the registration desk or several available elevators (see map X-Gebäude).

## By train

You can reach Bielefeld by train from various directions. From Bielefeld main station you can reach the university by tram **line 4** in the **direction of “Lohmannshof”** in about 10 minutes.

It is best to get off at the ‘Universität/Zentrum’ stop. From there, follow the signs in the direction of Universität/Gebäude X. You can easily recognise the X-building by the green elements on the outer facade.



(Copyright: Universität Bielefeld)

## By car

By car, you can reach the university from the city centre in about 15-20 minutes. If you are coming from outside, Bielefeld is well connected to the A33 and A2 motorways.

From the north: Motorway A2: Exit Bi-Ost, Detmolder Str. direction Zentrum (6 km, approx. 10 min). Way via Kreuzstr., Oberntorwall, Stapenhorststr., Kurt-Schumacher-Str. (is signposted).

From the south: Motorway A2: At the Bielefeld junction, take the A33 towards Bi-Zentrum, exit at Bi-Zentrum, follow the signs to the city centre on Ostwestfalendamm (B61), exit at Universität, follow Stapenhorststr., Kurt-Schumacher-Str. (is signposted).

There is plenty of free parking available on campus.

## Registration

The registration desk is located right at the **main entrance of the X-building** under the **green stairs (you won't miss them)** on **Tuesday (PhD workshop)** and on **Wednesday** at the beginning of the main conference. After that, registration will be possible in the coffee break room on level 1 (X-E1-203).

**Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>:** Registration open from 11:30 to 13:00

**Wednesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>:** Registration open from 11:30 to 15:00 (main entrance), from 15:00 to 18:00 (coffee break room)

**Thursday, March 27<sup>th</sup>:** Registration open from 9:00 to 17:00 (coffee break room)

## Lunch and Dinner

### Coffee Breaks

Coffee breaks will take place in X-E1-203 on level 1.

### Lunch

Lunch on Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> will take place in the main canteen on level 0 (turn left from the main entrance). You will get a voucher when you register for the conference. The voucher is valid for all available food options (salad, vegetarian and vegan options, meat, desserts etc.). Drinks are self-pay.

### Dinner

The conference dinner on Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> will take place at **“Hechelei” (Ravensberger Park 6, 33602 Bielefeld)**.

There will be an opportunity to join an accompanied group travelling to the dinner by tram starting at the university.



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## Social Activities

Wednesday, 26 March 2025

### Historisches Museum Bielefeld *(In German only!)*

The Historisches Museum Bielefeld preserves, researches and shares the cultural heritage of Bielefeld and the East Westphalia-Lippe region. **We will go on a tour exploring “Women between Gainful Employment and Housework”.** *(Prior registration required)*

When: **10.15 (NEW)**

Where: Main Entrance Historisches Museum, Ravensberger Park 2, 33607 Bielefeld

#### Meeting point at the University:

No meeting at the University

Thursday, 27 March 2025

### Kunsthalle Bielefeld

Built by the great American architect Philip Johnson, the Kunsthalle Bielefeld is the first testimony to his architecture in Europe. The collection focuses on German Expressionism, international sculpture and international contemporary art. *(Prior registration required)*

When: 16.00-18.00

Where: Main Entrance Kunsthalle Bielefeld, Artur-Ladebeck-Straße 5, 33602 Bielefeld

#### Meeting point at the University:

15.00 (Building X, Entrance hall by the green staircase)

### Dr. Oetker World

In 2005, Dr. Oetker Welt was established in the historic pudding powder tower on the company's premises in Bielefeld. During our visit, we will explore the interactive museum where you can delve into the history of the international brand. *(Prior registration required)*

When: 17.00-19.45

Where: Main Entrance Dr. Oetker World, Lutterstraße 14, 33617 Bielefeld

#### Meeting point at the University:

16.00 (Building X, Entrance hall by the green staircase)

## Network Walk

*Please note: You are welcome to join!*

If the weather permits, we will be offering a networking walk through the scenic Teutoburg Forest. **It's a great opportunity to connect with fellow attendees in a relaxed, natural setting.** *(You are welcome to join us at short notice)*

When: 17.15-19.00

Where: Start at the University

### **Meeting point at the University:**

17.15 (Building X, Entrance hall by the green staircase)

## Baby Changing, Breastfeeding and Quiet Rooms

The following rooms have been set up in building X for breastfeeding and supervising. They are freely accessible and can be locked from the inside.

Rooms in Building X:

- X-E0-108
- X-E1-113



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Sessions and Keynotes

Tuesday, 25 March 2025

PhD Workshop

## PhD Workshop 1: Gender, Work and Family Life

Date/time: 25.03.2025 14:00 - 16:00, 16:30 - 18:30

Room: X-E1-201

**Discussant** T. van der Lippe

**Chair** A. Abendroth, A. Schwarz

### Contributions

339 Career consequences of using policies designed for better work-family reconciliation

A. Kasperska, A. Matysiak, E. Cukrowska-Torzewska, G. Kaufman

371 Flexible Working and Gender Inequalities in Paid Work: The Role of Norms across European Countries

O. Leshchenko

327 Framing work-life balance: a content analysis of open-ended responses from recent parents

P. Bellón Jiménez

392 Can Workplace Flexibility Promote Gender Equality at Home?

M. Chae

267 Context Matters: The Moderating Effects of Culture on Employee Well-Being Among Caregivers and Across Genders in a Greedy, Male-Dominated Organization

M. Mejicano, L. Duxbury

330 Religion, Family, and Work: An Intersectional Longitudinal Study of Muslim Mothers in South Africa

F. Farista, A. Jaga

## PhD Workshop 2: The Politics and Policies of Community, Work and Family

Date/time: 25.03.2025 14:00 - 16:00, 16:30 - 18:30  
Room: X-E1-200

Discussant C. Engeman

Chair S. Blum, M. Reimann

### Contributions

235 **The Impact of Childcare Expansion: Cross-national Evidence on Mothers' Labour Market Outcomes across Social Classes**

A. Karmann

367 **The Politics of Couples' Taxation: Explaining the Transition to Individual Taxation in OECD Countries**

T. Fehrenbach

270 **Access thresholds and utilization patterns in welfare: Experiences of Ukrainian refugee women in Germany**

E. Dobrovolski

344 **The Grandparent's Century: Exploring Grandparents' Agency in the Childcare within Chinese Urban Dual-Earner Families**

Y. Wang

290 **Following British fathers' own wellbeing through their parental leave journeys**

J. Hobbs

375 **Gender Relations and Zero-Sum Thinking Implications for Online Misogyny in China**

Y. Liu

Sessions and Keynotes  
Wednesday, 26 March 2025

## Keynote "Climate Change and Community, Work & Family"

Date/time: 26.03.2025 13:00 - 14:30

Room: X-E0-001



(Copyright: Tanja van der Lippe)

Keynote

Speaker: Tanja van der Lippe

## 1.1: Policy Contexts, Normative Policy Feedback, and Changing Gender Norms - Part I (Parenthood and Care)

Date/time: 26.03.2025 15:00 - 16:30

Room: X-E1-200

Chair M. Philipp, E. Peters

### Contributions

261 **Attitudinal change across the transition to parenthood in Eastern European and Western gender regimes**

M. Philipp, P. Schober

350 **Managing multiple work and life roles: the case of Canadian and Brazilian Professors**

A. Leite, L. Duxbury, D. da Cunha Lemos, M. Barreto Moraes

377 **“Blue Zones” for Women in Leadership: Community, Work, and Family Factors affecting gender parity**

P. Sinzig

405 **“They have their own prejudice that it’s not possible to have a work-life balance” The issue of work-life balance as an obstacle in women’s recruitment**

B. Nagy

## 1.2: New Work - New Inequalities? The Ambivalent Effects of Digital Work on Job Quality, Work-Life Balance and Employee Well-Being

Date/time: 26.03.2025 15:00 - 16:30

Room: X-E1-201

Chair S. Meyer, A. Tisch, I. Entgelmeier

### Contributions

- 50 **“Exploring Empowering and Exploitative Narratives Regarding Digital Sex Work in Germany: The Case of OnlyFans Creators”**

S. Schuchmann

- 317 **Performing the digital ideal worker: The relationship between flexibility stigma, ideal worker culture and digital presenteeism**

H. Chung, S. Yuan

- 359 **Work-Life Balance Trends on Indeed.com: Insights from Keyword Analysis**

S. Geldres-Weiss, K. Kuschel

- 366 **Self-determination as a resource in digital work: uncovering group-specific differences when Working From Home**

A. Mergener, M. Trübner

### 1.3: Normative Expectations and Attitudes at Fathers' Workplaces

Date/time: 26.03.2025 15:00 - 16:30

Room: X-E1-202

Chair E. Schmidt, A. Baierl, B. Beham

#### Contributions

292 **Ideal worker norm, gender egalitarianism, and Swiss men's part-time work. The role of occupational contexts**

J. Müller, Y. Cha

300 **Managerial responses to fathers' working time requests - A Vignette study among Austrian managers**

B. Beham, E. Schmidt, A. Baierl

374 **Parental leave and the norms on fatherhood in organizations – paving the way towards participation or stuck with the male breadwinner norm? - Abstract**

S. Haarmann, A. Kümmerling, T. Rinke

385 **Untangling the characteristics of men who dare to break the "ideal worker" norm**

S. Tanquerel, M. Grau-Grau

## 1.4: Parenting Leaves, Care Leaves and (In)Equalities - Part I (Fathers)

Date/time: 26.03.2025 15:00 - 16:30  
Room: X-E1-107

Chair J. Lammi-Taskula, I. Dobrotić

### Contributions

- 244 Fathers as caring parents in the early phase of parenthood through the lens of hybrid masculinities. A praxeological approach.  
G. Maurer
- 260 Parental leave and gender equality: Online criticism and justification of paternity leave in Austria  
M. Schuster
- 275 **Impact of information on father's parental leave use - Evidence from a randomized information experiment**  
M. Saarikallio-Torp, S. Jauhiainen, A. Miettinen, E. Sihvonen
- 289 **A qualitative exploration of fathers' wellbeing through their parental leave journeys**  
J. Hobbs

## 2.1: Policy Contexts, Normative Policy Feedback, and Changing Gender Norms - Part II (Work and Family)

Date/time: 26.03.2025 16:45 - 18:15  
Room: X-E1-200

Chair M. Philipp, E. Peters

### Contributions

- 259 The possibilities of adapting a capability perspective to explore how gender norms, as (re-)constituted by UK's Shared Parental Leave policy, shape parents' care capabilities during their child's first year  
C. Matysova
- 271 Finnish home care leave policies in light of EU level developments  
M. Tammelin, C. Niemistö
- 316 Unpacking Germany's Slow Uptake of Day Care: The Role of Cultural Legacies and Regional Differences for Daycare and Maternal Employment Attitudes  
E. Peters, M. Philipp
- 382 Engaging South African low-income fathers to lighten the motherload  
A. Jaga, F. Ross, C. Duffy, Y. Zembe, W. Zembe, S. Chapman, J. Battersby, W. Shen

## 2.2: Working from Home, Gender and Family

Date/time: 26.03.2025 16:45 - 18:15

Room: X-E1-201

Chair I. Laß, A. Adams

### Contributions

- 287     **The rise of working from home in Austria: New or old inequalities?**  
B. Riederer, C. Berghammer, G. Göttl
- 343     **Partners' Work-From-Home and Fertility Intentions among UK Couples**  
S. Yuan
- 363     **Working from Home and Parental Childcare Division: Evidence from Two Years Covid-19 Pandemic**  
D. Müller
- 403     **Long-term implications of remote work for families with children in the Polish context. A qualitative longitudinal study**  
P. Binder

## 2.3: Changing Norms on Fatherhood - Part I (Involvement)

Date/time: 26.03.2025 16:45 - 18:15

Room: X-E1-202

**Chair** M. Schuster, G. Mauerer, S. Dörfler-Bolt

### Contributions

258 **Fathers adopting new practices? Changes in the time use of Finnish fathers in childcare activities**

A. Miettinen, J. Närvi, J. Lammi-Taskula

264 **Differential Paternal Involvement and Sibling Relationship Quality**

T. Eichhorn

296 **On emotionally involved fathers and family breadwinners – being a dad and fatherhood in transition**

S. Jäde

384 **Towards involved fatherhood? Shifting Polish fathers' attitudes to parental leave amidst legislative changes to their leave entitlements**

A. Kurowska, K. Suwada

## 2.4: Parenting Leaves, Care Leaves and (In)Equalities - Part II (Wage and Labour Market Impacts)

Date/time: 26.03.2025 16:45 - 18:15

Room: X-E1-107

Chair J. Lammi-Taskula, I. Dobrotić

### Contributions

- 245 Parental leave of mothers and fathers: patterns, motives and labour market effects among married couples in Germany  
A. Bächmann, C. Frodermann, A. Filser
- 304 The critical juncture of childbirth: applying a life course lens to disentangle the impact of leave policy and class on parental employment trajectories  
M. Reichert, T. Emery, A. Bartova
- 342 Take it or leave it: The relationships between the length of parental leave and ideal worker and mother norms in Germany and Israel  
A. Stertz, R. Waismel-Manor
- 381 Economic Rewards for Non-Traditional Roles: The Wage Impact of Fatherhood in Spain  
I. Lapuerta, M. González, M. Domínguez-Folgueras

Sessions and Keynotes  
Thursday, 27 March 2025

### 3.1: Changing Norms on Fatherhood - Part II (Practices, Policies and Norms)

Date/time: 27.03.2025 09:00 - 10:30

Room: X-E1-200

**Chair** M. Schuster, G. Mauerer, S. Dörfler-Bolt

#### Contributions

- 266 **Changes in fatherhood practices - a pilot study of two generations of Polish fathers**

D. Majka-Rostek, R. Florkowski, E. Banaszak

- 269 **Comparing three Generations of Fathers in Poland and Germany: Continuity and Change in the Practices of Fatherhood**

A. Buschmeyer, K. Lüring, C. Rehlinger, C. Zerle-Elsäßer, A. Bielewska, P. Czajkowski

- 294 **The construction of blended caring masculinity and struggles of gender norm bias in a traditional society**

G. Júlia

- 313 **Work-Life Balance policies for fathers and their impact on partner´s inequality in child care**

G. Meil

## 3.2: Working from Home and Work-Related Outcomes

Date/time: 27.03.2025 09:00 - 10:30

Room: X-E1-201

**Chair** I. Laß, A. Adams

### Contributions

- 319 Flexibility stigma across 15 European countries : The role of national contexts shaping stigmatised views against homeworkers

H. Chung

- 356 Workplace policies and the flexibility stigma of home-based workers in Germany and the UK: Evidence from vignette studies

Y. Lott, H. Chung, S. Wang

- 373 Telework realities: Investigating team interaction and job satisfaction

A. Adams, A. Schwarz, I. Laß

- 389 Where is the I in team? Examining the perceived inclusion of the self in working groups in flexible working arrangements in Europe.

A. Schwarz

### 3.3: Parenting Leaves, Care Leaves and (In)Equalities - Part III: (Knowledge on/use of parental leave, Sharing parental leave)

Date/time: 27.03.2025 09:00 - 10:30

Room: X-E1-202

Chair J. Lammi-Taskula, I. Dobrotić

#### Contributions

- 249 **Shared leave, shared nights? A qualitative study on Finnish, British and Spanish parents' accounts of sharing the parental leave and night-time care**

I. Kuusiahio, P. Eerola, K. Twamley, P. Romero-Balsas

- 252 **Sustaining or disrupting gendered family practices? Examining the impacts of different parental leave patterns**

K. Twamley

- 302 **Reasons for Limited Uptake of Paid Parental Leave in Shanghai, China**

Z. Wang

- 303 **Became parent abroad: Implications of being migrant in the parenting identity and the use of parental leave.**

P. Romero-Balsas, G. Meil

### 3.4: In-Between Family, Work and Company: Can Organizational Arrangements Help to Reconcile Family and Work Life? Analyses Based on Linked Employer-Employee Data

Date/time: 27.03.2025 09:00 - 10:30  
Room: X-E1-107

Chair A. Bächmann, D. Müller, K. Ruf

#### Contributions

- 247 Spoilt for choice? The collective bargaining choice between time and money  
A. Abendroth, A. Bächmann, A. Mellies, K. Ruf
- 285 Organisational Culture and Social Inequalities in Access to Parenting-Related Leaves in Academia: A Case Study Approach  
M. Uzunalioglu, K. Twamley, A. Koslowski, M. O'Brien
- 291 **Organizational family-friendly arrangements and fathers' employment interruptions after childbirth**  
C. Frodermann, A. Seidlitz, A. Bächmann
- 328 **Empirical evidence from a conjoint experiment: How do resources to balance work and family affect mothers' employment intentions?**  
P. Bellón Jiménez

## Keynote "Finding a Safe Haven: The Role of Community, Work, and Family for Sexual and Gender Minority People"

Date/time: 27.03.2025 11:00 - 12:30  
Room: X-E0-001



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Keynote

Speaker: Lisa de Vries

## 4.1: Alternative Work Models & Inclusion in the Future of Work

Date/time: 27.03.2025 13:30 - 15:00

Room: X-E1-200

**Chair** K. Kuschel

### Contributions

- 305 **Multitasking care: Gender differences and historical changes in time use for simultaneous care activities**  
N. Freymuth, N. Klünder
- 227 **The Effects of Reduced Working Hours on the Daily Lifestyle of Employees and their Social Environment with the example of the 4-day week – A qualitative study**  
C. Adam, M. Vilser, S. Kaminski, D. Frey
- 293 **Mumpreneurs in Social Media: Professionalizing Motherhood and Homemaking**  
K. Kuschel, R. Ruiz-Martínez, S. Idrovo Carlier, R. Powosino
- 334 **Childcare Support Networks: Alleviating Adverse Effects of Work-Time Demands on Work-to-Family Conflict**  
A. Matysiak, A. Kurowska, A. Pavelea

## 4.2: Flexibility, Working Time Pattern and COVID-19

Date/time: 27.03.2025 13:30 - 15:00

Room: X-E1-201

**Chair** I. Laß, A. Adams

### Contributions

- 256    **Working time flexibility and the new logics of the gender pay gap**  
C. Magnusson, A. Grönlund
- 338    **How Do Working Time Patterns Shape the Division of Domestic Work Among Dual-Earner Couples? The Role of Household Income**  
S. Jung
- 397    **How Worker Power and Time-related Constraint Shape Schedule Flexibility**  
M. Chae
- 320    **The pandemic as equaliser or divider? Working from home before and during the Covid-19-Pandemic**  
S. Altschul, A. Bächmann, C. Frodermann, S. Wolter

## 4.3: Global and Comparative Perspectives on Work-Family Issues

Date/time: 27.03.2025 13:30 - 15:00

Room: X-E1-202

**Chair** B. Zeyer-Gliozzo

### Contributions

- 312 **Amplifying marginalised voices: The intersectional experiences of black child-free women in the South African workplace**

N. Acheampong, F. Farista

- 321 **Mothers not choosing all-day childcare in urban area in Japan : Individual normative factors or working conditions?**

A. Yamada

- 365 **Separation and Unemployment Across the Life History of Older European Men in Welfare Context**

M. Brandt, B. Zeyer-Gliozzo

- 395 **The COVID-19 pandemic and Fathers' Care Practices in South Africa and the United Kingdom**

S. Haffeejee, K. Twamley

## 4.4: Politics and Policymaking Processes of Community, Work and Family

Date/time: 27.03.2025 13:30 - 15:00  
Room: X-E1-107

Chair A. Blome

### Contributions

- 246 **Two decades of research on ‘family policy change’: A qualitative systematic review**  
  
S. Blum, I. Dobrotić
- 357 **Work-Life Balance for All Parents? Assessing the EU Work-Life Balance Agenda Inclusiveness, Flexibility and Complementarity**  
  
I. Dobrotić, M. Uzunalioglu
- 398 **Changing Gender Attitudes and Childcare Policy Reforms in the Federal States of Germany**  
  
A. Blome, K. Mueller

## 5.1: Community, Care and Work

Date/time: 27.03.2025 15:30 - 17:00

Room: X-E1-200

Chair V. Yadira, O. Rea

### Contributions

- 251 **Work-life balance for who? An exploration of the role of Pastors' wives based on Christian blogs in the South American Protestant church Communities.**

V. Orbea Rea

- 386 **The Post-pandemic Effects on Migrant Women's Transnational Care Arrangements. Analyzing the interplay of structural constraints and coping strategies in local contexts.**

S. Willers

- 541 **Parents and partners as enablers of work in the creative industries**

W. Been, E. Loots, Y. Wijngaarden

## 5.2: Social Inequalities, Infrastructure and Resilience

Date/time: 27.03.2025 15:30 - 17:00

Room: X-E1-202

Chair A. Grönlund

### Contributions

- 283 The traps and trade-offs of small-town life. Geographic residence, gender wage gaps and work-family deliberations

A. Grönlund, I. Öun

- 378 **‘Digital Caregiving’ in the Era of Digitalised Public Services: A New Form of Gendered Domestic Labour?**

S. Bailey, G. Netto, F. Islam, A. Kukulska-Hulme, E. FitzGerald

- 391 Possibilities of promoting digital inclusion in civil society organizations: presentation of the results of the project "With technology and education we can do everything"

L. Rašić, H. Vusić

Sessions and Keynotes  
Friday, 28 March 2025

## 6.1: Elderly Life and Care

Date/time: 28.03.2025 09:00 - 10:30

Room: X-E1-200

**Chair** E. Verbakel

### Contributions

299 Does relationship satisfaction suffer when one partner needs to care for the other?

E. Verbakel

370 Dynamics of Later-Life Caregiving and Health. Insights From Biomarker Data and Cognitive Tests

A. Bertogg, P. Präg, K. Raiber

400 Gender differences or inequalities? Emotional work, families and social networks in the face of demographic ageing

T. Nazio, L. Cataldi

## 6.2: Gender Norms and the Division of Labour

Date/time: 28.03.2025 09:00 - 10:30

Room: X-E1-201

Chair I. Kuusiahho

### Contributions

276 **Night-time care in Finnish families with young children**

E. Grigorjew, P. Eerola, M. Böök

362 **Gender Conformity in the Division of Labor and Stress at Midlife**

K. Begall, P. Präg

401 **Money, In-Laws, and Children: Negotiating Gendered Expectations in the Transition to Marriage in South Korea**

Y. Cho, Y. Kim

250 **Finnish first-time parents' emotional and practical external support and psychological distress during the COVID-19 pandemic – a longitudinal study**

I. Kuusiahho, P. Eerola, A. Rönkä, M. Böök, S. Moilanen, K. Malinen, L. Leach

## 6.3: Community, Work and Family

Date/time: 28.03.2025 09:00 - 10:30

Room: X-E1-202

Chair D. Ojo

### Contributions

284 **Between family love and formalities** On intra-family negotiations of mixed-status families in Jordan

B. Kawalla

295 **Embracing Contextual Plurality: The Mental Well-being Experiences of Black Low-income Women and Mothers during the COVID-19 Pandemic in South Africa**

I. Lentsoe, A. Jaga

376 **Liminality of Forced Displacement: Syrian Refugee and Immigrant Lives in the US**

A. Ferris

393 **Impact of Family Reunification Policies on Academic Migrants' Quality of Life: A Case Study of African Scholars in Germany**

D. Ojo

## 6.4: Organisations, Behaviour and Work Devotion

Date/time: 28.03.2025 09:00 - 10:30

Room: X-E1-107

**Chair** B. Stumbitz

### Contributions

- 402 **Managing the Transition to Parenthood in Small and Medium-Sized Workplaces  
– Pathways to Good Practice**

B. Stumbitz, H. Norman, E. Banister, C. Santos, A. Burnett, B. Chabe-Ferret

- 413 **Life puzzling: moving beyond work-life balance**

J. Languilaire, L. den Dulk

- 447 **The association between work-family conflict and eating behavior in men and  
women: Can coworker encouragement of healthy eating buffer the effect?**

L. Maciejewski, A. van der Put, T. Van der Lippe

- 543 **Adversity in life puzzling for gay people**

J. Languilaire

## 7.1: Policies and Outcomes of Community, Work and Family

Date/time: 28.03.2025 11:00 - 12:30

Room: X-E1-200

Chair C. Zabel

### Contributions

- 311 **Lone mothers' welfare exits via employment: The role of stepping-stone jobs and jobcentre counselling**

Z. Kasrin, M. Kreyenfeld, C. Zabel

- 314 **Support for women belonging to "sandwich generation" in reconciling work with providing care over dependent persons in family.**

H. Kelm

- 332 **Impact of Spousal Social Capital on Career Advancement**

K. Brett, S. Bordia

- 360 **Modernizing Family Policies: How Gender-Equal Are Parenting Leave Provisions?**

S. Burman

## 7.2: Work, Family and the Division of (In)Formal Care

Date/time: 28.03.2025 11:00 - 12:30

Room: X-E1-201

Chair K. Begall

### Contributions

- 358      **Unpaid care over the lifecourse Does informal care in mid-life depend on care motivations and work-family patterns earlier in life?**  
  
K. Begall, E. Verbakel
- 364      **Cumulative employment outcomes of informal care and childcare over the life-course**  
  
A. Güneyli, K. Begall, E. Verbakel
- 272      **Maternal Work Trajectories and Childcare Histories: An In-Depth Exploration of the Interplay**  
  
S. Schmid, H. Steinberg
- 274      **Families between choice, compromise and sacrifice: conceptual reflections on the interplay between social policy, family wellbeing and resilience.**  
  
I. Naumann

## 7.3: Flexible Working Arrangements, Boundary Management and Work-Life Balance

Date/time: 28.03.2025 11:00 - 12:30  
Room: X-E1-202

Chair I. Entgelmeier

### Contributions

- 255 The transition into informal caregiving, family-to-work conflict and discrepancy between desired and actual working hours: A difference-in-differences approach with propensity score matching  
C. Kunz, A. Bertogg
- 297 Autonomy on days working from home and work-life integration A gender and parental perspective  
I. Entgelmeier
- 306 Investigating the effects of work intensification, illegitimate tasks and psychological detachment from work on work-family conflict  
C. Andrade, P. Neves
- 412 Work location, transitions and work-life balance: a daily diary study  
L. den Dulk, S. Metselaar, J. van der Meer

## 7.4: Entrepreneurship, Career and Work Trajectories

Date/time: 28.03.2025 11:00 - 12:30

Room: X-E1-107

Chair A. van der Put

### Contributions

310 It is a free decision? career and motherhood, the pressures of the environment

M. Bosch, M. Braun

354 Family Wealth and Entrepreneurial Gender Gaps: Intersectional Inequality in an Era of Global Transformations

A. Althaber

379 How people get to the top? A time- and status-sensitive model to explain (gender) inequalities in career trajectories

P. Sinzig, H. Hofmeister

448 When would workers want more hours? A vignette experiment exploring part-time worker's intentions to work more

A. van der Put, T. Van der Lippe

## Book of Abstracts

## PhD Workshop 1: Gender, Work and Family Life

### *Career consequences of using policies designed for better work-family reconciliation*

A. Matysiak, A. Kasperska, E. Cukrowska-Torzewska, G. Kaufman

#### Description of the research project

The aim of this project is to study the impact of using the work-family reconciliation measures, introduced by the EU Work-Life Balance Directive, **on workers' evaluation from a gender perspective**. The EU Work-Life Balance Directive was introduced in Poland in May 2023 and granted fathers the right to nine weeks of non-transferable parental leave. It has also granted parents the right to request flexible work arrangements (FWA) until the child is 12 years old. In this project, we evaluate how the use of these two types of measures affects **workers' hiring and pay opportunities**. We also examine how managers perceive workers who use these **reconciliation measures and particularly how they evaluate workers' commitment to work and reliability**. We adopt a gender perspective, expecting that the use of parental leaves and FWA may affect mothers' and fathers' work careers differently due to deeply rooted expectations toward men's and women's social roles. Our study is situated in Poland where research on the impact of parental leave use or FWA use on workers' careers has been rare to date. Furthermore, the novelty of the project lies in its experimental design, which **allows us to evaluate the causal effects of the use of parental leaves and FWA on workers' careers**.

#### Literature review

Although parental leaves present an advantageous prospect for fathers to enhance their involvement in family life, their use has been notably low. In 2021 in Poland, prior to the introduction of the EU directive, women used 97% of all benefit days paid for by the Social Insurance Institution (ZUS) for maternity, paternity and parental leave (Kurowska et al., 2022). Even though evidence suggests that the use of paternity leave (a two-week father-exclusive leave) has been increasing in recent years in Poland, only a small proportion of eligible fathers take it (Kurowska, 2019; Zajkowska, 2019). The uptake of parental leaves by fathers has displayed variation across different EU nations, prompting an exploration of potential determinants influencing their parental leave, such as cultural norms and labour market consequences for those who choose to take leave (Castro-Garcia & Pazos-Moran, 2015).

Existing literature suggests that taking parental leave can carry certain career penalties which go beyond career consequences resulting from human capital depreciation. For example, individuals taking parental leave often encounter perceptions of reduced agency and commitment to the workplace, which can diminish their prospects for career advancement (Petts et al., 2022; Coltrane et al., 2013; Rudman & Mescher, 2013). Career penalties may also result from deviating from the gender role norms with prescriptive and **descriptive stereotypes that women's primary role is at home and men's at work (Cha, 2010)**. Notably, the stigmatisation of men taking parental leave may be more pronounced than that for women, while women who prioritise their careers over domestic roles also face heightened negative evaluations (Haines & Stroessner, 2019; Williams et al., 2016; Coleman & Franiuk, 2011; Coltrane et al., 2013). To date, there was little research, however, which would allow for assessing the career consequences of parental leave use among men in comparison to women. Existing research was largely based on observational data and concentrated on Nordic countries, which are predecessors of this policy in Europe and are characterised by high gender equality (Rege & Solli, 2013; Evertsson, 2016). These findings may thus be not applicable to other social contexts and may be biased by unobservable characteristics of men who make use of parental leaves (e.g. men in less competitive jobs with flat career ladders where career breaks are related to lower career penalties). Few studies adopted an experimental design and investigated perceptions of parents who made use of parental leave (Coleman & Franiuk, 2011; Petts et al., 2022). These studies were, in turn, limited to the US context and their samples covered students or the general adult population instead of employers, which potentially compromises external validity (Hainmueller et al., 2015).

The following study is conducted in Poland, a country characterised by relatively traditional gender role attitudes, where women continue to bear a greater share of childcare **responsibilities than men (Matysiak & Węziak-Białowolska, 2016; European Commission, 2015)**. Akin to many post-Soviet countries, Poland has long ago endorsed a dual-earner family model (Zajkowska, 2019). However, caregiving responsibilities have predominantly remained within the private sphere and are primarily undertaken by women, resulting in a significant double burden experienced by many women (Magda et al., 2023; Martín-García & Solera, 2022; Zajkowska, 2019). Moreover, Poland demonstrates a strong work-centrality culture, with its workforce among the longest working hours in the EU and having a particularly poor work-life balance (OECD, 2023; OECD, 2022). It is thus highly likely that Poland displays strong career penalties for requesting parental leave or FWA and that these penalties are particularly strong for fathers.

The research questions are

**RQ1:** How does parental leave uptake and its length impact the hiring and pay opportunities of fathers and mothers as well as their commitment and reliability evaluation? Are men and women taking the same length of parental leave perceived differently by employers?

**RQ2:** Do managers evaluate workers who make use of parental leave entitlements more harshly than otherwise identical workers who experienced similarly long career breaks for other reasons?

**RQ3:** How do employers' evaluations of workers who make use of parental leaves compare with evaluations of workers who make use of FWA? Which of the two work-family reconciliation measures – parental leave or FWA – has a greater impact on the hiring and pay opportunities of workers?

**RQ4:** How do the hiring and pay opportunities of workers who request parental leave / FWA differ depending on the manager's and firm's characteristics?

## Data and methods

We use experimental research methods, which are perfect for determining deeply rooted attitudes and gender-related beliefs and allow for the identification of the causal effect (Auspurg & Hinz, 2014). We conduct an experiment using a factorial survey (i.e. paired conjoint with forced answer). The respondents in our experiment are managers with supervisory responsibilities. We chose managers because they are the principal decision-makers when it comes to hiring and pay at work. The participants are randomly assigned a set of workers' profiles which include information on workers' gender, work experience, skills, performance, use of home-based work (office / hybrid work / fully homebased work), and experience of career breaks due to parental leave (for fathers: 0 / 2 / 6 months and for mothers: 6 /

12 months) or other reasons. All of the workers' characteristics are manipulated and fully randomised (i.e. the order in which they appear in the survey and their levels will be set randomly). The respondents choose which worker (out of two) they would like to hire and who deserves higher pay as well as which one they consider to be more committed, and reliable. The study incorporates a between-subject design as the participants will evaluate 3 pairs of workers' profiles. The data, which will be representative in terms of the employer's gender and the company's size, sector and region, and is being collected online by an external research company.

## Findings

The data collection for this project is ongoing and no results can be presented at this stage. By the time of the conference, the data will have been collected, analysed and the first draft of the article will be prepared.

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## *Flexible Working and Gender Inequalities in Paid Work: The Role of Norms across European Countries*

*O. Leshchenko*

Flexible working arrangements in terms of location and scheduling of work aim to provide workers with an opportunity to balance work and private domains of life. Nonetheless, there is evidence that flexible working can lead to the expansion of paid labor rather than life beyond work, i.e., a phenomenon named the flexibility paradox (Chung, 2022). It occurs due to flexible working increasing the interference between work and life roles by blurring the boundaries between the domains of life, i.e., increasing work-life conflict (Clark, 2000). This pattern depends on gender identification, with women increasing unpaid work contributions and men raising their paid working hours (Chung & Booker, 2023; Lott & Chung, 2016). These gender differences might not be universal across different contexts, as some small-N studies argue this might be due to individuals' work or family devotion (Lott, 2023) and attitudes towards gender roles (Leshchenko & Chung, 2023). This study goes beyond single-country analysis and examines how contextual gender, work, and flexibility stigma norms moderate the relationship between flexible working arrangements and paid working hours for men and women. It uses individual-level data from the European Social Survey and aggregated country-level data from the European Values Study, World Values Survey, and Eurobarometer on work, gender, and flexibility norms, applying multilevel regression analysis. The preliminary results indicate that individuals work more hours in countries with higher work centrality norms without access to flexible work. Men consistently work more hours across contexts and arrangements. Still, women work as many hours as men in countries with a higher work

centrality and more traditional gender norms if they have inflexible work arrangements or complete time autonomy.

Regarding flexibility stigma, those with the freedom to decide on working time work more hours in countries with a higher flexibility stigma. Nonetheless, this association does not vary by gender identification. It indicates that **contextual norms intensify not only men's work contribution, as assumed earlier, but also women's. It is particularly alarming given that the division of labor at home largely remains on the shoulders of women.**

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## *Framing work-life balance: a content analysis of open-ended responses from recent parents*

*P. M. Bellón Jiménez*

### Introduction

Work-life balance policies may have certain resistances or inefficiencies that may cause them to not fully achieve their objectives. This can be attributed to two broad categories: the macro level, which includes political, managerial, and organizational factors (difficulties in adapting or disseminating the policy, not addressing the right target, difficulties in adapting the policy to the needs of the company, differences with the organizational culture, etc.), and the micro level, which focuses on individuals' attitudes and behaviors (Perrigino et al., 2018). The literature has primarily investigated the macro level and the framing of policymakers and organizations (Thompson et al., 1999; Hoffman & Cowan, 2008; Beauregard & Henry, 2009;

Wilkinson et al., 2017). However, individual resistance to change, also known as work-life backlash, should be examined from a micro-level perspective. Work-life backlash refers to negative attitudes, emotions, and behaviors towards WLB policies such as childcare provision, leave policies, and flexible arrangements by mechanisms such as stigma, inequity, and experiences at the micro-level. Social norms, gender roles, work situations, and cultural contexts further complicate these mechanisms (Perrigino et al., 2018).

The focus of research on how employees manage trade-offs between life, family, and work, has been investigated by organizational communication and management in depth. There is research work studying the ideologies of organizations (Hoffman & Cowan, 2008). More than studying the link between organizational control and individual resistance toward the company's ideologies and work-life balance framing, it is interesting to analyze tensions between macro and micro levels (Perreault & Power, 2023).

Individuals demand resources and measures from employers and governments, but households bear the responsibility. In postindustrial society, individualization and psychologization diminish collective action, shifting work conflict and accountability to individuals and households. Care is moralized, seen as a duty, naturalizing work and care as personal responsibilities aligned with social norms (Crespo & Serrano, 2011; Carrasquer Oto, 2013; Serrano-Pascual et al., 2019).

Literature often views work-life balance (WLB) through managerial control or social roles. However, WLB is also shaped by self-imposed norms and gender patterns, individualizing and moralizing care. Understanding these factors can improve WLB strategies, policies, and the social structure of care distribution.

## Research Questions

- What do recent parents understand by work-life balance?
  - Centrality of *work* ◦ “*Life*” in WLB means **caring**
  - Who is responsible for the *balance*? (self, company, **welfare state...**)
- Are there systematic differences in WLB perceptions between recent fathers and mothers or across educational backgrounds?

## Methods and Strategy

We rely on a large sample of recent parents in Spain (N=1,700). Our methodology combines quantitative analyses of open-ended survey questions with a qualitative semi-structured **interviews on parent’s understanding of work-life balance**. Our dual goal is to analyze (a) the difficulties recent parents face as well as (b) their aspirations and discourses around work-life balance conflicts; as well as the relationship between (a) and (b). We are particularly

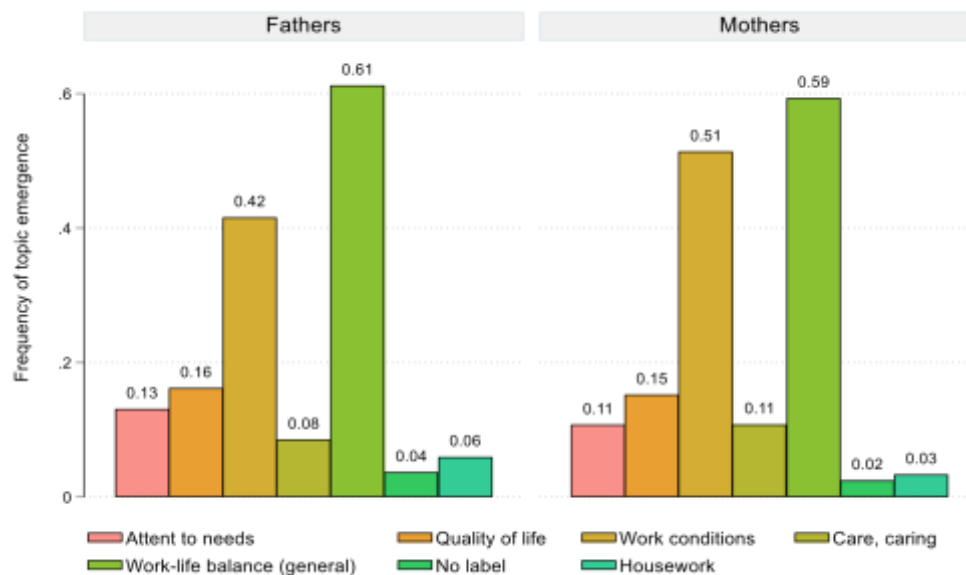
attentive to gender and socioeconomic differences in the perceived difficulties and discourse employed (Sørensen, 2019).

In this sense, we try to describe which are the most released issues about the opened question

“¿Qué es para ti la conciliación? (What does work-life balance mean to you?)”.

The general idea is to extract the main important topics and conflicts from the open-ended questions, and then, complement this short input with semi-structured interviews deepening in the discourse. Until now, we have categorized the answers from different approaches:

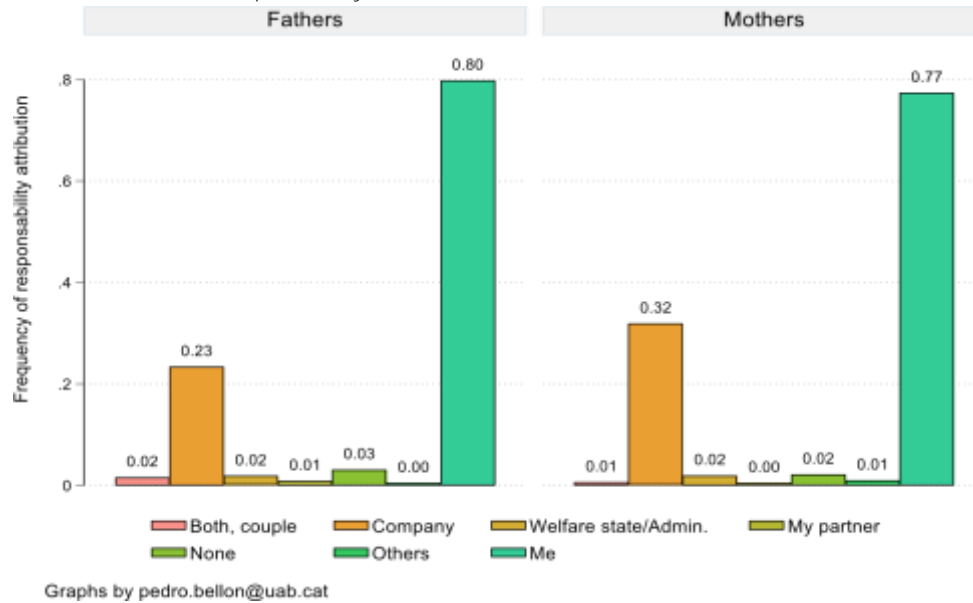
#### Main topics appear at statements



Graphs by pedro.bellon@uab.cat

Note: Preliminary results obtained from the manual codification and classified by gender.

Stakeholders to whom responsibility is addressed



Note: Preliminary results obtained from the manual codification and classified by gender.

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## *Can Workplace Flexibility Promote Gender Equality at Home?*

*M. Chae*

Recent literature has focused on the role of long work hours (working 50 hours or more per week) in shaping the persistent gender wage gap in the United States. Previous studies have highlighted either technical (nature of work) or normative characteristics of occupations. One line of research argues that compensation linked to long hours has increased exponentially, as oncall schedules and extensive hours better meet the demands of colleagues and clients, thereby improving worker productivity. However, another line of research suggests that returns for long hours might not necessarily reflect actual productivity but rather how employers perceive worker commitment. Despite these claims, prior research has not provided persuasive empirical evidence, as it is very difficult to directly measure worker productivity.

This research tackles this issue by focusing on the gender pay gap among those who work long hours and how it varies by occupation. If the long work hour premium is rooted in workers' increased productivity, we can expect to see consistently non-substantial gender pay gaps when men and women work the same long hours. However, if there remains a gender pay gap among those who work long hours and if it is greater in certain occupations, we could interpret it as a signal of normative or institutional factors within those occupations that disproportionately benefit men or penalize women.

Using Current Population Study (CPS) data from 2010 to 2019, I compare weekly and hourly pay between long-hour workers and full-time workers (working 35-49 hours per week) and examine how this long-hour work premium varies by occupation and gender. Preliminary findings show that in Executive and Management occupations, the long work hour premium is substantial, and there was a smaller gender pay gap among long-hour workers compared to fulltime workers. The long work hour premium is largest in legal and finance occupations, and while there was a small gender difference, these occupations also had the largest gender gap in the proportion of workers putting in long hours. Conversely, computer science and health occupations provide the smallest long work hour premium and exhibit the largest gender pay gap among those who work long hours.

The substantial occupational heterogeneity in the gender gap in long work hour premiums indicates that not only the nature of occupational tasks but also the context of where and who performs the work affects the compensation for long work hours. This topic is related to the Social Inequality Structures of Community, Work, and Family as it provides insight into the structure of persistent gender inequality in the labor market. The findings suggest that women, often the primary caregivers, may face difficulties adhering to these schedules and tend to work fewer hours, resulting in lower pay compared to men who work longer hours.

More importantly-, women's work may not be valued and compensated equally even when they match their male colleagues' long hours. They encounter a pay penalty due to persistent gender biases that cast doubt on their ability or willingness to work long hours and the associated productivity.

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## *Context Matters: The Moderating Effects of Culture on Employee Well-Being of Caregivers and Across Genders in a Greedy, Male-Dominated Organization*

*M. Mejicano, L. Duxbury*

### Theoretical Framework

Our research explores issues associated with employee well-being within a greedy, maledominated organization that espouses ideal worker norms. We have identified the military, specifically the Canadian Armed Forces, as an institution that typifies these **characteristics. We hypothesize that the organization's culture moderates the stress** and depression levels of its employees, with a particular focus on those experiencing work-family conflict. We argue that these levels are exacerbated for female employees and those with caregiving responsibilities. In the following paragraphs we provide a brief overview of the theories supporting our analysis.

The concept of the greedy institution was first introduced by Coser (1974). These institutions place multiple demands on individuals, seeking "exclusive and undivided loyalty" from their members (Coser, 1974, p.4). Individuals who work for "greedy institutions," including the military, often struggle to meet the all-consuming demands imposed on their time and energy by their institution. This struggle can result in difficulties not only in their professional roles but also in their personal lives (Coser, 1974; Segal, 1986; Piftman, 1994; Burchielli et al., 2008; Vuga & Juvan, 2013; Sullivan, 2014; Hoke Aberg et al., 2021).

Male-dominated organizations are those in which more than 70% of the workforce is comprised of male workers (Hulls et al., 2020). These industries are often associated with more traditional organizational forms and are typically led by males who exhibit predominant stereotypical masculine traits such as aggressiveness, risk-taking, and competitiveness (Campuzano, 2019). Recent research (Bridges et al., 2021) shows that women working in maledominated organizations often face unfavorable conditions (e.g., exclusion, discrimination, harassment) and feel pressured to "level up" and take on leadership roles traditionally held by men (Cardador et al., 2022).

The ideal worker is an employee who is rarely absent or late and does not let personal responsibilities affect their work devotion and commitment (Ramarajan & Reid, 2013; Reid, 2015; Sivestry, 2017; Ladge & Little, 2019; Las Heras et al., 2020; Masterson et al., 2020). While the literature does not explicitly assign a gender to the ideal worker, it is notable that the **“ideal worker” characteristics are generally associated with male employees** (Bates, 2022; Poorhosseinzadeh & Strachan, 2021; Sylvestri, 2017). According to this perspective, men are expected to prioritize work to provide for their families, with wives taking care of the family responsibilities (Acker,

1992; Kelly et al., 2010; Williams et al., 2013; Dumas & Sanchez-Burks, 2015; Smidt et al., 2017). The above research and theory support our argument that female employees are at a disadvantage in organizations that uphold and reward adherence to the ideal worker image, as also confirmed by Kossek et al. (2021).

The Theory of Role Dynamics (Kahn et al., 1964) helps us understand the relationship between the demands an organization places on employees (i.e., the job responsibilities) and the **employees’ stress levels. We focus** on two key concepts of this theory: role overload and role interference. We are particularly interested in two types of role overload: work-role overload, caused by demands in the work environment (Duxbury et al., 2018), and family-role overload, which stems from demands in the family environment (Aryee et al., 1999; Frone et al., 1997). In terms of role interference, we focus on the work-family conflict construct. Work-family conflict causes employees to struggle to fulfill work responsibilities and family obligations simultaneously and can be measured in two forms: work interference with family (WIF) and family interference with work (FIW) (Gutek et al., 1991). Several studies have analyzed the effects of gender within these constructs and identified trends in how work-family conflict relates to gender: men typically report higher WIF, while women report higher FIW (Duxbury et al., 1994; Burchielli et al., 2008; Higgins et al., 2010; Duxbury et al., 2018; Pascucci et al., 2021).

## Research Objectives

Within our research, we aim to address the following points when considering a greedy, male-dominated organization that embraces the ideal worker image:

- To what extent does culture moderate the relationship between work demands and workfamily conflict (WFC)?
- To what extent does culture moderate the relationship between family demands and WFC?
- To what extent does culture moderate the relationship between WFC and perceived stress?
- To what extent does culture moderate the relationship between WFC and depressed mood?

- How do these relationships differ based on caregiving responsibilities when controlling for gender?
- How do these relationships differ based on gender when controlling for caregiving responsibilities?
- Contribute to the work-life balance and role-overload literature by shedding light on the impacts that a greedy, male-dominated organization's culture has on female employees and those with family responsibilities. Additionally, provide actionable recommendations for practitioners, managers, and HR professionals on creating a more inclusive and supportive organizational culture for these employees.

## Data

Our data comes from a survey sent to military officers across Canada who were employed by the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). The survey was administered by the Director General Military Personnel Research and Analysis of the Canadian Department of National Defense **prior to the pandemic. A stratified sampling frame based on employees' age, gender, and working department** was created using administrative data. Women were oversampled to allow us to explore the impact of gender in our research. An invitation email assured respondents that participation was voluntary and their responses would remain anonymous. We received 1,627 completed surveys (40.8% response rate).

## Methods

To guide our examination of the relationship between the demands placed on employees, the work-family conflict they experience, their stress levels, and the organizational culture, we developed the model shown in Figure 1. We used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test **the model's statistical significance and overall fit. As noted in the diagram, we analyzed the moderating effects of organizational culture on the relationship between role demands and workfamily conflict, as well as between work-family conflict and stress levels. Additionally, we performed multivariate analysis for gender while controlling for the employees' life cycle stage,**

and for life cycle stage while controlling for gender.

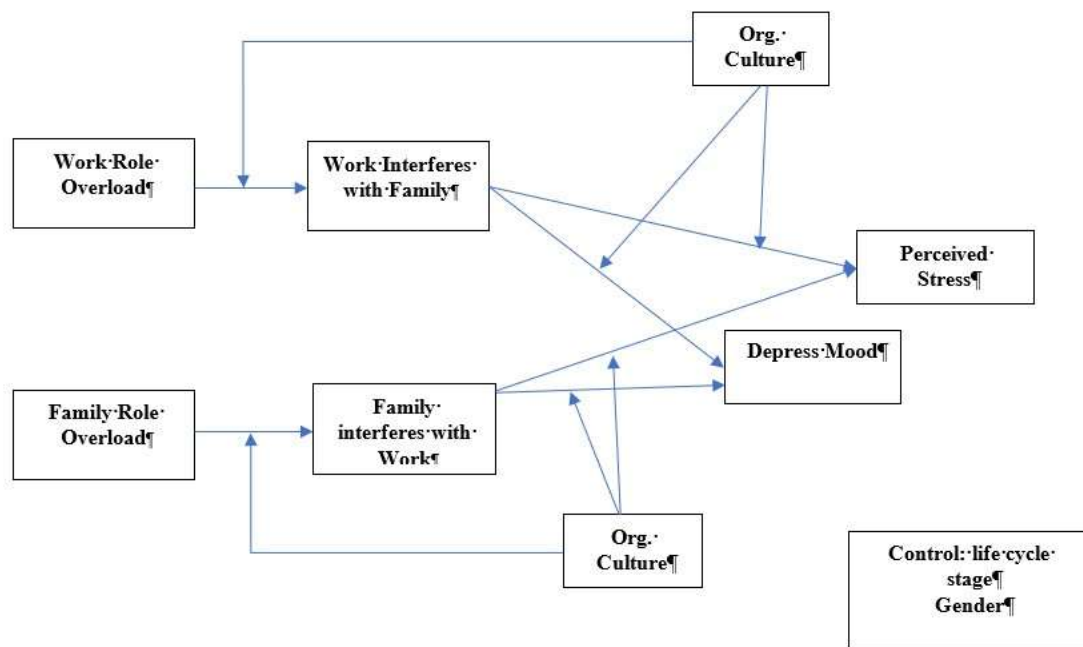


Figure 1: Proposed Model

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## ***Religion, Family, and Work: An Intersectional Longitudinal Study of Muslim Mothers in South Africa***

*F. Farista, A. Jaga*

Muslim women, as a diverse yet distinct demographic group, may encounter unique challenges upon entering the workforce due to the intersection of gender, ethnicity, and religion. This convergence can create barriers to their employment opportunities and career progression because of identity markers deviating from dominant Eurocentric workplace norms, such as

their traditional clothing, skin colour, prayer practices, and/or other visible and invisible markers (Tariq & Syed, 2018). Workplace discriminations against Muslim women are further compounded when they take maternity leave and return to employment as lactating **employees. Little is known about Muslim mothers' experiences of combining breastfeeding** and employment and the intersecting discrimination they face in the workplace. Where research exists on combining breastfeeding and employment, the focus has mainly been on white, Euro-American samples (Gatrell 2013; 2019), without particular attention to cultural and religious expectations and identities. We provide an empirical and theoretical contribution that addresses universalising mothers' experiences by gaining a nuanced understanding of the intersecting identities that inform the experiences of breastfeeding and paid work, among Muslim mothers in South Africa, where they are a religious and race minority group. To ground the study in the local southern context, we approach this study using a lens of intersectionality and transnational psychology.

## Theoretical framework

This study draws on Holvino's (2010) intersectional perspective of simultaneity. Intersectionality, as described by Crenshaw (1989), highlights the complexity of multiple marginalised identities but has been critiqued for its oversimplification and essentialist assumptions about shared experiences among workers of similar identities, thus undermining the diversity of lived experience (Lee, 2012). Further, this study integrates intersectionality with a transnational psychology conceptual approach by grounding Muslim lactating mothers' experiences in a 'grassroots' manner (Collins et al., 2019). That is, we pay attention to the cultural and contextual sensitivities of the experiences of Muslim lactating mothers and recognise them as experts of their lived realities.

## Research Objectives

First, we **seek to develop a nuanced and longitudinal understanding of how Muslim mothers'** intersectional identities inform their experiences of combining breastfeeding and paid employment in South Africa. Second, we explore the influence of the evolution of time, behavioural patterns, as well as organisational and personal events on breastfeeding and lactation among these mothers.

## Data and Method

A longitudinal, qualitative research approach was utilised. The 36 participants were full-time, formally employed mothers living in Cape Town or Johannesburg, South Africa, who self-identified as Muslim. Longitudinal qualitative data were collected at two points: first, within

four weeks of giving birth and during maternity leave when breastfeeding was attempted, and second, within four weeks after returning to work. Semi-structured, in-depth, one-on-one interviews were conducted. Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach to thematic analysis was **employed to analyze the data, with a focus on exploring the mothers' intersectional experiences**. Data analysis occurred twice, first after each wave of data collection and second, after both waves were complete to explore the findings across the entire data set.

## Preliminary findings

Preliminary findings suggest that although **traditionally the man's role in Islam is to be the provider, South Africa's current economic climate necessitates dual-income households**. Some mothers, despite wishing to stay at home, returned to work and engaged in taxing labour to be good mothers, wives, and workers, often at the cost of their well-being. Additionally, some held onto their work identity and found it important, choosing to return to work, yet many still engaged in taxing labour to fulfil their roles. Some of the mothers navigated postpartum depression and poor mental health to provide for their families, feeling a conflict between Islamic motherhood expectations and contemporary pressures like returning to work. They faced workplace discrimination and unsupportive families and spouses at home. Many mothers intended to breastfeed for up to two years, consistent with perceived Islamic ideals. However, they faced numerous challenges, including a lack of workplace facilities to pump breastmilk. Even when spaces were available, they often lacked privacy, and mothers feared victimization or being seen as receiving special privileges if they chose to pump, despite pumping breaks being a legal entitlement. Additionally, tensions with utilizing family members for childcare often forced them to resort to creches or private childcare. These findings indicate a need for workplaces that support diverse mothers' breastfeeding and caregiving responsibilities.

## Conclusion

This study contributes to theoretical development in work-family research in two ways. First, by incorporating a transnational psychology and intersectional approach, we discovered the diverse lived realities of breastfeeding Muslim mothers, exploring their simultaneous intersectional experiences in a context-sensitive manner without homogenizing them. Second, the innovative study design bridged the gap in the existing literature, by capturing **the complexity of Muslim mother's intersecting experiences of employment, breastfeeding and motherhood**, as they evolve through their breastfeeding journey and return to work. The research also contributes to feminist debates on workplace racialisation, religionisation, ethnicisation, and gendering, to advance more equitable and inclusive workplace organisation and practices.

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## PhD Workshop 2: The Politics and Policies of Community, Work and Family

### *The Impact of Childcare Expansion: Cross-national Evidence on Mothers' Labour Market Outcomes across Social Classes*

A. Karmann

In recent decades, welfare states became increasingly interested in family policy. This was characterized by a paradigm shift towards family-work reconciliation policies, with a strong focus on expanding childcare for children under the age of three. The use of public childcare can reduce work interruptions in mothers' careers, facilitate their (re-)entry into the labour market and thus contribute to reduction of inequality *between genders*. However, the outcomes of work-family reconciliation policies were uneven, giving rise to what scholars

termed ‘welfare state paradoxes’ and ‘gendered trade-offs’. Both hypotheses discuss how reconciliation policies can have unintended or paradox effects for mothers, depending on their social class. This raises the question of whether the expansion of childcare is leading to greater inequality *within gender*. Moreover, quantitative analyses showed that the effects of **childcare expansion on mothers’ labour market participation remain unclear, with scholars** suggesting different mechanisms and finding different results for women in different social classes or educational levels.

In this analysis, I integrate the methodological recommendations presented in recent publications to uncover paradoxes, primarily addressing two key questions: (a) How does increased childcare coverage affect **mothers’ return to the labour market?** and (b) **To what extent do childcare coverage rates lead to increased working hours for mothers?** Both questions are examined with a focus on mothers' social class.

The analysis utilised individual-level data from the cross-national dataset of the Luxembourg Income Study (LIS) for the period from 2005 to 2018, a period of significant expansion in childcare. This data was merged with contextual data on childcare coverage rates from Eurostat, resulting in 120,734 cases from 13 countries and 118 country-years.

My results indicate differences in labour market outcomes for mothers in different social classes, regardless of the level of childcare coverage. In contrast to previous research, my findings demonstrate that increased childcare coverage exhibits the most pronounced positive impact on labour market inclusion among middle-class mothers. For those mothers who are in work, lower-class women appear to be more responsive to higher childcare coverage rates, resulting in increased working hours.

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## ***The Politics of Couples’ Taxation: Explaining the Transition to Individual Taxation in OECD Countries***

*T. Fehrenbach*

Tax systems mirror societies and their inherent social structures. They reveal who is privileged and who is marginalized in society (Seelkopf, 2021). Joint taxation, which taxes couples as a unified entity, exemplifies this by raising marginal tax rates for secondary earners, who are predominantly women. This incentivizes them to remain at home, reflecting a patriarchal understanding of labor that expects women to primarily engage in unpaid care work in the household (Stotsky, 1996).

In contrast, transitioning to individual taxation, **which permits separate taxation of spouses’ incomes**, significantly affects the labor market and, consequently, gender equality. Numerous studies highlight that this shift significantly influences the work decisions of secondary

earners and increases women's **participation in the labor market** (Bick & Fuchs-Schündeln, 2017). Consequently, individual taxation allows women greater financial independence from the primary earner, affecting not only labor income but also pensions.

Since the 1970s, many countries have shifted from joint to individual taxation, including Austria, Italy, Sweden, and the UK. However, countries like the US, France, Germany, and Switzerland still adhere to joint taxation. The diverse adoption patterns of individual taxation in OECD countries present a puzzling phenomenon that resists straightforward explanation. In my dissertation, I examine these patterns, seeking to explain why some countries shift to individual taxation while others adhere to joint taxation.

This dissertation contributes to three key strands of literature. Firstly, it enriches tax reform discourse by integrating gender into research traditionally focused on reductions in personal and corporate income tax rates (Hallerberg & Basinger Scott, 1998; Swank, 2016). Secondly, it addresses gender-equalizing policy change by highlighting the overlooked role of taxation, whereas existing research often focuses on policies like parental leave and childcare services (Engeman, 2022; Htun & Weldon, 2018; Kittilson, 2008). Thirdly, it contributes to gender and taxation literature, which mainly identifies gender biases in tax systems but rarely explores why states eliminate such biases (Stotsky, 1996; van den Boogaard, 2018).

To examine policy changes in the taxation of couples, I first collected novel historical data from 1965 to 2020 for 28 OECD countries. This data includes information on tax units, dependent spouse allowances, and the transferability of basic income allowances. I collected data only for countries in the Global North, as personal income taxes play a marginal role in the Global South.

For the empirical analysis in my dissertation, I use a mixed methods approach, more specifically set-theoretic multi-method research (Oana et al., 2021; Schneider & Rohlfing, 2016). As a first step, I use a Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) to identify the drivers for a shift to the individual tax unit, the most important reform regarding the taxation of couples. The QCA follows a deductive, condition-based mode, which means that common explanatory **factors from the literature, such as women's political representation, the strength of left-wing parties, family structures, and institutional constraints**, are considered.

The first findings of the QCA indicate that institutional constraints, such as the institutional stickiness of the splitting method, whose reform is associated with higher political costs, as well as veto points, were especially relevant for tax unit change. Countries that used aggregation instead of the splitting method and had fewer veto points were more inclined to **shift to the individual tax unit. Progressive family structures and high levels of women's political representation** can, however, serve as additional push factors.

Secondly, based on these results of the QCA, I will conduct in-depth case studies. I will examine two typical cases that shifted to individual taxation (Finland, Italy) and two typical cases that

adhere to joint taxation (Luxembourg, Spain). Moreover, I will investigate two more deviant cases that show atypical adoption patterns (Switzerland, Czech Republic). In the course of the case studies, I will apply the following methods: analyzing parliamentary debates on adopted or failed reforms, examining media discourse, and conducting interviews with experts or legislators.

Since the stickiness of the splitting method emerges as a key explanatory factor in QCA, I may also analyze its introduction in the US and Germany. Both countries initially adopted individual taxation in the early 20th century but switched to joint taxation with the splitting method after World War II.

**Overall, by examining the politics of couples' taxation, this dissertation seeks to fill a significant gap in the scholarly literature and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of achieving gender equality through public policy reform.**

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## *Access thresholds and utilization patterns in welfare: Experiences of Ukrainian refugee women in Germany*

*E. Dobrovolski*

Since the Russian invasion in February 2022, over one million refugees from Ukraine, predominantly women, have arrived in Germany (Pachenko, 2022). The EU Temporary Protection Directive enables them to legal access to accommodation, welfare, and healthcare. In addition to the emotional strain of the ongoing war, concerns for their families and leaving husbands and partners behind, forced migration also presents challenges such as navigating an unfamiliar bureaucracy that offers various services through different channels.

In this presentation, I explore how Ukrainian refugee women, who find themselves in a state of liminality (Turner, 1964) and the ambiguities that come with it, navigate, and experience the German social system. Based on 56 narrative interviews with female Ukrainian refugees conducted between November 2022 and April 2024, as part of the longitudinal qualitative **research project “Ukrainian Refugees on their Way into the German Labour Society,”** I delve into the thresholds they perceive when accessing services and resources, such as childcare allowance, health care, housing assistance, or German language courses. This investigation explores the hurdles they encounter and examines their strategies for overcoming them, as well as the difficulties they face in doing so. In this context, it is crucial to understand both the knowledge these women possess about available resources and how this knowledge is generated, as well as how they use it to access social benefits and services. Based on the literature (Senthanar & MacEachen, 2023; Mangrio et al., 2019), it can be shown that knowledge and access paths are also shaped by individual life circumstances, such as **women’s ties to communities and different family constellations, e.g., (single) motherhood.**

By analyzing the narratives of Ukrainian refugee women, we can gain a better understanding of the barriers they face in accessing entitled assistance and identify mismatches between the bureaucratic organization of assistance provision and individual needs and circumstances. These insights can enable policymakers and stakeholders to design future refugee policy measures in a more gender-sensitive way.

**Key words:** Family policy, social welfare, Ukrainian refugees, gender, Germany

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## ***The Grandparent's Century: Exploring Grandparents' Agency in the Childcare within Chinese Urban Dual-Earner Families***

Y. Wang

### **Introduction**

China, grappling with sub-replacement fertility, transitioned from the one-child policy in 2015 to a two-child limit and subsequently implemented a three-child policy in 2021. The parenting leave system has also been modified in tandem to incentivise fertility further. Since 2016, besides the statutory 98-day maternity leave, first-time mothers receive at least 30 additional days after childbirth and are eligible for 60+ days for second or third children. Fathers are encouraged to take paternity leave (7-30 days), while spouses get 5-10 days of parental leave annually until the child turns 3, regulated by provinces. These recent policy changes, targeted at a clear demographic phenomenon, enable empirical investigation into how parenting leave policy shifts are expected to transform fertility, and what barriers there may be in achieving these changes.

This research explores the share of domestic labour in Chinese urban dual-earner couples when taking these 2016 new parenting leaves, dedicated to examining the policy's role in (re)constructing gender roles and care relationalities. By conducting in-depth interviews separately with couples welcoming children after 2016, this qualitative research combines longitudinal study, on the one hand, to see the changes in domestic labour arrangements during different leave-taking stages; and discourse analysis, on the other, to interpret parents' perceptions on gender roles and care relationalities.

### **Research Questions**

1. How do dual-earner urban parents share domestic labour during different stages of parenting leave?

- a. How do parents bargain for and rationalise their labour-sharing arrangements regarding specific infant care and housework tasks?
2. What are the perceptions of women and men of their labour sharing during and after the parenting leave?
  - a. How do they use gender to justify their roles in domestic labour?
3. How do parents manage caregiving responsibilities and professional careers when the leaves end?
  - a. How do they work out the division of labour after the parenting leave as children grow and care needs change?
  - b. How do parents consider other institutions' roles in caregiving, such as the state, society, community, etc.?
  - c. Would their personal experience of the current parenting leave policy give them the intention to have more children? Why?

## Literature Review

In China, the first maternity leave was passed in 1951, which granted all pregnant female workers 56 days of fully paid leave before and after giving birth (Government Administration Council, 1951). Then, the Chinese government increased the leave to 90 days in 1988, as three months was proved to be a sufficient period for women to fully recover from the physical effects of pregnancy and adapt to a period of lactation (Liu et al., 2019). In 2021, based on the suggestion of the International Labour Organization (ILO), maternity leave was extended to 98 days (Liu et al., 2019), the standardised duration of most developed countries. Importantly, paternity leave was formally suggested in China to promote the joint responsibility of couples for child-rearing (State Council 2012). Nevertheless, paternity leave implementation highly depends on specific regulations in different provincial governments and was not adequately fulfilled (Gao, 2016). To maximise the effectiveness of the secondchild policy, paternity leave was highlighted in 2016 again (Zhan, 2023).

Mandel (2009) believed that policies alone are insufficient in breaking gender inequality if ideology is not changed to stop placing all the responsibility for housework and child-rearing on women. Bourdieu (1996) argues that family policies are ways the state constructs and institutionalises a particular family form as normative. Therefore, interpreting the political meaning of this new parenting leave system is of great significance in understanding the desired family structure of the Chinese government. However, as feminist welfare-state researchers have demonstrated, the effect of family policies on fertility may be mediated through their effect on other social institutions, such as gender relationships and female employment (Never and Andersson, 2008). It is thus essential to focus on the effect of the parenting leave system on the gendered division of domestic labour, gender roles and care

relationalities to indicate its efficacy on the fertility rate further. Furthermore, Andrea Doucet (2023) recently argued that, in addition to the commonly used social exchange theories and "doing gender" theories, which consider individuals as rational beings, making independent decisions with intellectual agency and self-reliant subjectivity, attention should also be given to feminist care ethics and care economies that treat human beings as interdependent, intradependent and relational. In response to this call, this project explores how care is negotiated between couples, and how policy interventions shape this.

## Methodology

This research chooses a qualitative design for its strength in explaining how gender performances are negotiated (West and Zimmerman, 2009). Given the massive regional differences in Chinese policy implementation, three provincial-level administrative regions with the most limited, intermediate, and generous parenting leave quotas are sampled as representatives. Ten urban couples who welcomed children after 2016 will be recruited in each region for interviews. Given that the vast majority of children in the PRC are born to married parents (Davis and Friedman, 2014), single-parent, divorced and "patchwork" households are not the target even though they are integral populations worth exploring. Besides, they must be dual-earner couples who have both returned to the workplace after the leaves since they are those who suffer the "crises of care" or "care deficits" the most, considering that neither parent is a dedicated full-time caregiver (Fraser, 1994; Wallace, 2020). Additionally, the reason for restricting the study to urban couples is that social changes tend to start first in the urban area and then diffuse to the more rural and sparsely populated environment (Almqvist et al., 2011). To explore the interactions that sustain gender inequality (Doucet, 2023), both spouses of these 30 couples are to be interviewed separately with no knowledge of each other's responses to avoid mutual interference. Each interview is scheduled for one to 1.5 hours for sufficient engagement, and interviews will be conducted offline face-to-face.

With all information collected, a longitudinal study will be carried out first to analyse changes in their labour arrangements at all leave stages based on their descriptions. The data about labour arrangement is categorised into three periods: before the end of paternity leave, after the end of paternity leave until the conclusion of maternity leave, and the period when the mother resumed work before the child entered nursery. It aims to discover how couples respond to changes in the labour structure determined by the parenting leave system. Comparisons within and between these three groups of couples could illustrate the impact of different policy designs as well as individual factors in shaping the labour division. Afterwards, discourse analysis is adopted to interpret their language usage, revealing the cultural values and ideological beliefs of gender roles and care relationalities in specific social, economic, and political contexts. Benefiting from the epistemological advantages of these two research methods, this research comprehensively examines the social construct from the actual and ideological levels.

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## ***Following British fathers' own wellbeing through their parental leave journeys***

*J. Hobbs*

This doctoral study is located at the intersection of two fields of literature: fathers' parental leave experiences and fathers' perinatal mental health. Knowledge about fathers' parental

leave is usually associated with sociological research on fatherhood and has tended to focus on policy and usage. However, the field has broadened to consider the outcomes and experiences of fathers' **leave-taking**. Perinatal mental health is the subset of mental health and wellbeing research concerned with parents during the period from pregnancy through **their child's first year and has recently expanded to consider fathers as well as mothers**. Working parents often find balancing work and home responsibilities difficult, especially with a newborn baby. Welcoming a new child is usually a joyful event but life events can challenge **an individual's wellbeing as well as enrich it (Dodge et al., 2012)**.

Huppert observed that "since well-being is more than the absence of ill-being, it needs to be studied in its own right" (Huppert, 2009, p. 138). Such study should be based on a clear definition, and this study adopts a definition from the International Journal of Wellbeing, **which describes wellbeing as an individual's point of balance between their challenges and resources that is not static and can fluctuate in response to significant life events (Dodge et al., 2012)**.

We know very little about how fathers experience their own wellbeing during the life event of having a baby, especially the challenges they face and the resources they draw on. The wellbeing needs and experiences of first-time fathers in the UK were explored by Baldwin and colleagues (Baldwin et al., 2019). Their findings illuminate various external resources that can help new fathers to cope with the demands they encounter. It has also been suggested that **parental leave could help to support fathers' own mental health and wellbeing during the critical perinatal period**

(Cardenas et al., 2021; Korsgren & van Lent, M., 2022; Moss-Racusin et al., 2021; Saxbe et al., 2018) and the psychological mechanisms have been explored that explain how it might achieve this (Hobbs, 2024). However, these studies give little attention to what fathers can actively do to promote their own wellbeing.

To contribute to this limited body of research, this doctoral study offers a qualitative longitudinal exploration of the delicate fluctuations between challenges and resources for **working fathers' during their parental leave journeys. It takes a salutogenic approach**, considering health promotion as well as challenge. The research questions are:

1. How do fathers experience their own wellbeing during their parental leave journeys?
2. How is their wellbeing both challenged and promoted during that journey?

In order to address these questions, the research design is a qualitative longitudinal study that followed a sample of fathers through their parental leave. The criteria for participation in the study was men who lived and worked in the UK and planned to take some form of parental leave and return to work after. The sample comprises 21 fathers who represent a diverse range of occupations, familial contexts, parental leave structures and durations. Ethical approval was obtained from the supervising university to undertake this research.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants by telephone or video call at three time points: before, during and after their parental leave. This allowed for an **exploration of how each father's wellbeing developed** through his leave journey. The interview guide was informed by a synthesis of items from the predominant psychological wellbeing measures (Gatt et al., 2014; Keyes, 2002; Ryff, 1989; Tennant et al., 2007). The interview questions were focused around four themes: social, functional, emotional, and physical. All interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed verbatim. Data collection commenced in November 2020 and was completed in December 2023. The data is currently being analysed using the Framework Analysis technique (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994), with the analysis guided by conservation of resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989), the Work-Home Resources model (ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012), and the Extended demands-resources model (Demerouti & Bakker, 2022).

As with any qualitative study, the aim is not to generalise from these findings. Rather, the aim of this study is to explore a diverse range of experiences and generate a deep **understanding of these individual fathers' own wellbeing during their parental leave journeys**. The main contribution will be to identify the main resources these fathers draw on that help them to balance the challenges of their parental leave journey, and how demands and resources interact across the work and home domains. This knowledge will enhance our understanding of not only what external supports may benefit fathers but also what fathers themselves can do to promote their own wellbeing and be optimally effective in both their work and caring responsibilities.

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## *Gender Relations and Zero-Sum Thinking Implications for Online Misogyny in China*

Y. Liu

The theory and concept of hegemonic masculinity, as proposed by Connell, are frequently employed by scholars as a theoretical framework to analyze the intersection between online misogyny and gender stereotypes (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2013; Ging, 2019). Connell understands hegemonic masculinity as a specific form of masculinity that exists within particular historical and societal contexts, legitimizing unequal gender relations between men and women (Connell, 2005). To be more specific, Sharon R. Bird identifies an essential factors that contribute to the maintenance of hegemonic masculinity: competition (Bird, 1996). For male individuals pursuing hegemonic masculinity, male-female relationships are characterized by power struggles (Glick and Fiske, 1996). Some scholars further interpret this dynamic as a zero-sum game, suggesting that if women gain, men must inevitably suffer (Ruthig *et al.*, 2017). Consequently, advancements in women's rights may be perceived as a threat by male individuals who exhibit zero-sum thinking. (Glick and Fiske, 2011; Mansell *et al.*, 2022). This threat extends beyond just employment opportunities and also manifests in discussions surrounding the household division of labor and societal roles.

Since the late 1980s, China has been entering the digital era, a period marked by the rapid expansion of digital technology and its application in all aspects of society (Zhao, 2007). This period has had a profound impact on China, particularly in the areas of citizen participation. This has enabled citizens to have a greater say in the political process (Jiang, Meng and Zhang, 2019). The impact of such changes has had a complex influence on gender issues in China. More specifically, digital spaces have become a significant platform for feminist activists, fostering a surge in online feminist activities.

However, this phenomenon has also given rise to a crisis of hegemonic masculinity in China, which has, in turn, fueled an alarming increase in online misogyny, as one feature of misogynistic men is that they perceive the advancement of women's rights as a significant threat to men, potentially jeopardizing their interests. For example, calls for paternity leave to be extended to men (currently only women in China are entitled to maternity leave) and for equal pay for equal work between men and women frequently face substantial opposition. This mindset is highly similar to the previously discussed zero-sum thinking in gender relations. If the relationship is perceived as zero-sum, individuals may be motivated to avoid empathizing with the other party, as empathy could be perceived as interfering with their own objectives, which can be used to further explain the worsen of online misogyny (Zaki, 2014). Therefore, this study aims to explore the reasons behind the increasing prevalence of online misogyny in China in recent years from this starting point. This research seeks to investigate the relationship between zero-sum thinking among male social media users and online misogyny within the Chinese context. Specifically, the study aims to determine whether online attacks against gender equality policies and initiatives can be attributed to zero-sum thinking.

The main research site is Weibo, also known as the Chinese equivalent of Twitter. It has become increasingly popular in recent years as the second most popular social media in

China (since western social media platforms are forbidden in China) (Roser, Ritchie and Ortiz-Ospina, 2015). The primary research method employed in this study is semi-structured interviews. A total of 37 participants were recruited through direct messages and recruitment posters on Weibo. To better explore the motivations behind online misogyny, priority was given to individuals who had posted misogynistic content online. The participants, aged between 18 and 30, had at least three years of experience using Weibo. The interview questions first focused on the impact of increased online gender-related discussions on their professional careers, romantic and family relationships, and online experiences, to identify zero-sum thinking. Subsequently, vignettes with misogynistic features are presented to the participants to elicit responses, aiming to identify their attitudes towards online misogyny. All data collected from interviews are coded and analysed through Nvivo using critical discourse analysis.

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Wednesday, 26 March 2025

## 1.1: Policy Contexts, Normative Policy Feedback, and Changing Gender Norms - Part I (Parenthood and Care)

### *Attitudinal change across the transition to parenthood in Eastern European and Western gender regimes*

*M.-F. Philipp, P. Schober*

To-date, a range of single-country studies has investigated how the transition to parenthood **affects individuals' gender ideologies** (e.g., Baxter et al. 2015; Grinza et al. 2022; Perales et al. 2021; Schober & Scott 2012). They suppose that through exposure to the parental role and the frequently associated shift towards a more traditional division of labour between partners leads parents to readjust their previously held gender ideologies, also in order to reduce cognitive dissonance (Bolzendahl & Myers 2004; Festinger 1975). To-date, cross-nationally comparative evidence on how the parenthood effect on gender ideologies varies across country contexts with different policy settings and gender cultures is lacking. Yet, the specific **gender regime likely shapes individuals' exposure to the parental role and the extent to which** the transition to parenthood goes along with gendered responsibilities for work and care (Gangl & Ziefle 2015; Grunow et al. 2018).

Against this backdrop, we study the change in gender ideologies across the transition to parenthood in 10 countries with differing gender regimes based on work-family reconciliation policies and longstanding gender cultures: Bulgaria, Russia, Georgia, Germany, France, Austria, Australia, Lithuania, Poland and Czech Republic. We use data from the Gender & Generations Survey Round 1, mostly collected between 2004 and 2011. Fixed effects regression models are applied to a sample of 15,179 respondents.

Our results provide evidence of substantial differences in attitudinal changes after the transition to parenthood between Eastern European and Western gender regimes, even though most countries in our sample can be classified as male breadwinner or universal breadwinner models in terms of parental leave and childcare policies at the time of data collection. In Western countries, the transition to parenthood triggers more egalitarian views regarding maternal employment but increases agreement with the statement that children should stay with their mother in case of divorce. At the same time, new fathers, but not mothers, more strongly believe that children often suffer because their fathers concentrate too much on work. The effect on more traditional attitudes towards post-separation care arrangements is driven by lower educated parents. By contrast, in Eastern European countries, parenthood has a rather traditionalizing effect on views towards maternal employment. New parents in Eastern Europe do not shift towards perceiving more negative

effects of fathers' employment and their views towards divorce with children do not change significantly across the transition to parenthood, perhaps due to their more traditional baseline gender ideologies. Given the rather small family policy differences, the cross-national variations may be better understood as being shaped by the greater depth of democracy and longer history of alliances between feminism and other progressive political institutions and movements in the four Western countries compared to most Eastern European countries in our sample.

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### *Managing multiple work and family roles: the case of Canadian and Brazilian Professors*

*A. Leite, L. Duxbury, D. da Cunha Lemos, M. Barreto Moraes*

The COVID-19 pandemic led to the widespread adoption of remote work. Many professionals, including university professors, had to rapidly adapt their work to online environments. This sudden shift affected work-family boundary management, forcing individuals to blend work and family life within the same physical space. This paper uses Boundary Role Theory as a lens through which to better understand how university professors in two countries, Canada and Brazil, managed this situation. More specifically we seek to better understand how boundary management preference says prior to the pandemic impacted how our sample of professors attempted to balance work in the family roles during the pandemic. According to Boundary Role Theory, there are two opposing approaches to managing the different domains of family and work. Integration blends these domains, allowing them to overlap, while segmentation keeps them separate and distinct. The COVID-19 pandemic provides a unique context to explore how these preferences were consistent with or different from the strategies employed by faculty members to navigate their dual roles when forced to work at home. Our study contributes by looking at how preferences impact what people do and how people do that when they're not able to behave in a way consistent with their preferences. A notable aspect of our research is its focus on a specific profession: university professors. This profession juggle multiple roles as teachers, researchers, and administrators, often play in different settings. This study investigates how their preferences for integrating or segmenting these work roles have evolved due to the pandemic-enforced spatial integration. Having been compulsorily exposed to spatial integration, preferences may have changed or accentuated, making professors also had to create new tactics to manage them due to the absence of boundaries between both systems. This research also seeks to understand strategies used by faculty members to maintain their preferences. To achieve this, we conducted a mixed-methods study using demographic surveys and in-depth interviews with university business professors from Brazil (24) and Canada (23). Our qualitative data were analyzed using

Grounded Theory. This approach allows us to identify shifts in preferences during the pandemic and the underlying reasons for these changes. We also explore whether demographic factors (e.g., gender, number of school-age children, career stage) influence integration or segmentation preferences and examine the role of cultural differences between the two countries. Importantly, we examine the role of cultural differences between Brazil and Canada in shaping these preferences. Cultural norms and societal expectations can significantly impact how individuals balance work and family responsibilities. By comparing professors from these two countries, we gain insights into how cultural contexts influence work-family boundary management. This paper aims to provide insights into how mandatory remote work during the pandemic has altered work-family boundary management preferences and the strategies faculty members employed to maintain their balance in this new context.

**Keywords:** Boundary Management. Integration. Segmentation. Faculty members.

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## ***“Blue Zones” for Women in Leadership: Community, Work, and Family***

### ***Factors affecting gender parity***

*P. Sinzig*

Women are underrepresented in leadership and management, but this proportion varies **vastly among countries in Europe. Diverse institutional contexts influence women’s** opportunities before and during their employment and family trajectories in ways that make a difference to their chances to reach leadership positions. And despite a rise in welfare state directives and cultural changes that would support women in leadership, the European average of women in political and corporate management and leadership roles is stagnating below a balanced representation since 2011. Legal quotas for example seem to be effective, but only a handful of European countries have introduced such direct regulations.

Pathways to leadership for women have been described in many ways; for example, the labyrinthian metaphor based on the U.S. case describes the challenges for women to obtain leadership and management positions (Carli & Eagly, 2016). However, there is no study yet that tries to identify different **kinds of “labyrinths” that are similar between countries and states.** This paper disentangles the combinations of community (institutional), work, and family policy factors that facilitate women attaining senior leadership positions. The study uses multiple methods (cluster analysis and QCA) to identify similar patterns in the opportunity structures throughout the life trajectories of women (and men). The data is gathered from publicly available data sources (i.e., macrolevel indicators) including the

European Union/Eurostat, the World Bank, the European and World Values Survey, and the European Institute for Gender Equality. The resulting clusters are then used to explain varying levels of female representation in senior positions and top-level leadership positions using regressions. The analysis will consider historical change by considering temporal processes and time-lagged impacts on female careers. The sample includes all countries of the European Union as well as neighboring countries, due to their similarities in their construction of welfare. The institutional structures included in the analysis cover laws, employment-family policies, quotas, gender culture, educational attainment, and women's existing labor market participation and opportunities. All of these factors alter the opportunities women have to advance within their careers in comparison to men.

**This paper contributes to literature on women's leadership by providing an innovative and new typology of national opportunity regimes to explain differences in women's career advancement. Such an analysis has not been done yet. The results will yield insights into the exact factors and their combinations that facilitate women's advancement into senior positions and which factors continue to pose barriers, e.g. which welfare and family policies increase or decrease women's career advancement to leadership in Europe.**

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***“They have their own prejudice that it's not possible to have a work-life balance” The issue of work-life balance as an obstacle in women's recruitment***

*B. Nagy*

During the selection process of executive search, there is double pressure on potential women candidates. On the one hand, the need to conform to a male-dominated business world and, on the other, familialist expectations toward women are shaping their prospects. In this paper, we explore the ambiguous system of expectations, which are often framed as the issue of work-life balance. This paper intends to investigate to what extent executive search experts and decision-makers feel that the priority of work-life balance is an important barrier to women's access to executive positions. The investigation is based on interview research on executive search in four CentralEastern European countries: Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, and Hungary in 2020 and 2021. Twenty-two executive search consultants and twenty-two top company managers answered our questions.

Our findings show that executive search consultants and company leaders have ambiguous perceptions of women candidates. In the business world, meritocracy is claimed, and a devotion to leadership in the public sphere is expected. In contrast, women's reproductive tasks and family responsibilities are regarded as a resolute expectation in the private sphere. Although everyone acknowledges the contradictions and criticizes traditional gender

expectations, they do not feel they have the responsibility and/or agency to change the biased and discriminatory circumstances. This paper aims to investigate the perspectives of executive search experts and company decision-makers on whether opportunities and responsibilities beyond women's individual "choices" exist to foster a more balanced selection of executive managers.

## 1.2: New Work - New Inequalities? The Ambivalent Effects of Digital Work on Job Quality, Work-Life Balance and Employee Well-Being

### ***"Exploring Empowering and Exploitative Narratives Regarding Digital Sex Work in Germany: The Case of OnlyFans Creators"***

*S. Schuchmann*

#### Research Interest

The digital era has inevitably changed intimacy. Pornography accounts for every fourth online search globally, with Germany as its top consumer (cf. Röttgerkamp 2018). During COVID19, commercial intimacy on gig platforms like OnlyFans (OF) experienced a surge in popularity (cf. McCracken/Brooks-Gordon 2021, Uttarapong et al. 2022, Banerjee/Rao 2021, Hamilton et al. 2022). Yet research on the experiences of OF creators remains limited (cf. Jones 2015), especially in Germany.

This paper addresses digital self-employment through the perspectives and experiences of female sexual content creators and their narratives around empowerment and exploitation.

#### Methods and Theory

Five semi-structured interviews with female OF creators in Germany who design content primarily for male audiences were conducted online. Interviews lasted an average of 60 minutes and were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using content analysis and covered aspects of work processes, socio-economic contexts, and subjective perceptions of identity, work and power, to generate operational, contextual, and interpretative knowledge. **Concepts from Marx' *alienation* and *exploitation* (1844), Hochschild's *emotional labor* (2012), and *strategic intimacy* as capital (Laurin 2019, Marwick 2013) inform the research.**

#### Results

The interviewees prioritize autonomy and self-determination and reject narratives of exploitation. The creators view their work and their identity as self-efficient entrepreneurs positively. They control the production conditions, type, and pricing of their content and

services, and feel able to assert themselves against intrusive men. The findings challenge views of female sex work as victimization.

Nonetheless, vulnerabilities include social stigma and lacks of recognition and legal safeguards, including measures against content piracy. Current protections for sex workers such as the *Prostitutionsschutzgesetz (ProstSchG)* fail to protect digital creators, denying them essential benefits like health insurance. Addressing these challenges requires policy adjustments to uphold their rights to dignity, self-determination, fair remuneration, and healthcare access.

### Relationship to the session theme

Two features of this paper offer insight on new inequalities in the context of digital work. First, interviewees underscore flexibility and liberation from 9-to-5 (including power dynamics and gender inequities) afforded by digital work and appreciate the reconciliation of career and family life. But OF's integration into the gig economy as a supplementary income source points to potential correlations between the proliferation of digital sex work and financial distress among young female adults amid broader economic trends of diminishing wages and inflation. Second, the emergence of OF prompts critical inquiries into inequalities between digital and non-digital workers of a profession. The competitive and hierarchical nature of relationships between sex workers (termed *whorearchy* by Toubiana/Ruebottom 2022) impedes collaborative efforts to enhance job quality and well-being for the sex worker community. OF creators, positioned at the apex of the *whorearchy* due to the digital nature of their labor and higher socioeconomic status, can reject customer requests more readily than workers in nondigital, precarious settings. By their reluctance to identify with a sex work-related identity group, particularly physically working sex workers (e.g. in prostitution), they perpetuate overall sex work stigma.

Finally, the emergence of “digital pimping” agencies led by men who are monetizing on women’s sexual content under exploitative terms illustrates how gender inequality and exploitation models find their way into the digital worksphere.

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## *Performing the digital ideal worker: The relationship between flexibility stigma, ideal worker culture and digital presenteeism*

H. Chung, S. Yuan

With the rise of digital technologies, we also see a rise of digital connectivity of workers where workers are always-on, always connected to work (Mazmanian et al., 2013). Although such patterns of connectivity may be a symptom of excessive workload that cannot be done within the normal working hours, leading workers to work longer. However, this is likely to a symptom of (forced) digital presenteeism behaviour where workers are connected to work potentially due to their personalities, or more likely due to the problematic work cultures of the organisation. The two work cultures of interest are the ideal worker culture and the flexibility stigma culture. Firstly, the ideal worker culture (Acker, 1990) is one where workers are expected to prioritise work above all else, have no other responsibilities outside of work, and therefore are able to work all hours of the day. Such cultures are expected to pressure workers to feel like they need to be digitally connected to the workplace, which can fuel digital presenteeism

behaviours. This pattern of digital connectivity will be seen across all workers, not only those who work from home but also who go into the office. Related to this is the flexibility stigma culture (Williams et al., 2013), namely where flexible workers – namely those who work from home or use any other flexible working or family-friendly arrangements – are considered less motivated, committed and therefore less productive than non-flexible workers. In such cultures, especially workers who work from home are expected to need to perform digital presenteeism to overcome any potential bias managers and coworkers have against their work commitments and capacities (Chung et al., 2024). This may be especially true when homeworking is not normalised in the company. The paper further variation across workers – namely gender and parental status. This variation is expected not only in the digital presenteeism behaviours, but also in the association between work cultures and digital presenteeism/connectivity behaviours in that certain organisational contexts will be more impactful for those in marginalised/weaker positions. This is tested using the SWAA (Survey of Working Arrangements and Attitudes) data set collected in September of 2024 in the UK. (Results are not out as data not yet collected). A series of multivariate and moderation(interaction) regressions will be conducted to test the hypotheses.

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## *Work-Life Balance Trends on Indeed.com: Insights from Keyword Analysis*

*S. Geldres-Weiss, K. Kuschel*

## RESEARCH INTEREST

This study examines whether Indeed.com, a leading employment-related search engine, can aid in achieving work-life balance by analyzing job postings and candidate preferences. The research investigates the representation and frequency of work-life balance-related keywords

and phrases, aiming to understand how the platform reflects and potentially supports this critical aspect of modern employment.

The field of hashtag recommendation will increase very fast, and even more with the introduction of deep learning (Amiri, 2021). In relation to the hashtag recommendation methods, it is necessary to propose more effective methods that cover a broader range of predefined and novel hashtags with higher accuracy (Alsini, Huynh, & Datta, 2021).

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in work-family conflict theory and the job demand-resources model. Work-family conflict theory posits that work and family demands are often incompatible, leading to stress and reduced well-being. The job demand-resources model provides a lens through which to examine how job demands and available resources influence employee stress and performance. Digital platforms like Indeed.com, which aggregate vast amounts of job-related data, offer a unique opportunity to analyze how worklife balance is prioritized and communicated in the job market. Previous studies on Indeed.com have explored the drivers affecting employee job satisfaction (Sainju, Hartwell, & Edwards, 2021) being Work-Life Balance one of the 5 different dimensions.

## METHODOLOGY

**This study analyzes the platform “Indeed.com”, a global job matching and hiring platform. Our study uses “long tail keywords” hashtags like “work-life balance” or “stay at home mom” to understand how companies address this issue. Indeed.com contains millions of free-form employee reviews, salaries, and job posts that can be analyzed. We use a web scraper of Indeed.com, searching for results in the United States.**

## EXPECTED RESULTS

Preliminary results indicate a growing emphasis on work-life balance in job postings, particularly in sectors heavily impacted by digitization and remote work trends, such as technology and creative industries. Keywords like "remote work" and "flexible hours" have shown significant increases in frequency. However, the depth and sincerity of these commitments vary widely. Some postings merely mention these terms without substantial detail, suggesting a superficial approach to attracting candidates. In contrast, other postings provide comprehensive descriptions of policies and practices supporting work-life balance, such as flexible scheduling, mental health support, and family leave options.

The companies that describe the job positions are using work-life balance to promote their family-friendly culture.

We qualitatively identified the dimensions (remote work, work-from-home, time flexibility, **authonomy**). **“Best place to work” certified companies are expected to use more humanistic language and value motherhood.**

## RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CWF CONFERENCE

This research aligns with the broader topics of the conference, particularly "New Work – new Inequalities? The ambivalent effects of digital work on job quality, work-life balance and employee well-being." The findings contribute to understanding how digital job platforms can either mitigate or exacerbate work-life balance challenges. By highlighting the varying levels of commitment to work-life balance across different job postings, this study provides insights into the ambivalent effects of digital work on employee well-being and job quality.

Furthermore, the study touches on "Global Perspectives on CWF" by analyzing a global trend.

**KEYWORDS:** Indeed.com, long tail keyword, hashtag analytics, work-life balance.

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## *Self-determination as a resource in digital work: uncovering group-specific differences when Working From Home*

*A. Mergener, M. Trübner*

The widespread job-related use of digital information and communication technologies (ICT) often allows access to work content and contact with colleagues from any location. Thus,

**opportunities to work outside the employer's premises and outside of fixed working hours** are becoming increasingly common – not least during the Covid-19 pandemic. Working From Home (WFH) is an expression of these flexible working structures in the context of digitalization (Messenger et al. 2017), which is mainly found in occupations with a high demand for cognitive tasks, e.g. processing emails, documenting, or researching (Mergener 2020). While research has shown that employees who primarily perform cognitive tasks using digital technology are more self-determined (i.e. they are more likely to plan and organize their work independently) (Kirchner et al. 2020), there are also first indications of pre-pandemic data that WFH further amplifies self-determination irrespective of the occupation (Mergener 2024). When WFH, for example, there is a lack of established office structures with superiors and colleagues on site to organize work processes. Thus, WFH offers a higher degree of independence and responsibility from employees, as they can organize and co-ordinate their work content and breaks more independently. As this self-determination offers more autonomy to the employees, it can be assumed that it positively contributes to **employees' quality of work and life**.

Against this backdrop, after showing the extent to which WFH – beyond occupational tasks – requires increased self-determination (step 1), we focus on the extent to which self-determination can act as a resource for WFH users (step 2). In step 2, we additionally investigate group-specific differences between living arrangements and gender to uncover who profits most from the autonomous way of WFH. Moreover, we differentiate between the duration employees have been WFH, as experience and routine can be assumed to reinforce the positive effects of self-determination over time.

The analysis used data from the German BIBB/BAuA Employment Survey 2024, a probability-based, large-scale survey representative of German-speaking individuals working at least 10 hours per week.

With rich and highly up-to-date **information on respondents' personal and workplace characteristics**, including in-depth measures of WFH, self-determination and items related to quality of work and life, this is an outstanding dataset for examining the research aim raised in this paper.

Preliminary results, first, confirm previous research indicating that self-determination is amplified when WFH irrespective of occupation, even after the Covid19-pandemic. Second, we found that within the group of WFH users, self-determination acts as a resource for different aspects of quality of work and life, with additional heterogeneous group effects.

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### 1.3: Normative Expectations and Attitudes at Fathers' Workplaces

#### *Ideal worker norm, gender egalitarianism, and Swiss men's part-time work. The role of occupational contexts*

*J. Müller, Y. Cha*

This paper examines whether and how occupational contexts affect Swiss men's developing preference for part-time work and changing to part-time hours. In Switzerland, part-time work is widespread, comprising more than a third of the labor force, yet it remains highly underutilized among men. Swiss men's desire for part-time work has been steadily rising, however, leading to increasing mismatches between their desired and actual work hours. What explains Swiss men's underutilization of part-time work? Under what conditions do men develop parttime preferences and change to part-time hours? To address these questions, we focus on two normative forces operating at the occupation-level – (1) expectations for workers to exhibit complete and undivided devotion to work and (2) gendered structures and beliefs about men's and women's work.

We use a unique dataset that matches individual-level records from the 2002-2020 Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS) to longitudinal occupation data pulled from multiple sources. From the job posting data of the Swiss Job Market Monitor (SJMM), we use natural language processing and machine learning techniques to create variables measuring employer's expectations about "ideal worker norms": expectations for long hours and attributes of ideal workers (e.g., "willingness to work overtime"), and openness to employees' non-work devotions (e.g., "work-lifebalance"). We also use the overtime prevalence in the occupation drawn from the SLFS data, which measures the ideal worker norm reflected in employees' work behaviors. From the Swiss Household Panel and SLFS data, we constructed a series of variables to measure occupation-specific gender egalitarianism: prevalence of gender beliefs about

maternal employment and male dominance and managerial gender diversity. We offer two sets of analyses. First, we examine how these occupation-specific norms affect the likelihood **of men's developing parttime preference**. Second, we examine how these occupational norms lead to reductions in work hours among men who developed part-time preferences. We leverage the longitudinal structure of our data using Random Effect Within Between (REWB) models, which allow us to estimate both the effects of the norms differing across occupations (**"between-occupation effects"**) and the effect of the norm *changes* within occupations **between 2002 and 2020 ("within-occupation effects")**.

Our results show that on average 10.5% of men working full-time develop part-time preference, and 6.4% of men who previously expressed part-time preference move to part-time. Overall, fathers, college-educated and high income workers, and workers in non-management positions tend to develop part-time preferences and move to part-time at higher rates. We find that occupation-specific gender egalitarianisms play an important role **in determining both men's part-time preference and transition to part-time**. However, the ideal worker norms appear to be more consequential to *behavioral* changes than changes in work-hour *preferences*. Specifically, occupations emphasizing strong work devotion suppress **men's part-time transitions whereas employer's shifts towards openness to employees'** devotions to other domains are associated with a higher chance of **men's transitions to part-time employment**.

Taken together, these findings show that men's preferences for part-time are constrained by social norms about "good workers" and gender beliefs operating at the occupation-level yet shifts in these norms can change these dynamics.

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## ***Managerial responses to fathers' working time requests - A Vignette study among Austrian managers.***

*A. Baierl, B. Beham, E.-M. Schmidt*

Over the last decades, expectations regarding fathers' active involvement in care work have evolved in many Western developed societies. Contemporary Austria makes an interesting case to study involved fathering. Despite recent changes in governmental policies and a lively public discourse on involved fatherhood, interrupting employment for parental leave or reducing working hours for care work remains a highly gendered phenomenon in the country. **Fathers are employed fulltime regardless of the youngest child's age**, while they realize parental leave or part-time employment only to a minimal extent compared to mothers.

However, fathers do not act and decide in isolation, but in relation to normative expectations that are reproduced both in the family sphere and at workplaces. Research has identified

multiple organizational barriers to involved fatherhood in companies. Among others, **line managers' attitudes and behaviors play a key role in enabling or restricting working fathers' active involvement in caregiving**, since they act as gatekeepers to flexible work arrangements in organizations. It is unlikely that work-family policies will be effective for fathers, if line managers fail to support fathers requesting flexible working arrangements to increase their engagement in care giving.

Drawing upon sociological theories on social structures in organizations and psychological **attribution theory**, **this experimental study examines line managers' attitudes towards fathers' requests for workfamily policies**. We conducted a vignette study among 412 managers in Austrian organizations who responded to a number of hypothetical scenarios (vignettes) of fathers requesting either paternal leave or a part-time arrangement to care for a child. The experimental design used in this study clearly has advantages over conventional survey designs, since it allowed us to model complex decision scenarios and to draw causal conclusions.

We found that the reason provided for requesting a flexible working arrangement – namely performance levels, commitment attributions, and critical knowledge of the father – **influenced line managers' allowance decisions, although not always in the hypothesized direction**. Further, organizational characteristics – such as share of part-time worker, managerial level or organizational culture, as well as gender role attitudes and family-supportive behaviors of line managers – affected their allowance decisions. Differences **between line managers' personal support of fathers' requests and anticipated organizational supportiveness** were observed. Overall, our findings show a remarkable discrepancy between a rather positive and supportive assessments of Austrian managers and the actual behavior of fathers in Austria who rarely take long parental leave or substantially reduce working hours to become more involved in childcare. Family policies therefore seem to need a shift in **normative expectations towards fathers' childcare responsibilities for being more effective**.

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### ***Parental leave and the norms on fatherhood in organizations – paving the way towards participation or stuck with the male breadwinner norm?***

*S. Haarmann, A. Kümmerling, T. Rinke*

The adoption of paid parental leave as one of the legal provisions adopted by the German government in 2007 marked a paradigm shift towards an offensive family policy of **compatibility of family and career primarily aiming at increasing women's share of waged labor** (Bundesstiftung Gleichstellung, 2024, BFSFJ, 2023). Despite a wide range of legal,

collective and corporate provisions on the reduction of working time, such as paid parental leave, hopes about an equal participation of fathers in often unpaid care and family work have only been fulfilled in parts: Even though the share of men taking parental leave has more than doubled to 43% in 2019 since its introduction in 2007, with 3.3 months on the average, men take significantly less time off than the majority of women with 10 months (Bundesstiftung Gleichstellung, 2024).

Our research examines the question how and why working fathers in Germany use parental leave and which conclusions can be drawn from analyzing organizational processes and structures, i.e., the dynamics and possible tensions between different groups of employees along different levels of hierarchy and in different fields. Despite an increasingly diverse landscape of models of the division of paid and unpaid work between women and men in heteronormative family models, the male breadwinner model is still the most common (see Trappe et al., 2015, Oschmiansky et al., 2020). Arising question are: Which underlying organizational and familial conditions favor or hinder men to take longer parental leave times? Which findings can we extract from analyzing organizational processes around the compensation of working hours due to men taking parental leave? Which impact does the time loss caused by parental leave of men have on processes depending on its duration? How do prevalent norms and expectations of fatherhood materialize in organizational structures? To what extent are norms of the ideal worker and the male breadwinner still embedded in company cultures and how do they materialize in gendered organizational structures (see Acker, 1990, 1998)? Which role do such structures play in facilitating fathers to engage more in care and family work? Which organizational constraints regarding the expectations of fatherhood are (still) at work? Do men who take longer parental leave function as a role model or do such flagships rather stabilize existing gendered organizational structures?

**Investigating in this matter, we draw on data from the project “ZOBABO – provisions on the reduction of working time related to life phases and their effects on internal work organization”. Within this scope we examine the implications of the provisions on the reduction of working time, such as paid parental leave, on companies and organizational processes as much as employees, and analyze how companies compensate the loss of working hours. Our research is based on quantitative and qualitative data from five case studies with more than 100 indepth interviews conducted across different industries (transport, chemicals, banking, water, metal and electrical industry), different levels of hierarchy and work characteristics. Next to the comprehensive empirical data, we will draw on sociological and feminist theoretical concepts, such as the ideal worker norm (see Williams, 2000) and the male breadwinner model (see e.g., Trappe et al., 2015), thereby exploring to what extent they are still reflected in expectations to fathers at work, their presence/absence, performance and the related coercions in organizational processes. In this light, we will shed a more nuanced perspective on existing theories of the male breadwinner model and the ideal worker**

norm and carve out the necessary, e.g., structural, socioeconomic, organizational, cultural conditions for a transformation of the norms of fatherhood at work.

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## ***Untangling the characteristics of men who dare to break the “ideal worker” norm***

*S. Tanquerel, M. Grau-Grau*

For many researchers, the image of the “ideal worker” remains the dominant norm in most organizations today. This ideal worker is typically depicted as someone who is completely committed to their job, always available, and fully devoted to their work responsibilities. Deviating from this image can present significant risks, particularly for men, who are most expected to conform to this work-devotion norm. Men who do not conform to conventional masculinity face various risks including femininity stigma, flexibility stigma, job-related consequences, and career penalties.

Despite these stigmas and barriers, some men are willing to explore alternative paths to achieve a better work-life balance. While previous research has primarily examined the consequences of men deviating from the “ideal worker” norm in terms of their job outcomes and career trajectories, there is still much to learn about the characteristics of these “progressive” men. These men challenge the dominant model of masculinity and the traditional norms that continue to govern contemporary organizations. They play a crucial role in advancing gender equality and justice both at work and at home.

This article investigates the traits of these men who dare to defy gender norms and break away from the “ideal worker” archetype. Drawing on 61 semi-structured interviews with working men across various occupations, organizations, and sectors in France and Spain, this exploratory study uncovers the different factors that may explain their willingness to “disclose” their nonconformity and pursue alternative work-life arrangements.

#### 1.4: Parenting Leaves, Care Leaves and (In)Equalities - Part I (Fathers)

*Fathers as caring parents in the early phase of parenthood through the lens of hybrid masculinities. A praxeological approach.*

*G. Mauerer*

##### Research interest and theoretical approach

In my contribution, I focus on the theoretical concept of hybrid masculinities regarding fathers as caring parents in the early phase of parenthood. On a praxeological level, parental motivations, developed practices and the exchange of knowledge and skills in the care of young children will be analyzed and discussed. The presented findings derive from the research “Gender and family in Motion. Parental Arrangements” (03/2021-02/2025). In this research, we investigate how paternal care activities and practices are being developed as a result of fathers’ childcare allowance claims in Austria.

## Methods

The research is based on couple interviews with parents in Austria (2021-2022, n=42), followed by individual interviews (n=41, 2023).

As there are hardly any role models for couples in Austria in terms of dual parental use of childcare benefits and/or parental leave and gainful employment, as well as paternal assumption of childcare, the praxeological investigation of the division of couples is of great importance for subsequent (parental) generations and for future policy design of family benefits. The applied instrument couple interview (n=42, 2021-2022) followed by individual interviews, n=41, 2023) were important instruments, allowing for analyzing negotiations between two parents in situ as well as in terms of content. In our analysis, we focus on the early transition to parenthood, with particular attention to the paternal position using the concept of hybrid masculinities.

## Results

The empirical results will be discussed in regard to findings from international parental leave and masculinities research. The empirical results point to paternal performance in the form of "hybrid masculinity": On the one hand, this means that fathers succeed in taking on and embodying care tasks, and on the other hand, it shows the effect of social norms that include a continuation of (higher) expectations of men in terms of constant availability at work. In the private sphere, this means that the assumption of paternal responsibility and paternal presence in the family are still realized on an individual level and primarily seen as a support for female partners in Austria.

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### *Parental leave and gender equality: Online criticism and justification of paternity leave in Austria*

*M. Schuster*

In Austria, fathers who take parental leave are rarities (Hammerl 2022). In my dissertation, I discuss this unequal gender distribution in the use of parental leave (e.g. Doucet and McKay 2020; Bergmann and Sorger 2018) along the following questions: How is parental leave for fathers negotiated by posters in online comment columns? And how do these posters understand and justify their own comments? In this way, I aim to identify patterns according to which (no)participation practices are legitimized or criticized in the online environment. Online comments provide information about how topics are currently being discussed, how

perceptions are socially constructed and can therefore also be informative with regard to prevailing conventions. The theoretical basis of my work is convention theory (Boltanski and Thévenot 2014), which also serves as a methodology for investigating coordination situations and orders of justification. Conventions are seen as normative and empirical orders of worth (Diaz-Bone 2018). In the analysis, the convention-theoretical perspective is combined with a discourse-analytical procedure, whereby relevant conventions are examined as linguistically represented discourse logics (Foucault 2020). The results should also be transferable to other fields where gender equality affects the social order.

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## ***Impact of information on father's parental leave use - Evidence from a randomized information experiment***

*M. Saarikallio-Torp, S. Jauhiainen, A. Miettinen, E. Sihvonen*

Many countries have implemented parental leave reforms aiming at **enhancing fathers'** participation in childcare. Introducing designated and ear-marked leaves for fathers, the **father's quota, has been found to** be effective in many countries and the take-up rate of fathers' parental leave use has increased as a result of the reforms (e.g. Duvander and Johansson, 2012; Kluge and Tamm, 2013; Patnaik, 2019). However, despite of the reforms, a significant share of fathers do not use any leave at all (e.g. Saarikallio-Torp & Miettinen, 2021).

Several factors, such as socio-economic background, workplace characteristics and gender norms, have been found to explain this, but there is only limited knowledge of whether (lack of) information on the entitlements of leave also plays **a role in fathers' leave** taking. Despite growing interest in behavioural science interventions in the field of social policy, to our knowledge, we lack evidence about whether nudge interventions can have positive impact on fathers' leave take-up. The idea behind nudging is to gently push **individual's** behaviour towards better decisions or desired direction without restricting their freedom of choice (see Thaler & Sunstein, 2008).

Relying on an experimental design, this study investigates the effect of information letters on **father's** parental leave use. We measure both take-up of parental leave and the length of the leave. The outcomes are observed from the administrative registers of the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Kela). Fathers of newborn babies (born in 2018) were randomized into two groups; treatment group (n=4,043) that consists of fathers who received information letters by mail and control group (n=4,710) that consists of fathers who did not receive any additional information. The treatment group was further divided into three groups according to the type of the letter they received: 1) Fathers who received a letter emphasizing the relationship between the father and the child, 2) Fathers who received a letter concentrating on the reconciliation of work and family and 3) Fathers who received a letter containing the same information as the letter to group 2, but the letter was also sent to their spouses. All letters contained information on family leaves in general and instructions on how to apply for paternity leave.

We contribute to the literature by investigating the effect of targeted individual-level information on an area of social policy where similar information experiments have so far been scarce. If such information proves to be effective, it would provide a relatively **inexpensive way to promote fathers' participation** in parental leaves. Our study also adds to the knowledge about the hindrances **of the father's parental leave use**. **Although fathers rarely say that they don't know about parental leave opportunities** (Kinnunen et al. 2024) providing targeted information about parental leaves around the time when families are deciding **upon father's parental leave use** may act as a trigger. As a significant share of fathers do not use their right to parental leaves, it is crucial to increase understanding about the behavior of fathers of newborn children.

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## ***A qualitative exploration of fathers' wellbeing through their parental leave journeys***

*J. Hobbs*

Fathers' mental health is known to affect the wellbeing of his partner and children. It is therefore important for fathers to maintain good mental health and wellbeing not only for themselves but also for them to be optimally effective in their caring responsibilities. However, **men's mental health and wellbeing** have become topical issues for social sustainability and evidence indicates that they are especially vulnerable during the **perinatal period, which is the period from pregnancy through baby's first year**. Many countries continue to expand their leave entitlements for new fathers with the aim of increasing paternal involvement at home and gender equality at work. It has further been suggested that parental leave could **help to support fathers' wellbeing through this critical period**.

Parental leave policies accessible to fathers in the UK are evolving but continue to lag the more established policies in many other countries, especially the Nordic region. The cultural norm is a poorly paid 2-week paternity leave at the time of birth. The new Shared Parental Leave policy was introduced in 2015, and although take-up of longer duration leave by fathers in the UK is notably low, expectations of paternal leave-taking are changing, and British **fathers' parental leave use** now takes a variety of forms.

This qualitative longitudinal study explores how a sample of British fathers representing a variety of occupations, familial contexts, parental leave structures and durations experience their own sense of wellbeing during their leave journeys. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 21 fathers at three timepoints: before, during and after their paternal leave. Items from the predominant wellbeing measures were used to inform a qualitative interview guide, and the participants were invited to discuss specific aspects of their physical and psychological wellbeing at each timepoint. Framework Analysis was used to understand how **each father's wellbeing** developed over time. Their experiences were then compared across the sample to identify patterns of how their wellbeing was both challenged and promoted during their parental leave journeys.

Using Conservation of Resources theory as a foundation, preliminary analysis suggests that **fathers' wellbeing** during their parental leave journey is experienced as a fluctuating balance of demands and resources across both the home/family and work domains. Parental leave appears to temporarily improve fathers' wellbeing by initiating a resource gain spiral. However, the data also suggests that fathers' wellbeing is especially vulnerable during the transition back to work after their leave when the combined home and work demands compete for their finite resources with little support.

This research contributes to the conference session on parenting leaves, care leaves and (in)equalities by linking research on paternal leave experiences with fathers' wellbeing. The preliminary findings suggest that dedicating a period of time to adapt to changes in their family life without the demands of work can promote fathers' **wellbeing** during this major life transition, however sustainable parental leave design should also consider fathers' support needs for returning to work after parental leave.

## 2.1: Policy Contexts, Normative Policy Feedback, and Changing Gender Norms - Part II (Work and Family)

### *The possibilities of adapting a capability perspective to explore how gender norms, as (re-)constituted by UK's Shared Parental Leave policy, shape parents' care capabilities during their child's first year*

*C. Matysova*

Parental leave policies provide possibilities to progress gender justice and more equal sharing of care during a child's early years. The UK's Shared Parental Leave (SPL), introduced in 2015, provides such opportunities yet there has been limited uptake. Structural explanations for low uptake include poor wage replacement, restrictive eligibility criteria and inconsistent employer implementation (Twamley and Schober, 2019, Javornik and Oliver, 2019). However, less is known about how gender norms shape parents' real opportunities to use leave and couple decision-making relationalities.

The Capability Approach (CA) (Sen 2009), employed to understand gaps between opportunities and achieved capabilities within work family scholarship (Yerkes et al., 2019, Hobson, 2014), provides possibilities to evaluate what is of value to parents when planning care and parents' care capabilities. Social embeddedness of the phenomena under study is a key concern of the CA, however, the way gender norms shape what is of value to parents, parents' subjectivities and "what an individual would choose if she is unable to imagine the alternatives and opportunities open to her" (Hobson, 2014: 22) has remained largely underexplored. Furthermore, for the CA to meaningfully account care requires recognition of individuals as both autonomous and interdependent and choice as shaped by responsibility for self and others (Lewis and Giullari 2005).

Offering theoretical innovation, I respond to these gaps by combining a discursive and normative conceptualisation of gender (Butler, 1990, Morison and Macleod, 2013) with the CA to examine how gender norms are productive of parents' valued functionings. My adaptation theorises how gender norms relationally and dynamically shape what parents sees as feasible and imaginable, to examine parents' (multiple and competing) valued functionings when planning care as normatively constituted and shaped by gender relations of power within a couple dyad (Siltanen and Doucet, 2017). I thereby extend analysis of the family leave policy as a means differentially accessed by parents to a normative means differentially (co-)productive of parents feasible and imaginable valued functionings.

I draw on my PhD research **which explores parents' leave taking behaviours in the UK context**. During 2020-21, I employed two-staged multimethod qualitative data collection, involving seven online asynchronous discussions with expectant and new parents (a total of 36 participants) and, subsequently, 10 couple interviews. From a social constructivist standpoint, I employed both thematic and dialogical narrative analysis to examine how gendered parenting norms shape parents' decision-making.

I identified six main themes within what parents articulated as valuable to them when planning **care during a child's first year: shared parenting, spending time with baby, financial security**, achieving career aspirations, postnatal wellbeing and gender justice. In this paper, to illustrate the possibilities of adapting the CA, I focus on my findings in relation to financial security and spending time with baby, illustrating the ways in which (feminine) uncommodifiable affective care is often interactionally backgrounded in relation to (masculine) provision of financial security. As such, the paper contributes insights into the importance of greater consideration for normativity and associated gendered relations of power within couple decision-making, as shaped by work-family policy.

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## ***Finnish home care leave policies in light of EU level developments***

*M. Tammelin, C. Niemistö*

In light of the attempt to harmonize both care and gender equality developments across the EU member states, as steered by the EU Work-Life Balance Directive from 2019 and the European care strategy from 2022, we explore the Finnish home care leave, and how it is framed **in the recent national family policy and strategy documents**. Drawing on Bacchi's (1999) approach for conducting WPR research (What's the Problem Represented?), we analyze Finnish policy and strategy documents concerning the home care leave throughout the process of transposing the Work-Life Balance Directive into national law. We also account for the European care strategy, as the lead document for EU level development in care.

Following Nygård and colleagues (2019) our analyze on the recent debate and policy connects **to the idea that 'political language, and the ideas and narratives stories included in these, can be seen as 'actions' per se' as these influence on how any topic is understood and what should be done about them**. In political debates and policy regarding care of small children, Finland has traditionally been a country divided between public day care and the home care leave. Finnish children have a universal right to daycare, and public day care is heavily subsidized. Alternatively, care of small children at home is enabled by the home care allowance, and widely used in reconciling work and care responsibilities.

The home care allowance was a result of a debate between those in favor of day care and those in favor of extended parental leaves already in the 1970s and 1980s, in general a debate between the political left and the political right. The popularity of the care leave has remained rather even, and rather paradoxically, Finland is a country with both a relatively high employment rate for women, a full-time working norm for both women and men, and a relatively large number of parents, dominantly women, staying on care leave with their small children. The long leaves are, however, criticized for stalling gender equality in the labor market and society at large, especially for women of more precarious positions. However, the home care allowance, seems to be an important benefit in lengthening parenting leave, especially for mothers, but both for those in a precarious labor market position, but also for those in stronger labor market positions (Lammi-Taskula et al, 2024), regardless of some rather opposite policy aspirations within the EU.

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## *Unpacking Germany's Slow Uptake of Day Care: The role of Cultural Legacies and Regional Differences for daycare and maternal employment attitudes*

*E. Peters, M.-F. Philipp*

Despite significant expansions in formal daycare and the introduction of a legal entitlement for a daycare spot for children below age 3 in Germany, take-up for toddlers has increased only slowly (Jessen et al. 2020). Potential reasons for the low take-up include widespread ideals of parental (maternal) care resulting in skepticism towards non-parental care and rather traditional views toward maternal employment (Ruckdeschel 2015; Begall et al. 2023; Huebener et al. 2023). However, important differences between Eastern and Western Germany exist: although attitudes and employment patterns have converged since reunification, they remain more egalitarian in the East, and coverage as well as take-up of formal daycare are

higher and more socially accepted in the East (Trappe et al. 2015; Barth et al. 2020; Stahl & Schober 2018).

Against this backdrop, we explore attitudes towards daycare take-up and maternal employment and how they differ across social groups and specifically between East and West Germany. We use data from the PASS-Panel waves 5(2011), 10(2016) and 16(2022). Regardless of their parenthood status, respondents were asked at what age of their (hypothetical) child they could imagine using a) regular childcare for a few hours a day and b) full-day childcare (at least 35 hours a week) outside the family. It was specified that childcare outside the family encompasses crèches, kindergartens, and childminders. Furthermore, respondents were asked at which age of the child a mother could work for a) at least 15 hours a week and b) full-time (>30 hours a week). The analytical sample contains 13,200 individuals and 29,314 observation years.

We conducted pooled linear regression models controlling for wave to understand how respondents' answers differed across time and how acceptance of institutional childcare and maternal employment differ between East and West Germany. Results reveal that respondents' assessments at which age children can attend institutional childcare a) for a few hours a day and b) full-time statistically significantly decreased from 2011 to 2016 with no further reductions to 2022. This reduction is more pronounced for West Germans. East German participants state that full-time childcare is appropriate for a child aged around 3½ whereas West German participants, on average, state it is appropriate at around age 6. Regarding maternal employment, there seems to be no statistically significant change among East German participants. In contrast, the appropriate child's age for mothers to work part-time or full-time decreased from 2011 to 2016 for part-time employment, and for full-time employment, there is another reduction to 2022. West German participants consider the age of 3½ years appropriate for mothers to return to work part-time and 7 for full-time employment. Still, East German opinions are more favorable towards earlier maternal employment: part-time at around 2½ years and full-time at age 4. These findings shed light on the evolving attitudes towards childcare and maternal employment in Germany, providing valuable insights for policymakers and researchers.

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## *Engaging South African low-income fathers to lighten The Motherload*

*A. Jaga, F. Ross, C. Duffy, Y. Zembe, W. Zembe, S. Chapman, J. Battersby, W. Shen*

Our project investigates the labour of care through ‘the Motherload’— a concept we have developed to describe the highly gendered, mostly invisible, undervalued work that individuals performing mothering undertake, which hinders their economic security, safety, and wellbeing. This burden is intensified by the lack of support from fathers or male partners in

child-rearing and household responsibilities. South Africa's entrenched patriarchal culture maintains traditional gender norms, but economic necessity and high rates of femaleheaded households (42%) mean that mothers often juggle both breadwinning and homemaking with limited support. The gendered nature of under-supported care work and its detrimental consequences, especially for low-income mothers, is a concern for families, workplaces, the state, and policymakers.

Stage 1 of our partnered research engaged low-income mothers about intersecting vulnerabilities. They identified the lack of male involvement and support as a key contributor to the Motherload. In the current phase, we explore care work from the perspective of lowincome fathers, using the concept of the Motherload to visibilise care work, shift traditional gender norms and contribute to the establishment of care economies.

To deepen our understanding of barriers to **low-income fathers' involvement in caregiving**, we adopt an intersectional lens with particular attention to Southern sociocultural and material **conditions**. **South Africa's apartheid and colonial history** have created intersecting issues of socioeconomic status, race, and gender. Unequal gender roles and responsibilities persist, **exacerbating mothers' care loads**. **Intersectionality helps us explore and analyse the material, structural, and political realities that shape fathers' care narratives and lived experiences.**

**Our transdisciplinary research team is collaborating with a women's rights group, an NGO** program focused on gender inequity by redefining 'manhood', our provincial government, and a group of low-income mothers ( $n = 10$ ) and fathers ( $n = 12$ ), over 24 months. Rooted in feminist, decolonial praxis, we use a participatory action approach (PAR), employing photovoice. In this stage, we engage low-income fathers, to discuss what care means to them, their understanding of gender norms, how they can help reduce the Motherload, and barriers to their involvement as fathers in the South African context. This method shifts development inquiry from a top-down process to a participant-led and responsive approach. This ensures that policies reflect the diverse voices and realities of the population they aim to serve. PAR is an iterative cycle of research, action, and reflection, potentially leaving low-income fathers with new skills, goals, interests, and support groups. Regular stakeholder reflection and learning sessions in this study embed the lived realities and values into policy refinements more rapidly for sustainable solutions.

Preliminary findings give greater insights into how South African low-income fathers perceive their roles in this context, how they understand care, the Motherload, and the persistence of patriarchies. Additionally, they highlight barriers to shifting traditional gender norms and contributing to communities and economies of care. Incorporating these lived realities into policy design can help transform gender norms and foster care economies in South Africa and globally, advancing gender equality.

## 2.2: Working from Home, Gender and Family

### *The rise of working from home in Austria: New or old inequalities?*

*B. Riederer, C. Berghammer, G. Göttl*

This study examines the “new normal” of working from home in 2022 in Austria, drawing a comparison with the pre-pandemic period. Its emphasis is on **changing inequalities in working from home between 2019 and 2022**, considering **gender (in relation to parenthood) and socio-economic inequalities (occupational status and education)**. Studying different kinds of inequalities and their interrelations allows us to address the following questions: Have existing inequalities increased? Have new inequalities evolved? Which characteristics were decisive: family characteristics, education, occupation? What was the role of other characteristics, e.g. housing, urban/rural context, company size? The study focuses on heterosexual **couples with and without children**. We examine couples (not individuals) as employment decisions are negotiated on this level and gender dynamics can be better understood. This perspective allows us to assess whether both partners, only the woman or only the man work from home. We study **Austria** which is a middle-of-the road country in terms of workplace flexibility within (the whole of) Europe, but characterised by less flexibility compared to other the other western European countries.

Our contribution to the literature is as follows. First, the study is among the first to explore working from home as a **new defining, permanent feature of labour markets**. Working from home has reached the centre of the workforce and is a job characteristic increasingly expected and demanded by employees. While working from home during the most urgent phases of the pandemic, spiking during lockdowns, has been intensively investigated, studies on the post-peak pandemic situation of working from home are still very rare. However, as working from home changes work relationships and is connected to new risks and opportunities, it is a topic of high scientific and social relevance. Second, this study analyses **working from home at the couple level**. Partners negotiate the distribution of paid and unpaid work between them, especially when children are present and thus unpaid work is extensive. Job characteristics matter in these negotiations. Working from home can be a resource for better balancing employment and family – a responsibility traditionally assigned to mothers. Thus, studying working from home leads to theoretical insights into gender dynamics at the couple level. **As place flexibility has risen, so has the prevalence of “dual working from home”**. This is relevant against the background of high couple status homogamy, implying a accumulation of two (dis)advantages.

The research is based on the **Austrian labour force survey** (LFS). The LFS is a continuously ongoing, compulsory survey, collecting information on all household members. Each quarter, around 22,500 households are surveyed. The LFS contains detailed socio-demographic and socio-economic information. We apply **multinomial logistic regression models and decomposition analyses**.

The theoretical framework relies on the demands/resource approach and the digital divide. Preliminary results show that the socio-economic gap in working from home has strongly grown, while the gender and parenthood gap remained remarkably stable. The increase was largest among younger, childless women leading to both partners working from home in this group. Although families with children did not generally adopt working from home to ameliorate work-family balance, parents with young children started to use it for this purpose.

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## ***Partners' Work-From-Home and Fertility Intentions among UK Couples***

*S. Yuan*

Fertility rates in many European countries have been declining, often falling below the replacement level that allows the population to remain stable. These pervasive trends can be partly linked to the increasing prevalence of childbearing postponements and childlessness across Europe (Kreyenfeld & Konietzka, 2017; Ohlsson-Wijk & Andersson, 2022). For example, in 2020, around half of women born in the 1990s (the latest cohort reaching 30 years old) in England and Wales did not have children by the age of 30, marking the highest recorded level (ONS, 2022c). Various socio-economic and structural factors, including work-life balance challenges and economic uncertainty, exacerbate this discrepancy between intention to have children and actual childbirth. Working from home (WFH) presents a unique opportunity or challenge for individuals striving to achieve their intended family size due to its significant impact on work and family lives.

Especially since the pandemic, WFH has become one of the most substantial changes in the workplace, significantly altering how people manage work and family lives. The increased adoption of WFH and the positive experiences associated with it have also contributed to diminishing cultural barriers and stigmas (Abendroth et al., 2022). Given these shifts and the prevalence of unachieved fertility goals, this study investigates how WFH influences the fertility realization once the fertility intentions are formed across differences across gender, parity, and occupation.

WFH, defined as completing job tasks outside a traditional office setting, often at home, represents a **significant shift in working culture (Chung & Booker, 2023)**. WFH's inherent flexibility in work location and hours can significantly differ from not only traditional onsite work but also other flexible working arrangements. While WFH may not explicitly indicate time flexibility, the flexibility to work outside of the office allows workers to leverage the saved commuting time and digital connectivity to tailor work hours around personal productivity peaks and life commitments (Sandoval-Reyes et al., 2021).

Due to the unique traits of WFH, particularly its flexibility and autonomy (Clark, 2000; Laß & Wooden, 2023), it has received increasing attention for its potential impact on childbearing decision-making, specifically the realization of fertility intentions.

On the one hand, WFH can potentially help workers to achieve their fertility intentions. Firstly, WFH may directly create the opportunity for workers to actively act their fertility intentions by granting them a longer period at home and may have more opportunities for sexual activities (Berrington et al., 2021). Secondly, WFH may enhance economic certainty for families, a crucial factor in childbearing decisions (Kreyenfeld et al., 2012; Oppenheimer, 1994). WFH enables better management of family responsibilities, especially beneficial for mothers who often face career disruptions due to childcare (Kahn et al., 2014). In liberal welfare systems like the UK, WFH offers a continuous career path without sacrificing wage and status (Anxo et al., 2007; Sigle-Rushton & Waldfogel, 2007). Thus homeworkers, especially women, do not need to worry about losing jobs or significant career sacrifices when it comes to childbirth. Thus, WFH may lower uncertainty regarding future careers for individuals, potentially easing the barriers to realize the intentions to have more kids. Thirdly, WFH may foster a more equitable distribution of domestic labour among couples (Craig & Churchill, 2021; Garcia, 2022), **crucial for improving women's realization of fertility intentions (Köppen & Trappe, 2019; McDonald, 2000)**. This redistribution challenges traditional gender roles, potentially reducing work-family conflicts (WFC) and enhancing relationship satisfaction (Blom et al., 2017), thereby positively influencing fertility.

On the other hand, WFH also presents challenges that could impede the action of realizing fertility intentions. Firstly, the lack of direct contact in remote settings can heighten feelings of isolation and job insecurity (Chung, 2020; Gottlieb-Cohen & Fosslien, 2023; **Nemţeanu & Dabija, 2023**). Particularly when considering the flexibility stigma associated with WFH, homeworkers may encounter negative stereotypes or biases about their commitment, productivity, and dedication to their roles (Chung, 2020). Those working flexibly may be **perceived as "poor workers" who prioritize family and personal needs over work efficiency** (Chung, 2020), regardless of the actual situation. Thus, homeworking workers may feel more insecure about their careers and would not take the risk to expand the family despite their intentions to have a kid. Secondly, WFH blurs work-family boundaries, often increasing both paid and unpaid working hours (Lott, 2020), and intensifying workloads (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). For women, who disproportionately handle domestic responsibilities, this can

exacerbate the burden of housework and childcare (Chung & Van der Lippe, 2020; Sullivan & Lewis, 2001). Additionally, the increase in men's participation in domestic tasks may still be **much less than women's** increase in domestic labour, reinforcing the traditional gender division (Chung & Booker, 2023). Finally, the increased working hours and total workload under the homeworking arrangement may also lead to infertility, miscarriage, and reduced sexual activity (Ahn et al., 2021; Bonde et al., 2013), impeding the realization of fertility intentions. Consequently, while WFH has the potential to help the realization of fertility intentions through increased work-life balance, economic stability and gender equality, it may also present as an obstacle despite of the intentions to have a baby.

The study leverages data from 2018 to 2023 of the Understanding Society, mainly considering how WFH arrangements help individuals achieve their short-term fertility intentions (within 3 years). The empirical process was two stages: 1) firstly conducting a event history analysis among workers who would like to have a kid in the next 3 years and 2) then using conducting heterogeneity analysis across gender, parity, and occupation lines. By examining the role of WFH in bridging the gap between fertility intentions and actual outcomes, we can gain insights into whether and how WFH arrangements help individuals achieve their desired family size.

Partly due to the unexpected surge in WFH during the pandemic, as well as its theoretical complexity, empirical studies on the relationship between WFH and fertility are very limited (Bailey et al., 2022; Kurowska et al., 2022; Osiewalska et al., 2022; Stone & Ozimek, 2023). While some studies have linked the observed rise in fertility rates in developed countries during the pandemic to WFH (Berrington et al., 2022; Kurowska et al., 2022; Sobotka et al., 2011), their discussions or findings surrounding the influence of WFH on fertility have largely remained either theoretical or inconsistent. Moreover, existing studies mainly focus on fertility intentions or realizations alone, lacking a life course perspective on how WFH may impact the realization of fertility intentions once they are formed. Furthermore, while much existing **research has focused on WFH's impacts on productivity, job satisfaction, and work-life balance**, there has been relatively little attention to its effects on family planning. Thus, this study will fill these gaps by focusing on the impact of working arrangement on the link between fertility intentions and their realization. By focusing on short-term fertility intentions, which are more concrete and easier to be impacted by individual circumstances than long-term intentions (Philipov & Bernardi, 2011), the study emphasizes the immediate socio-economic impacts of WFH. Policymakers and employers can also draw practical insights on how to support families in the current socio-economic climate, particularly in light of the ongoing shifts towards more flexible work arrangements post-pandemic.

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## ***Working from Home and Parental Childcare Division: Evidence from Two Years Covid-19 Pandemic***

*C. Boll, D. Müller, C. Osiander, S. Schüller*

During the Covid-19 pandemic, there were intense public debates about the unequal gender division of paid labor and unpaid care work between parents in many countries, especially when school and care systems were closed and childcare shifted to the home. Previous empirical research has mainly been concerned with parental division of unpaid care work in the immediate lockdown period at the very beginning of the pandemic. Exceptions that look at the medium-term developments up until the second lockdown in Germany are Boll *et al.* (2023) and Jessen *et al.* (2022). Both find that an initial shift towards a more equal division of childcare was rather limited in size and dissipated within a few months. Boll *et al.* (2023) further show that these temporary adjustments were driven by families in which full-time-employed mothers cannot work from home (WFH) and identify a second small shift with the second lockdown in early 2021.

Our analysis contributes to this strand of literature by examining the longer-term dynamics in Germany up until Spring 2022. Additionally, we investigate the role of parental WFH arrangements within families: this study provides novel evidence on the association between WFH options for parents that became salient during the pandemic and dynamics in the

parental childcare division. Our investigation of the parental division of childcare aims to address two main research questions. The first question concerns the overall dynamics of the parental division of childcare: did the gendered pattern in childcare provision change over time, and if so, in what direction? The second research question concerns the dynamics of the division of parental childcare across specific subgroups: (how) are changes in the division of childcare associated with specific employment/WFH constellations in the parental couple?

We employ unique data from a (bi)monthly survey based on a random sample from administrative data (IAB-HOPP). Based on a sample of 598 mothers and fathers providing full information throughout, we find dynamics toward a more equal division of parental childcare. Up to April 2021, drivers are couples with already care-involved fathers. Later, couples with a strongly traditional division drive these changes. The latter shift emerges in parental constellations where fathers unilaterally gain working from home (WFH) possibilities. Within this group, we identify two types: (a) “necessity meets opportunity” where employed mothers have no option to WFH, but fathers can WFH and (b) “opportunity only” with stay-at-home mothers where fathers gain WFH options. Our results give moderate support for optimism but also point to an ambiguous role of WFH.

## Literature

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## *Long-term implications of remote work for families with children in the Polish context. A qualitative longitudinal study*

*P. Binder*

The proposed paper discusses the social consequences of the pandemic observed at the intersection of remote work and the life of families with children. Its purpose is to answer whether remote work experience deepens or weakens the inequalities between women and men in the context of various dimensions of work. In theoretical terms, these considerations are embedded, on the one hand, in the context of reflection on the changes in family patterns (Česnuitytė i in., 2017; Ciabattari, 2021) and conflicting expectations towards the social roles

of women and men (Acker, 1990; Gerson, 2010; Hochschild & Machung, 2012). On the other hand, the text refers to the boundary theory rooted in the field of deliberation on remote work (Ammons & Markham, 2004; Ashforth i in., 2000; Nippert-Eng, 1996). The proposed paper is based on 66 individual semi-structured interviews with gender-balanced group parents who experienced remote work during the pandemic [1]. The interviews were collected in three waves as part of a qualitative panel study between 2020 and 2022. The systematic thematic analysis was supported by MAXQDA software and focused on the three dimensions of work (professional work, care work, and unpaid work at home). The article contributes to the literature on the subject in two ways. Firstly, the conducted research confirms that it is essential to consider whether the work of one or both partners has been transferred from office to home. This vital distinction is mainly overlooked in the literature on remote work. Secondly, the possibility of returning to the same participants allowed for capturing the evolution of family practices from a dynamic perspective, distinguishing the presented analyses from the static pictures of the pandemic dominating the current research.

[1] The selected interviews were part of a larger dataset collected within the project "Determinants of change in social attitudes and lifestyle in the context of current challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic in Poland" at the IFiS PAN by the team of Piotr Binder, Hanna Bojar, and Dariusz Wojakowski, commissioned by the Institute of Environmental Protection—National Research Institute (Contract no. PZ. 022.19.2020.CC-CD) and supported by IFiS PAN statutory research fund.

## 2.3: Changing Norms on Fatherhood - Part I (Involvement)

### *Fathers adopting new practices? Changes in the time use of Finnish fathers in childcare activities*

*A. Miettinen, J. Närvi, J. Lammi-Taskula*

This study focuses on the time use of Finnish parents in childcare, as well as gender differences and changes in time use in childcare activities during the past decades. Parental time is characterized by several parallel developments in Western countries. First, there has been an **increase in parents' time devoted to childcare**, related to norms and expectations concerning **'good' parenthood and an ideology of intensive parenting** (Rose et al, 2014; Miller, 2017). Second, the idea of caring fatherhood has gained popularity, and fathers have increased their involvement in childcare, and, less markedly, in housework (Dermott, 2008; Johansson and Klinth, 2008; Sullivan et al., 2014). The Nordic countries have been forerunners in this change, especially by developing policies that promote gender equality in work and in childcare. Yet,

ideas and practices related to the gendered division of labour change slowly (Ellingsaeter & Kitterød, 2023). **Despite a long tradition of women's labour market participation, even in the Nordic countries, mothers continue to devote more time to childcare than fathers** (Grunow & Evertsson, 2016; Ylikännö et al., 2015). Moreover, mothers and fathers often adopt gender specific tasks in childcare such as mothers doing basic childcare, and fathers engaging in playing with the children (Attila et al., 2019). Past research has also shown clear socioeconomic disparities in parental childcare time; highly educated and well-off parents devoting more time to childcare than others, especially to developmental activities (Monna & Gauthier, 2008; Sullivan et al., 2015; Schneider et al., 2018).

We use the Finnish Time Use Survey data from years 1999-2000, 2009-2010 and 2020-2021 to study the time used in childcare by Finnish parents, with a focus on fathers (N=2,234). We ask 1) How has fathers time use in childcare as total, and in different tasks of childcare changed over time? 2) Have the gender differences in childcare time and in different tasks diminished?, **and 3) Are there sociodemographic differences in fathers' time use?** We use regression analysis to investigate time trends and factors related to fathers' time use in childcare activities.

The preliminary results show that the gender gap in time used for childcare has continued to narrow. Although also mothers use more time than previously in childcare, fathers are catching up and account now for about 40 percent of the total childcare time, including tasks **related to children's basic care. Income is positively associated with fathers' childcare time, up to a threshold.** The increase in time use in childcare tasks over the past twenty years has been strong in all educational groups of fathers; however, recent development suggests that **differences in childcare time by fathers' educational attainment are increasing.** Based on the results, we discuss the possible mechanisms of **change in fathers' childcare time and reflect the meaning of the changes for today's parenthood in Finland.**

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## *Differential Paternal Involvement and Sibling Relationship Quality*

*T. Eichhorn*

An increasing proportion of fathers desire a more active and involved form of fatherhood (Lamb et al., 1985; Palkovitz, 2019; Pleck, 2010) that transcends the traditional breadwinner role model (Adler et al., 2015; Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2020; Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, 2016). While recent empirical studies on fatherhood compare different fathers, couples, or households based on various characteristics (e. g., Cabrera, 2010; Macon et al., 2017; Petts & Knoester, 2018), conceptual discussions (Lamb & Lewis, 2010; Norman, 2017) suggest that fathers may vary their fathering practices among their children. Although some empirical work on differential parenting

(Feinberg & Hetherington, 2001) has shown that parents generally differentiate among their children based on age, gender, and degree of kinship (Aldous et al., 1998; Atzaba-Poria & Pike, 2008; Poonam & Punia, 2012), differential fatherhood has been scarcely examined. This study addresses this gap and explores, using social network analysis, whether differences in fathers' involvement with their children are associated with poorer sibling relationships as rated by these children, thereby deepening the understanding of the connections within family relationship structures (Barnett, 2008; Cowan & Cowan, 1987; Voorpostel & Blieszner, 2008; White, 1999).

Utilizing data from the German AID:A Family Survey 2019 (Kuger et al., 2020), the study applies a cross-sectional analysis design that includes information from fathers and their children across 532 sibling networks. The measurements encompass dimensions of paternal involvement (shared activities, conversations with the child about their experiences, school involvement) regarding their children separately, and the children's assessments of the relationship quality with their siblings. Additional characteristics of the children (age, gender, biological kinship to the father), which may influence paternal involvement, are used as control variables to estimate the direct effect of differential involvement on sibling relationships with fewer distortions. The statistical analysis employs Exponential Random Graph Models (ERGM) for small networks using the R package *Ergmito* (Vega Yon et al., 2021) to estimate the likelihood of a positively rated sibling relationship based on the differential involvement fathers showed toward their respective children.

The study's initial findings indicate that differences in fathers' involvement among their children impact the sibling relationships among the children. It is not the absolute differences in involvement between the decisive children. Children who experience stronger involvement from their father than their siblings are less likely to rate the relationship with their siblings as good or very good than children who experience less involvement than their siblings. This difference persists even when controlling for differences among the siblings regarding their age, gender, and kinship to the reporting father.

This study contributes to the understanding of the dynamics of family relationships and sheds light on how differential treatment of children by fathers can manifest within the family relationship network. The study thus extends knowledge about involved fatherhood by profitably embedding the concept into a network-theoretical perspective and is particularly suitable for discussion against the backdrop of the Specific Session on *Changing norms on fatherhood*.

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## *On emotionally involved fathers and family breadwinners – being a dad and fatherhood in transition*

S. Jäde

Historical, social and societal changes have altered the conditions under which parents', fathers' and mothers' live families today. Like the realities of parents' and families' lives, the images of parenthood, fatherhood and motherhood have also changed, although a simultaneity of 'traditional' and 'modern' guiding images can be observed (e.g. Lück 2015; Toppe 2021). In recent years so-called 'new' fathers have become the centre of attention (e.g. Tolasch/Seehaus 2017). Topics such as self-images of fathers, social perceptions of fatherhood and work-sharing models are researched, especially considering the need to establish gender equality on different societal levels. However, this focus often means that the interdependencies of parenthood, motherhood and fatherhood slip from view. To better understand (images and concepts of) fatherhood, it is important to analyse its relation to (images and concepts of) motherhood. It is only through such a relationalisation that the complexity of today's (self) perceptions, images and concepts of fatherhood become clear.

This is precisely the aim of this contribution, which asks from a praxeological perspective *how* parents-to-be as couples jointly bring about being a dad and fatherhood in the transition to (renewed) parenthood. In addition to parenthood-related orientations and the associated images of fatherhood and motherhood, the practice of division of labour, which ranges from parity/egalitarian to gender-differentiated, is examined. It will become clear that everyday theoretical assumptions about and images of fatherhood and motherhood, structural and organisational conditions, the couple concept and the individual situation of families are relevant to the opportunities of fathers to participate in family life, family work, care and the education of their children.

The contribution combines theoretical considerations on contemporary parenthood, fatherhood and motherhood with empirical **analyses**. It **draws on data from the author's** completed PhD project on the transition to (renewed) parenthood. The main question of the study was *how* the transition to (renewed) parenthood is *done* in practice by the parents-to-be (Jäde 2021). The project was designed as a qualitative longitudinal study with three data collection points (before pregnancy, approx. six and twelve months after the birth). The data was analysed using the Documentary Method and an overarching meaning genetic typology of the transition to parenthood for all data collection points was developed.

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***Towards involved fatherhood? Shifting Polish fathers' attitudes to parental leave amidst legislative changes to their leave entitlements***

A. Kurowska, K. Suwada

## Introduction

While fully paid maternity leave has been available to mothers in Poland since 1974, fathers only gained their first week of fully paid paternity leave in 2010. Soon after, this was extended to two weeks, and in 2013, 26 weeks of paid parental leave were introduced. Nevertheless, until **2022, fathers' use of parental leave remained minimal, accounting for only 1% of those taking leave** (Kurowska et al., 2023). In contrast, the share of fathers who took paternity leave increased significantly from 4% in 2011 to 67% in 2023. In April 2023, nine weeks of a father quota in the parental leave scheme were introduced following the implementation of the EU Work-Life Balance Directive.

## The research interest

Our study aims to analyze the changes in attitudes toward parenting leave take-up among Polish fathers over the past decade, marked by substantial changes to their leave rights. Specifically, we seek to understand the extent to which Polish fathers perceive the need to use the leave, their sense of entitlement to parenting leaves, their attitudes toward gender roles related to childcare and leave take-up, and their ideas about fatherhood.

## The theoretical background

It has been shown that public policies can play a crucial role in shaping the attitudes and behaviors of individuals (e.g. Tummers, 2019). Specifically, research has demonstrated that parental leave for fathers disrupts traditional gender roles and promotes less stereotypical ones (e.g. Tavits et al., 2024) and that parental leave schemes influence fathers' behaviors (e.g. Rostgaard & Ejrnaes, 2021). However, to our knowledge, no study has examined the attitudinal and behavioral changes related to parental leaves, gender roles, and fatherhood among fathers in Poland along with the profound changes to parental leave system in the last decades. Our study aims to fill this gap.

## The methodological approach

We apply reflexive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2022) to semi-structured interviews conducted with fathers in 2012/2013 (32 interviews), in 2015 (18 interviews), in 2017 (23 interviews) and in 2023/2024 (30 interviews).

## The preliminary results

While in 2012/2013 fathers were rather critical or ambivalent towards taking parental leave, by 2023/2024 they exhibited positive attitudes towards the idea of parental leave reserved for

fathers. This change in attitudes to leave was accompanied by a general shift in attitudes towards gender roles in family and fathering practices. They see parental leave as an opportunity to be an involved father. Nevertheless, fathers often sustain their privileged position as men. They hold a debilitating power that allows them to choose their level of engagement in care work (Suwada, 2022). It is up to them to decide whether they take parental leave, for how long and when. Consequently, although non-transferable parental leave makes men more involved in their fatherhood, it is far from reducing gender inequalities at home. It can be argued that gender inequalities are reproduced in new forms that often conceal existing system of power relations between men and women.

### How the research relates to the conference topic or session

Our paper addresses the changing models of fatherhood and gender roles in Polish society over the last 10 years. At the same time, it offers a critical reflection on how non-transferable parental leave, enforced by the EU directive, serves as a tool for reducing gender inequalities. As such, it fits **stream 4 as it addresses pathways promoting/”destabilizing” gendered concepts of parenthood.**

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## 2.4: Parenting Leaves, Care Leaves and (In)Equalities - Part II (Wage and Labour Market Impacts)

### *Parental leave of mothers and fathers: patterns, motives and labour market effects among married couples in Germany*

*C. Frodermann, A-C. Bächmann, A. Filser*

The transition to parenthood is a critical juncture for gender inequalities in the labour market as heterosexual couples tend to reorganize paid and unpaid work in traditional ways after a **child is born. Therefore, increasing fathers' involvement in childcare is widely seen as a key policy measure to reduce gender inequalities.** In Germany, a central parental leave reform in 2007 created incentives for fathers to participate more in childcare by introducing a two-month daddy quota. However, in 2022, more than half of fathers still did not claim any parental allowance. Prior studies have highlighted that **fathers' use of parental leave is stratified by socio-economic and educational differences.** However, due to data limitations partner characteristics had to be neglected so far. We address this research gap and investigate what *individual- and couple-level factors can encourage fathers to take parental leave.* In our analytical strategy we model a two-step decision-making process for fathers where the first decision is whether to take any parental leave, and the second decision is on the duration of parental leave among those who do take parental leave.

In a next step we concentrate on the often-mentioned fear of career disadvantages as a central reason for the reluctance to take paternal leave. By using a two-way fixed effects models we *investigate the short and medium-term wage consequences of family related employment interruption of fathers.* We analyse whether potential wage penalties will decrease over time as the proportion of fathers taking parental leave, especially the two "daddy months", increases and employers' attitudes towards parental leave might change, which could lead to greater social and workplace acceptance.

In a last step we focus on mothers as earlier studies suggest that the division of parental leave forms the basis for the further division of care and household work within the couple and should also have an influence on the employment decisions of both partners. However, limited due to a lack of long-running data on both partners, **the consequences of fathers' parental leave uptake on mothers' employment trajectories after childbirth have been unexplored so far.** We address this gap by employing time-specific piecewise constant and competing risks models. We concentrate on the re-entry of mothers after childbirth and investigate, *how*

*fathers' involvement in parental leave shapes the duration of mothers' employment interruption as well as their work volume when returning to the labour market.*

In our analyses, we rely on a unique administrative dataset from the German Integrated Employment Biographies that contains complete employment histories of married couples through 2019. Our sample covers more than 160,000 couples who became parents between 2007 and 2013. Extensive and daily information on the employment biographies of both partners allows us to analyse parental leave patterns within the couple in detail.

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### *The critical juncture of childbirth: applying a life course lens to disentangle the impact of leave policy and class*

*M. Reichert, T. Emery, A. Bartova*

Project in 3 sentences: This project treats the gender dynamics of parents between childbirth **and widely available preschool provision (usually at the child's age of 3)**. The theoretical approach seeks to connect research on the life course with comparative welfare state research. The strategy is to perform sequence analysis on micro level data containing labor market activity of the parents combined with policy information such as maternity and parental leave, and ECEC.

#### Motivation

The birth of a child has a sustained gendered and classed impact on the on the family and work domains in the life courses of cohabiting parents (Le Goff and Lévy 2016; Firat, Visser, and Kraaykamp 2023). The months and years around childbirth are especially important for the labor market attachment and long term earnings of the mother (Goldin 2014; Van Winkle 2020; Zagel and Van Winkle 2022), as the policy mix structuring this period in most countries falls short of insuring against the extra demand in care work, leading to early childcare gaps (Saraceno 2011). The access to adequately timed, compensated, or shared leaves, together with early childhood education and care is part of the potential solution to safeguarding mothers from reduced labor market attachment and ensuring that the critical juncture of childbirth is not followed by economic dependency on the partner or the state (Thévenon 2013; Ferragina 2020). Leave policies, however, differ widely between countries in their eligibility criteria, duration, and remuneration. Varying eligibility criteria in turn imply varying degrees of policy coverage within countries, which in turn translates to potentially unequal

access, exacerbating already existing inequalities along the lines of class or gender (Bartova, Otto, and Van Lancker 2022; Dobrotić and Blum 2020). The same pattern of inequality in access holds for institutionalized childcare provision (Van Lancker 2017)

## Contribution

In this article, we aim to describe the typical ways cohabiting parents navigate the critical juncture of childbirth in European countries from a labor market perspective, and how this juncture is moderated by leave policies and childcare usage. We aim to make a threefold contribution. First, zooming in on the critical juncture of childbirth making use of harmonized high detail monthly activity data for both parents, spanning from 10 months before to 24 months after childbirth. Second, describing the interaction of individual level circumstances and leave and childcare policy regimes in structuring the life course in different European countries.

## Theoretical framework

We rely on recent theorizing on the life course which emphasizes the interplay of micro level circumstances and macro level factors in structuring the life course (Bernardi, Huinink, and Settersten 2019; Heckhausen and Buchmann 2019; Fasang, Gruijters, and Van Winkle 2024). This structuration in turn institutionalizes time and place specific patterns of timing and sequencing, creating a normative environment within which future cohorts are socialized (Giddens 1986; Kohli 2007; Levy and Buchmann 2016).

## Data and analytical strategy

**The micro level data describing individuals' activity trajectories underlying this article is** provided by the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), which we aggregate to a cumulative panel (Borst and Wirth 2022). To supplement labor market activity information of parents, we estimate individual level policy eligibility, duration of policy coverage, and level of remuneration based on yearly country level leave policy information and past labor market history of individuals (Bartova 2022). We furthermore impute childcare usage from the cross-sectional version of the EU-SILC into the longitudinal version by predictive mean matching (Buuren and Groothuis-Oudshoorn 2011). This results in **three linked trajectories: mothers' and fathers' activity states around childbirth (including estimated leave)**, linked with their respective childcare usage. Making use of multi-domain sequence analysis, we describe and cluster the obtained trajectories to generate a typology of typical transitions (Piccarreta 2017; Ritschard, Liao, and Struffolino 2023). We finally examine the association of cluster membership and individual level and circumstantial

factors, such as education, country membership, or birth-history by means of a multinomial logistic regression.

## Preliminary results

### Sequence Analysis

Descriptive results show that the critical period after childbirth is highly gendered (see Figure 1). The life course of mothers is markedly different for mothers (more part time work, more inactivity, larger impact of maternity leave, coupled with relatively high transversal entropy) than for fathers (continuous full-time employment and comparatively low entropy).

Between and within country variance of the trajectories is shown in Figure 3. It shows a similar **albeit more complex picture than Figure 1, namely that fathers' trajectories are much closer to continuous Full-Time employment (FT), and exhibit a smaller within group variance as well, in every country contained in the sample. Mother's distance to FT is much larger in every country, and trajectories are also much more heterogeneous.**

Furthermore, the life course of especially mothers is structured by individual level factors as well. The example shown in Figure 2 highlights how different the period around childbirth is structured by level of education of the mother, showing a clear educational gradient of higher education leading to higher continuous levels of (full-time) employment and, remarkably, a much higher coverage through maternity leave policy.

Clustering the sequences leads to an optimal solution of 6 clusters as shown in Figure 4 (Piccarreta 2017; Ritschard, Liao, and Struffolino 2023). The first cluster (I) is marked by continuous inactivity with barely any maternity or parental leave coverage. The second cluster (I/FT = ML/PL) contains mostly sequences which sometimes were employed prior to childbirth, but were universally covered by both maternity or extensive parental leave. The third cluster (FT = ML = FT) is the largest, containing sequences in continuous full-time employment interrupted by short maternity leave coverage after childbirth. The fourth cluster (PT = ML = PT) is similar to the third, but exemplified by continuous part-time employment with a short spell of maternity leave after childbirth. The fifth cluster (FT = ML = PT) is interesting as it contains sequences of mothers working full time before childbirth, being covered by maternity leave, and returning almost exclusively to part-time work post leave. The last cluster (FT = ML/PL = I) contains sequences of mothers mostly working full time before childbirth, being covered by short maternity and parental leave, followed by abstention from the labour market post leave.

## Multinomial Regression Results

A multinomial regression will be used to assess individual level (such as education) and macro level contextual factors (such as country membership) with cluster membership. Table 1 reveals several significant and interesting relationships.

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## Tables and Figures

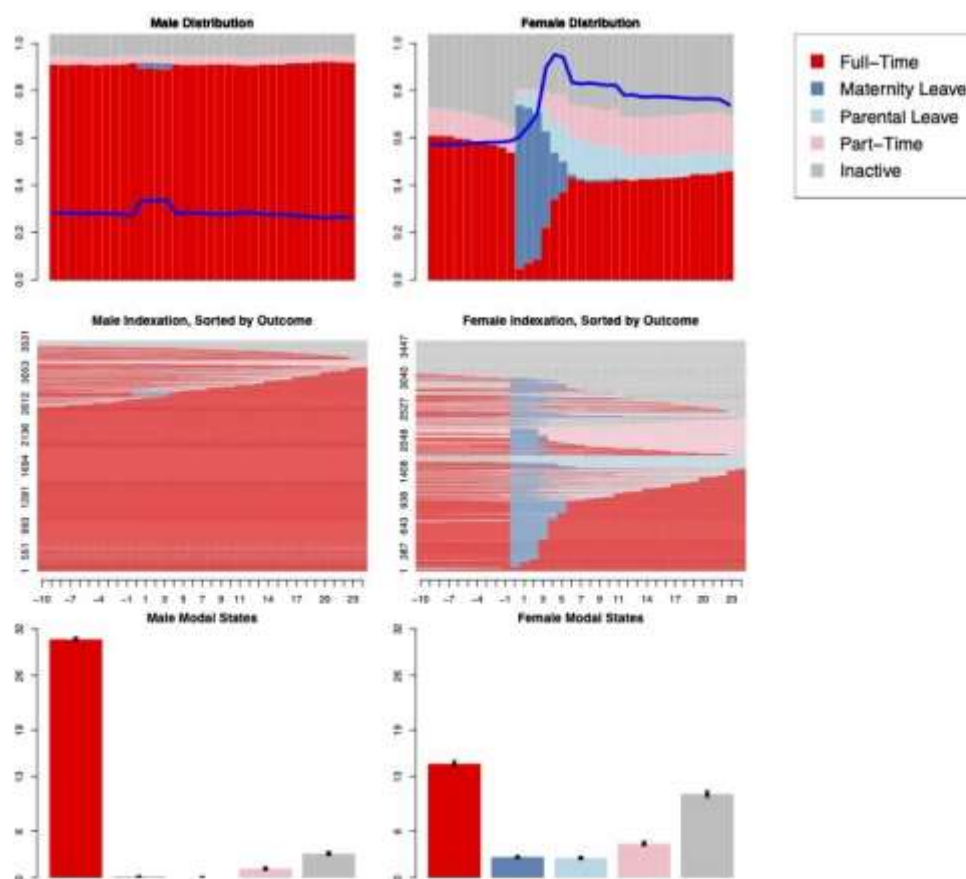


Figure 1: Stratified by gender, birth at month 0 (aggregate frequency of state distributions; sequences sorted by outcome; modal states)

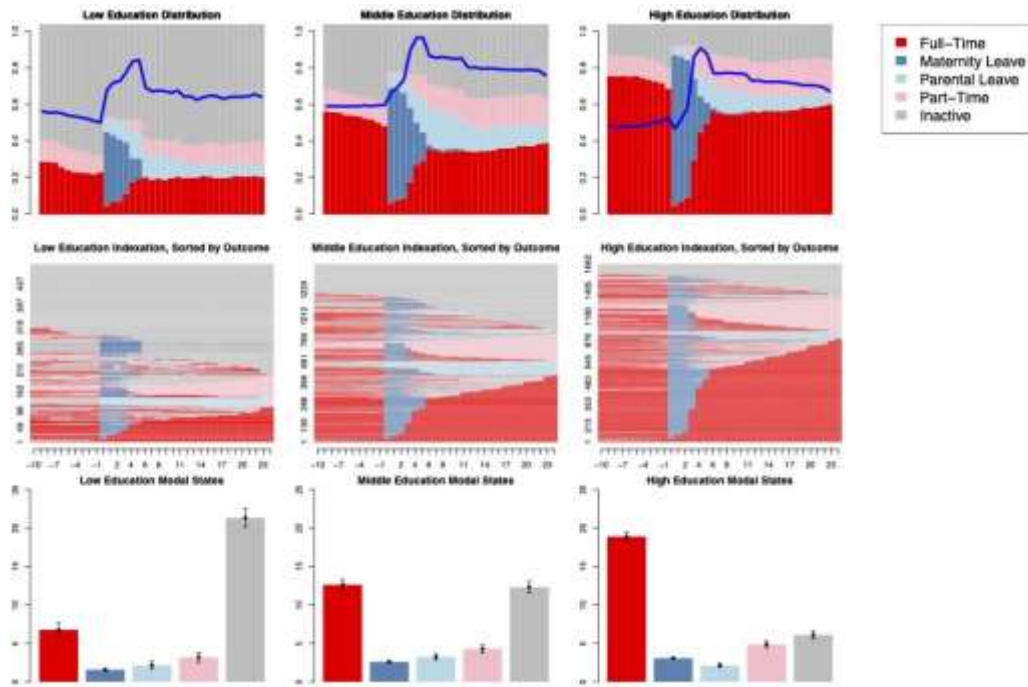


Figure 2: Mothers, stratified by education, birth at month 0 (Aggregate frequency of state distributions; sequences sorted by outcome; modal states)

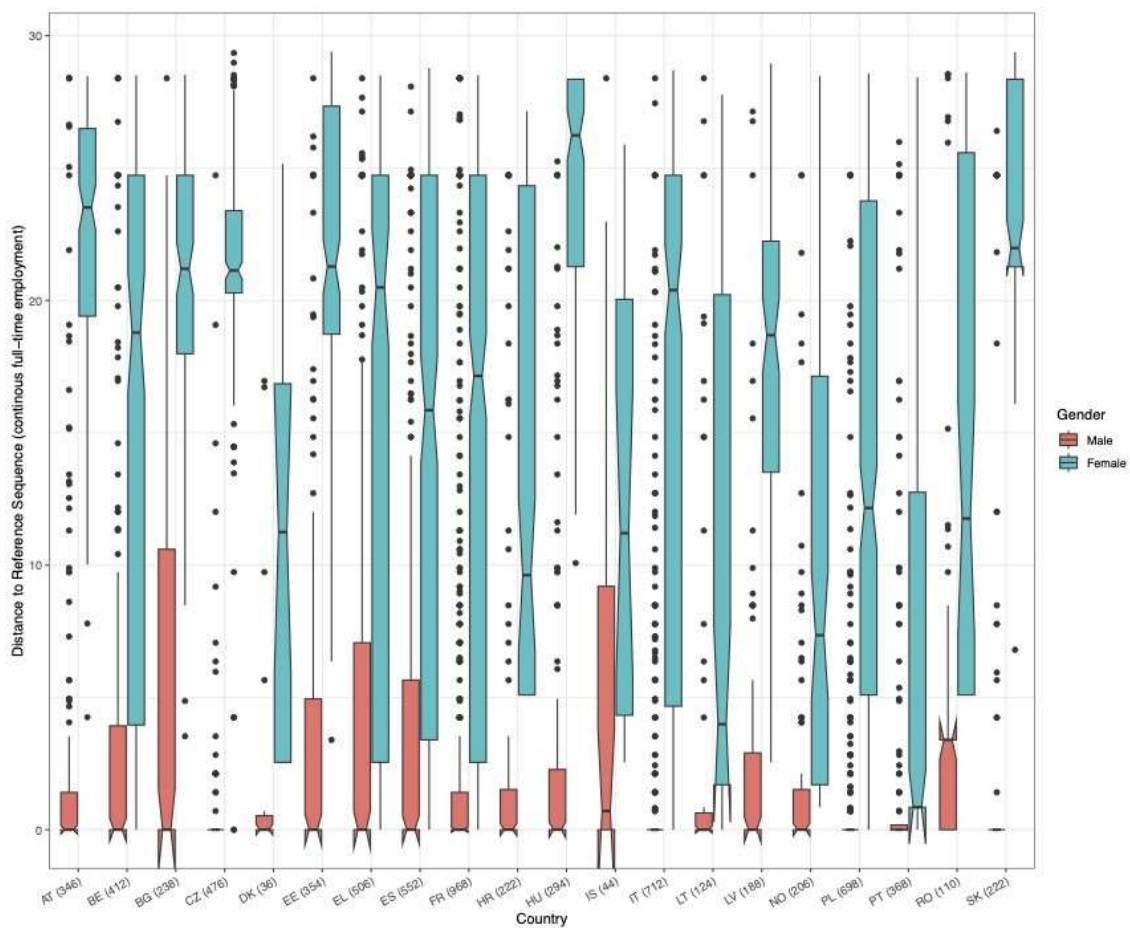


Figure 3: Mean distance (obtained via Optimal Matching) to continuous full-time employment by country and sex; higher values equal more distance

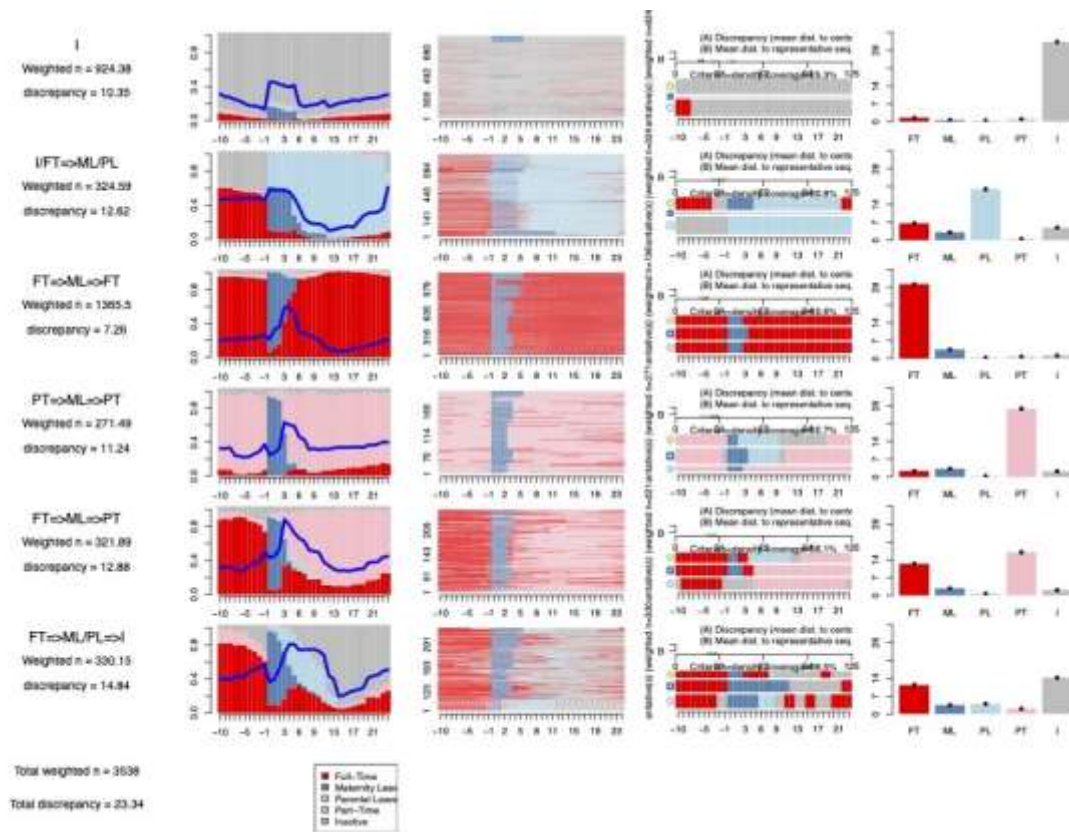


Figure 4: 6 cluster solution, fathers trajectories not shown (Agg. frequency distribution; indexation of sequences; typical sequences; modal states)

Table 1: Log odds of being sorted into a specific cluster, ratios relative to reference cluster

FT=ML=FT

	Dependent variable:				
	I (1)	I/FT=>ML/PL (2)	PT=>ML=>PT (3)	FT=>ML=>PT (4)	FT=>ML/PL=>I (5)
edulmiddle	-1.445*** (0.165)	-0.397 (0.408)	-0.353 (0.277)	-0.122 (0.299)	-0.322 (0.252)
edulhigh	-2.868*** (0.170)	-1.150*** (0.407)	-0.999*** (0.271)	-0.401 (0.289)	-0.965*** (0.251)
cpre dummy	0.685*** (0.106)	0.305 (0.225)	0.729*** (0.162)	0.178 (0.146)	0.086 (0.138)
gpindh dummy	0.188 (0.227)	0.267 (0.418)	0.050 (0.496)	0.426 (0.390)	0.234 (0.292)



countryFR	1.864 (0.965)	-4.067 (132.205)	3.598 (0.214)	4.291*** (0.194)	1.055*** (0.208)
countryHR	1.347 (0.983)	-16.625*** (0.0001)	1.019 (0.700)	-15.652*** (0.00000)	0.790** (0.316)
countryHU	-16.722*** (0.00001)	14.581 (19.809)	-13.743*** (0.00000)	-12.522*** (0.00000)	-12.544*** (0.00001)
countryIS	1.124 (1.124)	-20.482*** (0.00000)	-24.268	3.874*** (0.557)	-0.007 (0.995)
countryIT	2.266** (0.965)	6.189 (19.825)	3.528*** (0.233)	3.686*** (0.237)	1.237*** (0.219)
countryLT	1.809* (1.006)	-17.799*** (0.00001)	1.131 (0.969)	2.085*** (0.701)	0.655 (0.467)
countryLV	2.347** (1.023)	11.451 (19.806)	1.932** (0.981)	3.527*** (0.539)	3.282*** (0.299)
countryNO	0.930 (1.012)	-14.161*** (0.0005)	2.994*** (0.350)	2.868*** (0.404)	0.772** (0.360)
countryPL	2.091** (0.966)	-1.562 (45.041)	1.436*** (0.422)	2.884*** (0.271)	1.532*** (0.191)
countryPT	0.479 (0.978)	-11.476*** (0.019)	0.706 (0.578)	0.051 (0.953)	-0.424 (0.370)
countryRO	1.572 (1.010)	8.672 (19.812)	2.341*** (0.598)	-20.919	0.169 (0.590)
countrySK	-13.199*** (0.0001)	15.119 (19.815)	-10.951*** (0.00000)	4.368*** (1.156)	-11.458*** (0.00001)
Constant	-1.009 (0.966)	-10.512 (19.807)	-4.351*** (0.285)	-4.840*** (0.297)	-2.012*** (0.245)
Akaike Inf. Crit.	7,525.380	7,525.380	7,525.380	7,525.380	7,525.380
Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01					

## *Take it or leave it: The relationships between the length of parental leave and ideal worker and mother norms in Germany and Israel*

A. M. Stertz, R. Waismel-Manor

Working women frequently struggle to balance work and family after becoming mothers. This means meeting the expectations imposed on them by their roles as parents as well as

employees. Most countries allow working women to take a short leave of absence to care for their newborn, but each country has its own regulations regarding maternity protection, parental leave, and how mothers can use and prolong their leave. Considering country-specific parental leave legislation, we analyze how women are perceived in their roles as mothers and workers in Germany and Israel based on the length of their parental leave. Building on the paradigm of the social construction of gender and scholarship on gender stereotypes, we **hypothesize that women who take a shorter leave are seen as more “ideal workers” than women who take longer leaves and vice versa with regard to the “good mother” norm.**

We conducted online experimental studies in Germany ( $N = 262$ ) and Israel ( $N = 324$ ) in which participants had to evaluate a fictitious woman on the basis of a vignette. Leave length was experimentally manipulated. Thereby, we investigated the impact of taking 4, 6, 12 and 36 months of leave (the latter only in Germany) on person perception. The concept of the “ideal worker” included three dimensions derived from the literature: professional commitment, professional competence, and time-related behaviors. The perceptions of “a good mother” consisted of two dimensions: family commitment and parental competence.

In the family domain, German women who had taken lengthy leave—three years—received the highest ratings on family commitment. Nonetheless, there was no difference in the commitment ratings for the 4, 6, and 12 months leave circumstances. In Israel, mothers were also perceived as more committed to their families if they took longer leaves. By contrast, **mothers’ leave length had hardly any (Germany) or no influence (Israel) on the parental competence evaluation.**

In the work domain, we discovered that German women who took a three-year leave were perceived least career-committed and were evaluated most negatively in terms of time-related behaviors. However, there was no variation in professional competence ratings based on the leave length. In Israel, only work dedication (a part of career commitment) was negatively associated with leave length. Importantly, Israeli women generally received low ratings on professional competence ( $M = 3.3$ ) and time-related behaviors ( $M = 2.8$ ; on scales of 1 to 5). In Germany, women received more positive ratings on professional competence ( $M = 3.7 - 4.0$ ), but the ratings on time-related behaviors were also rather low ( $M = 2.5 - 3.0$ ).

In conclusion, we found similar results in both countries regarding family-related perceptions. Work-related perceptions were more affected by the leave length in Germany than in Israel, but this was driven by the very long leave of 3 years—a leave duration, which is legally offered in Germany but not in Israel. Overall, this research extends our understanding of attitudes toward women in the workplace and at home.

## *Economic Rewards for Non-Traditional Roles: The Wage Impact of Fatherhood in Spain*

*I. Lapuerta, M. Domínguez-Folgueras, M. José González*

This paper examines the influence of fatherhood on earnings in Spain, using panel data spanning from 2005 to 2021. While there exists substantial research regarding the adverse effects of motherhood on income, our understanding of its impact on fathers, particularly in the Spanish context, remains limited. In certain countries with available data, fathers tend to experience a financial advantage, commonly referred to as the "fatherhood bonus" or **"fatherhood premium"**. **This phenomenon is primarily attributed to gender role specialization**, where women assume caregiving responsibilities while men engage in paid employment, employers' preferences for male employees, and the self-selection of individuals into parenthood, as those more established in the labour market may also be more likely to become fathers.

This paper seeks to assess the impact of fatherhood on men's earnings and explore its underlying factors by focusing on three understudied dimensions: the wage advantage or disadvantage concerning fathers' occupational categories, family structures (men residing in heterosexual partnerships, same-sex partnerships, or single-parent households), and the use of longer-term parental leave to take care of young children after an initial spell of maternity and paternity leave. The study is grounded in three primary hypotheses. Firstly, we anticipate that the fatherhood bonus will be notably pronounced among men in higher occupational strata, as they confront greater opportunity costs when adjusting their working hours. Secondly, we expect the fatherhood bonus to be more substantial among men in heterosexual partnerships, owing to the heightened likelihood of gender specialization in such arrangements. Thirdly, regardless of their occupational characteristics and family structure, **we expect the use of parental leave will penalize men's wages due to the low commitment stigma**.

The study relies on data obtained from the Continuous Sample of Working Lives, a survey encompassing individuals who have made contributions to or received benefits from the Spanish social security system during the reference years. To estimate the anticipated earnings of men with and without children, we employ unconditional quantile regression on longitudinal data. Additionally, we integrate quantile regression with fixed effects techniques to account for self-selection into fatherhood.

### **Theoretical Focus**

A "fatherhood bonus" refers to the advantages that working fathers get in terms of pay and perceived competence in comparison with working mothers and childless men. The

fatherhood bonus occurs due to the belief that fathers have greater work commitment, stability, and deservingness, while mothers are perceived as exhausted and distracted at work, thereby perceiving them to be less productive.

**Two main theories explain the “fatherhood bonus”: the deterioration of human capital and the low commitment stigma.** The deterioration of human capital occurs when mothers take a break from paid work, temporarily interrupt paid work, or reduce their working hours while fathers remain full-time life-long connected to their job. Human capital deterioration might be particularly acute for women taking long leaves as their work experience suffers, while existing knowledge and skills depreciate for the lack of use and adaptability to new technologies. If the career break is short, there is much more scope to make up for lost time in terms of training, and job prospects will not suffer to the same extent. Therefore, the child penalty may be sensitive to the duration of fathers and mothers leave and the likelihood of catching up with productivity levels prior to parenthood.

The low commitment stigma occurs when employers interpret taking leave as a signal of low commitment to work. If this stigma exists, it may translate into discrimination. Employers may discriminate against fathers and mothers with career interruptions when it comes to wage increases and may fail to involve them in new projects that might involve or create career opportunities. Employers may also penalize or stigmatize fathers and mothers who take breaks because fatherhood and care work are devalued, and thus in turn devalue people who do such work. This is related to existing norms in the labour market, in which the ideal worker is an individual with no additional responsibilities and an exclusive focus on the job. Different studies have found positive evidence of this type of discrimination against mothers. Leave-taking would add to this discrimination.

In addition to the theories outlined above, the literature has also shown that certain **characteristics of the parental leave may influence men’ wages during fatherhood.** During the period covered by our data (2005–2021), the Spanish legislation provided two different types of unpaid long-term leave that could be taken after maternity and paternity leave. **The first one, the ‘leave of absence to care for a child, also known as ‘full-time parental leave’,** enables both parents to interrupt their employment until the child is 3 years old. Their return to the same job is guaranteed during the first year, after which the employer is obliged to offer the worker a position within an equivalent category, but not necessarily the same job. **The second type of leave, the ‘reduction of working hours’, or also called ‘part-time parental leave’, allows workers to reduce their working hours (from an eighth to a half) to care for a child under 12, while keeping the same job.** The law protects workers on parental leave – full or part-time – and explicitly forbids companies from firing employees while they are on leave. It also ensures social security contributions for the whole period of full-time parental leave and until two years in the case of parttime parental leave, which affect the recognition of other rights, such as pension benefits, health coverage, unemployment benefits and new maternity and paternity leaves. Both parental leave periods are in addition to paternity and

maternity leave, which in Spain is 16 weeks for each parent, although its duration has varied during the period analyzed in this study.

## Data

We base the analysis on the Continuous Sample of Working Lives ("Muestra Continua de Vidas Laborales," hereafter MCVL), waves 2005–2012. This dataset provides an organized group of anonymized microdata extracted from three different administrative sources: the social security system, the municipal registry of inhabitants, and income tax registers. The target population of this survey is made up of all of those who contributed to or received contributory benefits from the Spanish social security system at some point in the reference years (2005–2021), regardless of whether this was on a temporary or permanent basis. Men and women can enter the sample at any time within the window of observation, and they can also exit the sample if they leave the labour market or lose their unemployment benefits. We selected men and women who were between twenty-five and forty years of age when they entered the sample, starting in 2005, and followed them until they left the sample—or until 2021. This means that if an individual is first observed in 2005 and stays in the sample for the whole window of observation, we follow him until this person is thirty-nine in 2021.

The MCVL is an individual register dataset, but it can be matched to the municipal registers. We use this information to construct our fatherhood bonus variable, and we define fathers/mother as person who live in a household where a child is registered in a specific month. A person become father/mother in month  $n$  if we observe a child living in the household that was not there in month  $n-1$ . We define non-fathers as men who live in a household where no children are registered. This measure is of course biased, as some men may have children living in another household, or they might move in with a partner who has children. However, this is a common practice in the literature given the data limitations, and we expect the bias to affect only a small number of cases. The MCVL is a reliable source of information for our research question, as it is a large representative sample of the Spanish population with longitudinal records.

## Methods

The effect of parenthood on wages is a classic example of possible unobserved heterogeneity because the decision to have children may be related to labour market outcomes and preferences. For instance, if women who are career-oriented and very productive are less likely to have children, this leads to a spurious correlation between the number of children and wages. In the literature, it has thus become standard to estimate the parenthood wage gap using fixed-effects models. **Fixed-effects estimators' control for the observed and unobserved**

characteristics of individuals that do not vary over time, considering the within-variance stemming from changes in individuals' lives.

**This type of model allows us to control for men's and women's inclinations regarding parenthood and work.**

Moreover, in this research we go a step further and also analyse the wage penalty for children with an unconditional quantile regression (UQR) estimator to estimate two models. The model estimates the wage penalty using UQR at the 10th, 20th, 30th, 40th, 50th, 60th, 70th, 80th, and 90th quantiles of the wage distribution, including the everparent and all other control variables. Clustered standard errors control for multiple observations of individuals in the panel. Unconditional quantile regression is a powerful tool for examining the parenthood wage penalty because it allows for a detailed analysis of how the penalty varies across different parts of the wage distribution, can handle nonlinearity, endogeneity, and heterogeneity, and provides insights that are valuable for both researchers and policymakers.

### Expected findings

So far, our analysis has focused on a sample of women, showing that the costs associated with childbearing are significantly higher for working mothers who opt for reduced working hours (part-time parental leave) or long-parental leave (Dominguez-Folgueras, González, & Lapuerta, 2022). Turning to men, we expect that, in line with the theory of the flexibility stigma, the wage premium associated with fatherhood will be particularly pronounced for men with high occupational status who refrain from taking temporary career breaks or reducing their working hours. In the specific context of Spain, we also expect the fatherhood wage premium to be more pronounced among men in heterosexual partnerships. This expectation stems from the greater likelihood of gender specialisation in such arrangements. Finally, although fathers' rights to spend more time with their children are extended and parental leave is equalised for mothers and fathers, we expect the negative impact of longer-term care leave on wages to be higher for men than for women. This will be due to the greater social acceptance and legitimacy of their use by women and the stigma of low work commitment faced by fathers who use them.

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Thursday, 27 March 2025

### 3.1: Changing Norms on Fatherhood - Part II (Practices, Policies and Norms)

#### *Changes in fatherhood practices - a pilot study of two generations of Polish fathers*

*D. Majka-Rostek, R. Florkowski, E. Banaszak*

In the second half of 2022 and early 2023, a team of sociologists from the University of Wrocław conducted pilot research. It was a part of the preparation of the project proposal which is named "Comparing three Generations of Fathers in Poland and Germany: Continuity and Change in the Practices of Fatherhood". It is currently funded by the German Research Foundation and the National Science Centre Poland (03/202405/2027).

The pilot study tested a research tool prepared by the Polish team. It consists of three elements: a biographical narrative interview, a photo-assisted interview and a family map. Each of its elements was intended to pursue a slightly different objective and reach different data. The purpose of the biographical narrative interview was to learn about paternal practices, to determine which practices are transmitted from fathers to sons; the photo-assisted interview was to yield knowledge about the father-son relationship and its emotional colouring, to show the events and experiences relevant to it; and the family map was to situate the relationship within broader family structures and provide a picture of the family as a context for the transmission of paternal practices. Eight interviews were conducted during the pilot study. The respondents were representatives of two generations - young men who have sons and the fathers of these men. During the presentation, the methodological aspect will be shortly described, inter alia the difficulties that arose during the implementation of the research. These difficulties led to the decision to change one of the elements of the tool in the research (it was decided to use a Problem-Centered Interview instead of a biographical narrative interview). However, most importantly, preliminary findings on continuity and change in fatherhood practices will be presented at the conference. It will be made on the basis of the collected data, which allowed a comparison of fatherhood realized by young men and by their fathers. The framework for these findings is social practice theory, according to which key elements of social life, such as relationships or institutions, should be explained as embodied in networks of practices (Reckwitz, 2002). This is because these embodied activities represent recognizable methods of achieving some goal - in the case of paternity studies, that goal is the realization of the father's role (Lamb, Tamis-LeMonda, 2004).

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### *Comparing three Generations of Fathers in Poland and Germany: Continuity and Change in the Practices of Fatherhood*

A. Buschmeyer, K. Lüring, C. Rehlinger, C. Zerle-Elsäßer, A. Bielewska, P. Czajkowski

Although fatherhood concepts and practices have changed significantly and in many ways in recent decades (Dermott 2008), there is still a lack of studies that show the diversity of fatherhood, especially in terms of generational and cultural differences (SchoppeSullivan/Fagan 2020). Also the question how the intergenerational differences and/or similarities develop in intra-familial transmission processes has not yet been **sufficiently addressed (Brown et al 2018)**. The project **“Comparing three Generations of Fathers in Poland and Germany: Continuity and Change in the Practices of Fatherhood”** (03/2024-05/2027) is funded by the German Research Foundation and the National Science Centre Poland. It is the main aim of the study, to explore change and continuity in the culture and practices of fatherhood in two neighbouring countries, with very different recent historical developments but the same (EU-)Regulations, namely in Poland and Germany. We expect these differences to translate into patterns and practices of fatherhood. In each country, we want to examine three generations of fathers, starting from great-grandfathers to their sons (grandfathers) and ending with their grandsons (already fathers themselves). Conducting 60 problem-centered interviews with fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers in two countries in combination with additional family-mappings and photo-elicited interviews, we expect to find both, continuity and change as well as similarities and differences between the two countries and the three generations. At the conference in March 2025, we will be able to present some first results from the data. Our project brings, thus, **wider context to the current debate on ‘new fatherhood’ as it examines how norms and practices are currently formed, how they are influenced by individual family history and especially the heritage of one’s own father’s fatherhood practices but also other influences like welfare policies and social change.**

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### *The construction of blended caring masculinity and struggles of gender norm bias in a traditional society*

G. Júlia

Fathers' involvement in childcare increased in the last decades while differences among countries related to childcare practices of fathers persist. This study investigates the macro and micro level circumstances of relationships on dividing childcare duties and parental leave in a society with rather traditional gender norms in Hungary. It involves 20 qualitative interviews with fathers on parental leave. The interviews showed that cooperative behaviour **at the relationship level resulted in a more balanced and satisfying relationship. Couples'** behaviour was motivated by cooperative intentions according to egalitarian norms, which led to positive relationship outcomes. However, involved fathers felt internally conflicted about leaving the breadwinner role. Therefore, Hungarian stay-at-home fathers seem to differ from the Scandinavian type of involved fathers as their choice is not to foster gender equality but to act as child-centred. This attitude might correspond with a traditional family-centred view, a type of caring masculinity, namely blended caring masculinity.

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### *Work-Life Balance policies for fathers and their impact on partner´s inequality in child care*

G. Meil, J. Rogero-Garcia

A growing number of countries are introducing or extending leave rights earmarked for fathers, on the basis of the principle “take it or lose it”, as an instrument to foster father´s involvement in childcare and, implicitly, gender equality within families. More in general, as the EU Work-Life Balance Directive shows, this strategy is embedded in fostering men´s use of WLB instruments as both an instrument for reducing gender inequality in the family and motherhood penalty.

Based on an online survey performed in 2021 among 3,100 parents of children less than 7 years of age residing in Spain, the presentation will discuss the impact of the use of a broad array of resources for balancing work and family life on gender inequality in childcare. The focus **variables included in the analysis of father's** subsample are length of father's leave use, solo caring while the mother is on paid work, working less than 35 hours per week, teleworking, flexitime, grandparent's support, use of early childcare facilities and paid caring help. Within this context, the adequacy of extending leave rights for fathers and doing so for solo caring while the mother is employed will be also discussed. The Spanish case is relevant because it extended well paid leave rights for fathers in the observed period from two to sixteen weeks, improving also other leave rights, while Spanish families are among those in the EU which have reduced most gender inequality in childcare in recent years (Eurofound, 2020).

Preliminary results show that the longer fathers use paternity leave the lower is gender inequality in childcare, and particularly when they use at least part of it to care alone after mother's return to paid work. Reduced work hours or flexitime doesn't appear to have any impact, while teleworking facilitates substantially time differences among partners in childcare. While using early childcare facilities clearly reduces the gender imbalance, rely on paid help or grandparents doesn't appear to have any significant impact. Leave policy, but also other work-Life balance measures, when they are used by fathers, are effective instruments to foster gender equality in childcare.

This paper addresses session 4 call topic to provide empirical research on shared parental leave and pathways for promoting as well as "destabilizing" gendered concepts of parenthood.

## 3.2: Working from Home and Work-Related Outcomes

### *Flexibility stigma across 15 European countries : The role of national contexts shaping stigmatised views against homeworkers*

*H. Chung*

Despite the steep rise in homeworking in the past few years (Eurofound, 2022), there still exists stigmatised views against homeworkers (Williams et al., 2013). Homeworkers are considered less motivated, committed to the workplace, less productive, and therefore less likely to be put forward for promotions. **Flexibility stigma hinders worker's take up of flexible working arrangements and can make flexible working arrangements result in negative outcomes for worker's well-being and company's productivity.** Although many studies (Kasperska et al.,

2024; Munsch, 2016; Wang & Chung, in review) have provided evidence of this, even after the pandemic, much of the evidence comes from liberal economies such as the US or UK. These countries generally have weak worker protection, work-centric and traditional gender norms, where stigmatised views against homeworkers may be more prevalent. Other countries, with a more balanced norm around work and private life, egalitarian gender norms, and stronger **workers' bargaining power, flexible working may not be as stigmatised**. What is more, much of the evidence on flexibility stigma, especially those that collect data across countries is from before the pandemic or in a period where lockdown measures were still in place. Finally, most studies based on surveys do not distinguish between homeworking from other diverse types of flexible working, including part-time working which has shown to be linked with bias views (Chung, 2020; Fernandez-Lozano et al., 2020).

This study overcomes these limitations by using a unique data collected in the autumn of 2024 from across 15 European countries as a part of the H2020 funded TransEuroWorks project. The paper examines how national contexts that shape normative views around work and work-life balance -namely, e.g. national family policies (childcare, maternity, paternity and parental leaves), **work and gender norms, as well as contexts that shape workers' bargaining powers** – e.g. union density, collective bargaining power, unemployment rates, and finally normalisation of flexible working – e.g. proportion of workers homeworking, composition of homeworkers in the country (men vs women), legislation that provide workers right to flexible working - can reduce stigmatised views against homeworkers. A multilevel modelling approach will be

used matching individual level data with national level context data. A further

interaction term will be used to see whose perceptions are shifted by these contextual changes most. The results of the paper will provide us with policy evidence on how best to tackle stigmatised views against homeworkers in the labour market in order to ensure that the rise of homeworking results in better outcomes for both workers and companies.

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## ***Workplace policies and the flexibility stigma of home-based workers in Germany and the UK: Evidence from vignette studies***

*Y. Lott, H. Chung, S. Wang*

Home-based working has traditionally faced stigma in many workplaces, leading to limited access and career disadvantages. However, the Covid-19 pandemic caused a significant increase in home-based working, temporarily weakening cultural barriers against it. This shift may have reduced the flexibility stigma associated with home-based working, especially in workplaces with formal policies regulating and, thus, normalizing it. Consequently, this study investigates whether formal workplace policies regarding home-based working decrease the flexibility stigma. These policies might be most effective in environments where trade unions and co-determination are strong, and workplace policies hold higher significance. To explore this, the study compares Germany and the UK, two countries differing in co-determination density and strength. We ask: Do variations in the effect of formal policies on flexibility stigma exist between Germany and the UK? Two vignette studies were conducted in each country. The German study took place in November 2023 as part of the WSI labor force survey, while the British study was part of the UKHLS in the summer of 2023. Initial results indicate a lower flexibility stigma in workplaces with formal home-based working policies. Moreover, variations between Germany and the UK suggest that formal policies are more effective in the institutional contexts with stronger co-determination.

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## ***Telework realities: Investigating team interaction and job satisfaction***

*A. Adams, A. Schwarz, I. Laß*

The advantages and disadvantages of working away from a central workplace have been discussed in the scientific discourse for several years. At the latest since the measures to restrict contact during the COVID-19 pandemic, working from home has become an integral

part of everyday work in many professions. It becomes clear that spatial flexibility impacts the interactions between colleagues. This encompasses the contact frequency and contact type of interaction with colleagues. Besides personal contact, contact via phone, email or video conference has gained salience and is intended to bridge the gap of fewer face-to-face conversations. In our research, we investigate the impact of the frequency of working from home on job satisfaction and how the contact frequency and type of contact between colleagues mediate this relationship.

Job satisfaction is a good indicator of various aspects, including turnover intentions, productivity and overall well-being. It is suspected that the relationship with colleagues also impacts job identification and job satisfaction. As more and more employees desire flexible working, questions arise about how this form of work affects various types of colleague contact and whether both working from home and the frequency of contact influence job satisfaction. At the same time, a high proportion of working from home simultaneously can complicate processes such as onboarding. Additionally, the importance of working arrangements and colleague contact might differ depending on the importance job contacts have in different jobs and workplaces.

To investigate the relationship between working from home and job satisfaction, we conduct mediation analyses on data from the European Social Survey compiled in 25 European countries between 2020 – 2021. Additionally, we perform moderated mediation analyses using O\*Net-sociability indicators to examine the direct and indirect effects of working from home on job satisfaction via colleague contact for different types of jobs with high or low sociability.

Initial results reveal that frequent working from home is associated with lower personal but higher remote contact frequency among employees. Working from home and a higher personal contact frequency are positively associated with job satisfaction. At the same time, there is a significant negative indirect effect of working from home via personal contact frequency, indicating a complex interplay between the aspects investigated in our study. This indirect association is stronger for jobs that have a lower sociability score.

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### *Where is the I in Team? Examining the perceived inclusion of the self in working groups in flexible working arrangements in Europe.*

A. Schwarz

According to social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978), **individuals'** social identification is constructed with regard to intergroup concepts and behaviors. For example, feeling like a part of a team at work can serve **employees'** self-perception and function as an important

source of social inclusion. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, telework has been normalized in many workplaces and is even more often requested by many employees. However, previous research describes **employees'** feelings of isolation which can arise, particularly in arrangements of telework, when frequent face-to-face contact is limited or completely missing (Chung, 2022; Golden, 2008; Collins et al., 2016). While previous research provides evidence based on small samples, this study aims to examine the inclusion of the self in work groups in flexible working arrangements from a country-comparative perspective.

On the organizational level, the theory of relational inequalities (Tomaskovic-Devey & Avent-Holt, 2019) describes different preconditions attached to positions in organizations that might moderate the association for employees in telework. While employees with a higher occupational status might be confronted with facilitated social inclusion in work groups -even in telework from a distance-, employees in less powerful positions with fewer resources might perceive themselves less as a part of a team when they conduct location-independent telework. On the country level, this research further investigates dynamics of dualization (Doering & Piore, 1975) and job security regulations (Emmenegger, 2014) that might moderate the associations in the context of telework.

The study draws on multi-level regression analyses using the 10<sup>th</sup> round of the European Social Survey to examine associations in over 30 European countries. Furthermore, macro-level indicators from the OECD are merged with the main dataset to estimate the level of job security regulations in each country and calculate cross-level interaction effects.

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### 3.3: Parenting Leaves, Care Leaves and (In)Equalities - Part III: (Knowledge on/use of parental leave, Sharing parental leave)

#### *Shared leave, shared nights? A qualitative study on Finnish, British and Spanish parents' accounts of sharing the parental leave and night-time care.*

*I. Kuusiahio, P. Eerola, K. Twamley, P. Romero-Balsas*

Sufficient and uninterrupted night sleep is one of the most essential requirements for human well-being, yet it remains a luxury for many parents of young children. This is especially true for mothers. According to earlier research, the 'parental night shift' – which includes late evening and early morning routines, night awakenings, intermittent sleep, child feeding, anticipating **an infant's night-time** needs, night-time care for a sick child, sleepless nights of emotional labour **worrying about one's child(ren) and family** matters, and other parental responsibilities undertaken outside waking hours – is a burden shouldered primarily by mothers of young children. The gendered division of night-time care follows the global **pattern where mothers' take-up** of parental leave is significantly higher than that of fathers. Yet, no earlier research exists on the connections between parental leave and night-time care work.

In this **paper, we explore parents' accounts of sharing parental leave and night-time** care. Our aim is to examine how parents of young children perceive the role of parental leave in their night-time care practices in three different country contexts – Finland, the UK, and Spain – which differ in terms of parental leave policies as well as other policy

(e.g., welfare state model, work-family balance policies, parental support) and cultural (e.g., **gender regime, parenting culture, and understanding of fathers' role in care**) factors.

Theoretically, the study builds on earlier research from the fields of parental leave research, research of gendered parenting practices and the sociology of sleep.

As empirical data, we utilize qualitative interviews conducted with mothers and fathers of young children under three years old in Finland (n = 42), the UK (collection in progress, all interviews to be completed by July 2024), and Spain (n = 25). The data will be analysed using discursive methods, specifically by reading parents' accounts through the concept of 'interpretative repertoire' by Potter and Wetherell (1987).

Based on initial readings of the Finnish and Spanish data, night-time care of young children appears to be a clearly gendered phenomenon in both countries. In some cases, fathers' take-up of individual parental leave seems to be associated with a more equal division of night-time care in the parents' accounts. The analysis of data from all three countries will be completed by the end of 2024.

This study is part of the Kone Foundation-funded research project The Parental Night Shift: Gendered Inequalities in Night-time Care (2023-2027).

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## *Sustaining or disrupting gendered family practices? Examining the impacts of different parental leave patterns*

K. Twamley

In this paper, I discuss how the kind of parental leave taken by first-time parents shapes their understandings and practices of motherhood and fatherhood. I draw on qualitative longitudinal diary and interview data from 21 mixed-sex couples in England, collected during their parental leave after the birth of a first child. Half of the sample were sharing leave and the other half were not. In the analysis, I draw on the sociology of everyday life to examine both what participants did and the meanings they attributed to these practices. The accounts demonstrate how women experiences of maternity leave sustain gendered parenting norms. I detail the process of learned expertise and the taking on of moralised discourses around mothering during this period. Fathers' lives did not radically change, and they did not develop similar care expertise. For sharing couples, normative practices could be **counteracted by fathers'** extended leave alone, but couples taking leave at the same time tended to reinforce gendered normative parenting. I detail why these differences occur, showing how fathers on leave alone were able to foster a sense of themselves as primary carers, even if just for a short time. The study fills a lacuna in research on parental leave everyday practices and the ways in which they contribute to gendered parenting outcomes.

# *Reasons for Limited Uptake of Paid Parental Leave in Shanghai, China*

Z. Wang

## Background and Objectives

Ten-day paid parenting leave for couples with children under 3 years old have been introduced in Shanghai in the year 2022, aiming to help dual-worker families to balance work and life. However, the uptake rate was low after its implementation. In this paper, I highlight the role of the state's developmentalist and familialist regime in young couples' concerns over taking paid parenting leaves. I propose that the policy's ineffectiveness in addressing work-life balance can be better understood in the context of state's advocate for economic efficiency and the evolving intergenerational structures in contemporary Chinese families.

## Research Design and Method

A digital ethnographic project is conducted from online with 20 pairs of dual-worker parents living and working in Shanghai, China, in the year 2024. Lived experiences of childcare are summarized from in-depth interviews via recorded WeChat calls and the social media posts on WeChat, Weibo and Xiaohongshu from 2022 to 2024. Drawing on grounded theory, the ethnographic cases illustrate the key dimensions of structural barriers and the derived personal concerns hindering the uptake of paid parental leaves.

## Results

Dual-worker couples do not take parenting leaves for following reasons: (1) Regulatory Weakness: Parental leave is stipulated as regulation and not enshrined in law, leading to lax enforcement. Employers often disregard leave requests with minimal repercussions. (2) Limited Leave Scope: Many companies only grant leave for sick care, disregarding the broader scope of bonding in childcare. (3) Negative Implication on Annual Income: Although paid, **parental leave negatively impacts employees' annual bonuses**, a significant portion of income in China. This disincentivizes leave, especially for young couples with high mortgage. (3) Insufficient Public Support for Childcare in General: Maternal leave after childbirth is 158 days and paternal leave is 10 days. Daycare centers are often poorly regulated, with insufficient positions available. This lack of quality and availability forces dualincome families to rely on grandparents or domestic workers for childcare anyway, undermining their intention to use parental leave in childcare arrangement. (4) Prioritization of Productive Work over Reproductive Work: China's market socialist regime, which emphasizes economic

development and extended-family support, discourages middle generations from taking parental leave. Societal expectations of breadwinning by the middle generation and caregiving by the retired generation can lead to criticism of young couples who take leave, portraying them as lacking work ethic and neglecting their financial obligations to the family.

### Relations to the Session Topic

This research contributes to the session theme by demonstrating how policy implementation, payment structure, family care strategies, and cultural context converge to create significant barriers to parental leave uptake. It advocates for a more nuanced understanding of the implications and effectiveness of parental leave policies in real life.

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### *Became parent abroad: Implications of being migrant in the parenting identity and the use of parental leave*

*P. Romero-Balsas, G. Meil*

Studies that focus on how the migrant population knows and uses family policies are scarce and only present in Central European and Nordic countries. The use of public care policies has been noted regarding how migrants change both the forms of care and the normative discourse of care, influenced by the design of family policies, especially the parental leave agenda (Kvande and Brandth, 2017; Brandth and Kvande, 2020; Zadkowska et al., 2020). We focus on the American migrant population with employment when entering parenthood in South European countries.

This study is frame in a wider research project on “The impact of parental leave policies and childcare centers on family dynamics in Spain” (QUIDAN 2, Ref: PID2021-123736NB-I00). This presentation is also a result of a research stay in the research lab MESOPOLHIS at the Aix-Marseille Université (France), awarded by the scholarship “José Castillejo”. Both projects have been funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities.

Our aims are to dig about the information channels, cultural interpretation and barriers of leave use by migrant parents. Besides migrant background, the working situation is a key aspect that mediates the use of family policies, so another aim is to analyse the relations between work, childcare resources, parent and migrant identities. This research adopts a qualitative approach. Specifically, we have conducted 30 in-depth interviews to migrant that became parents in France and Spain. We have transcript the interviews and codified thematically parents’ discourses using software Atlas.ti.

Our preliminary results pinpoint that knowledge of childcare care options, resources and administrative process are acquired through friendship networks of the same nationality. Another preliminary result show that the interpretation of childcare care policies is based on the comparative framework of the country of origin. Regarding to the agents include in childcare the participation of grandparents when (often) does not exist is not totally replaced by other care agents. Finally, the spending time and being present is included in all discourses, even though actual time spent ranges very widely and the childcare leave are perceived as insufficient in terms of length.

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### 3.4: In-Between Family, Work and Company: Can Organizational Arrangements Help to Reconcile Family and Work Life? Analyses Based on Linked Employer-Employee Data

#### *Spoilt for choice? The collective bargaining choice between time and money*

A. Abendroth, A.-C. Bächmann, A. Mellies, K. Ruf

In Germany, the desire for a more flexible adaptation of working life to the family situation has risen sharply with the rise of two-earner households over the last decades. This trend is also reflected in labour market policy developments such as the introduction of bridging part-time work (Klammer, 2021). Instead of collective regulations, however, many employees want more individual freedom of choice and selfdetermination with regard to their working hours. Against this backdrop, certain trade unions in Germany have incorporated an individual

choice option in their collective agreements, which permits employees to select between receiving more time off or more pay each year. This allows for greater adaptability of working hours to personal needs and different stages of life in a more self-determined and flexible manner.

However, so far it is still unclear who actually chooses more time rather than more money and for what reasons. In line with that, it is also unclear to what extent this choice is socially structured. This study addressed these research questions by examining the extent to which there are gender and parenthood-specific differences in the choice of time and the underlying motives (e.g. more time for family, leisure, further education) in the context of the annual collective bargaining option between more time and more money.

In order to answer the research question, a linked employer-employee (LEE) dataset is used, which was created as part of the Hans Böckler Foundation funded project "The choice between time or money: new flexibility for a better work-life balance? The project is a cooperation between Bielefeld University and the Institute for Employment Research (IAB). The LEE dataset therefore only includes companies that offer the individual choice option to their employees. The establishment survey collected information on both the exact organisation of the option in the firm and the firm context (such as competitive pressure, prevailing working time standards and other measures to reconcile work and private life). The employee survey includes questions on the individual motivation for the choice and the consequences of the choice for the individual's work and private life.

Based on this well suited data set multivariate probit regression models reveal that women are more likely to choose more time over money. Additionally, parents with children younger than 14 years old are significantly more likely to mention hobbies, friends and time for themselves as the most important reason for choosing time over money. Accordingly, gender and parenthood can influence individual choice options, which is in line with previous work on the use of other flexible working arrangements.

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## *Organisational Culture and Social Inequalities in Access to Parenting-Related*

### *Leaves in Academia: A Case Study Approach*

*M. Uzunalioglu, K. Twamley, A. Koslowski, M. O'Brien*

This study explores the implementation and experiences of parental leave at universities, **focusing on disparities among different parents' leave take-up** and experiences. The overarching research question asks what role demographic and workplace characteristics play in employees' leave-taking behaviours.

Our study adopts a comprehensive case study design, honing in on a large researchintensive university in the UK. This approach facilitates in-depth analysis of complex factors within a **specific ‘bounded’ context**. **We draw on three types of data:** University staff records, encompassing data from 2,199 individuals, an online survey of 419 employees who had taken leave in the preceding four years, and qualitative interviews with 19 of the survey respondents.

**The findings revealed disparities in parents’** leave-taking behaviours due to universitylevel characteristics, family-level characteristics and individual ideologies. These disparities are supported by organisational cultural mechanisms and policies.

In the UK, mothers have 52 weeks of maternity leave available, of which only the first six weeks are well paid. They may transfer up to 50 weeks to the partner via the Shared Parental Leave (SPL) policy. Partners receive two weeks of paternity leave. In our case study university, mothers receive 18 weeks of fully paid maternity leave, and partners receive four weeks of fully paid paternity leave.

**The uptake of partners’ four weeks of paternity leave was very high, but few co-parents** took SPL. Mothers in lower grades, paid at lower rates, tended to use the entirety of their 52 weeks of statutory maternity leave. Higher-earner mothers were more likely to share their leave with their partners (though still low numbers overall). This division of leave was often explained to be a result of relative couple earnings and the transfer design of SPL since some women did **not want to ‘lose’ their maternity leave**.

Disparities were observed depending on the level of awareness of the line manager, having a human resources (HR) officer within reach at the department and the type of job they are doing. A pronounced disparity emerged between academic and administrative staff. Influenced by the flexible working culture and the 'ideal worker' norm, academics often minimised leave duration to meet professional responsibilities, particularly in male-dominated departments. In contrast, non-academic staff managed their absences with greater ease. Academic mothers frequently reported working during their leave, underscoring the pressure to fulfil professional obligations. **A returners’ sabbatical leave was appreciated** by academic staff as it facilitated a phased return to work after the parenting-leave. However, the inconsistencies in implementation indicate uneven access.

Despite being part of the same organisation, universities present a complex workplace setting. Cultural and compositional variations across departments lead to heterogeneities in implementing policies and employee experiences. Well-known determinants, such as financial constraints, the existing gender pay gap within coparents, and access to childcare services, remain dominant in shaping leave behaviours. However, universities still hold the potential to bring more equity in facilitating social sustainability in parenting leaves for parents across the organisation.

## *Organizational family-friendly arrangements and fathers' employment interruptions after childbirth*

*C. Frodermann, A. Seidlitz, A.-C. Bächmann*

In Germany after a child is born, mothers typically interrupt their careers to take care of their newborn, while fathers remain in the labour market. This gendered division of paid and unpaid work continues in the years following childbirth, when women in Germany are primarily responsible for household and family work (Klenner and Schmidt 2011). To buffer negative career consequences of mothers and to foster gender equality in Germany, a comprehensive parental leave reform (Elterngeldreform) in 2007 created new incentives for fathers to participate more in childcare. To encourage fathers to take paternal leave, the reform **introduced a “daddy quota”, which allows to extend the paid leave period by two additional months if both parents take a least two months of leave**. Thus, the reform clearly aimed at increasing the involvement of fathers in childcare and more than 15 years later the share of fathers who take parental benefits has increased constantly and was more than 42 percent in 2022. However, these numbers also reveal, that more than half of all new fathers still do not take any parental leave, and moreover, three-quarter of fathers, who do, only take the **two “daddy months” (that would otherwise expire), while mothers still bear the main burden of care work after the birth of a child** (Destatis 2023). If fathers are asked why they do not take parental leave at all or why they limit their parental leave to two months, one of their main reasons is the fear of career disadvantages (about 40 percent) (BMFSJ 2023).

Against this backdrop, the organizational culture in terms of family-friendliness and work-life balance should be of particular importance in determining whether fathers consider taking parental leave. Only in firms where fathers do not expect to be penalized for taking parental leave, they will seriously consider this option. We assume that family-friendly arrangements in a firm can act as an indicator for its work culture. Therefore, we analyse, whether fathers who work in firms that offer family-friendly measures are more likely to take parental leave after the birth of a child and whether they also interrupt their careers for a longer amount of time than fathers who work in firms without those measures.

In order to answer this research question, we rely on the linked employer-employee dataset LIAB of the Institute for Employment Research. The LIAB data set consists of the IAB Establishment Panel, a representative annual establishment survey, and individual level data generated in labour administration and social security data processing. To consider the interaction between organizational arrangements and regional context factors, we further enrich the LIAB data with structural context information such as the childcare rate on the district level. We employ logistic regression models with clustered standard errors at the firm level to analyse the probability of parental leave take for men who became fathers between

2008 and 2012 under consideration of family-friendly measures in the firm. Moreover, we use event history analysis to investigate whether the organizational family-friendly arrangements influence fathers' duration of employment interruptions.

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### ***Empirical evidence from a conjoint experiment: How do resources to balance work and family affect mothers' employment intentions?***

*P. M. Bellón Jiménez*

Following the adoption of the 2019 EU Directive on Work-Life Balance, some member states have implemented policies to assist in balancing paid work and private life. We investigate how recent mothers and fathers in Spain prioritize their resources to establish a more nuanced understanding of the factors influencing work-life balance. Our research investigates whether recent fathers and mothers with equal leave rights give equal importance to measures. Our objective is to determine the attributes that carry more weight in the participants' preferences to help develop more targeted policies for work-life balance.

The primary discussion in this field revolves around the employment of mothers. Mothers' desire to return to work is closely tied to their opportunities on the job market as well as the resources available to them to achieve balance (Oehrli et al., 2022). Therefore, understanding how parents weigh these factors in their preferences for returning to work is crucial when designing effective public policies. Our study analyzes the extent to which different resources influence the intention to return to work after paid parental leave, as well as the effect of those resources in determining the own care strategy.

We field a conjoint experiment to evaluate job conditions and caring preferences when deciding to return to work, especially focusing on the differences between mothers and fathers. We use a large sample of recent parents in Spain (N=1,700) to measure the trade-offs between different work-life balance measures based on job opportunities, including remote work, flexibility, salary level, and the availability of childcare at the workplace. This sample is more considerable than other studies that focus on the general population (Oehrli et al., 2022). Various hypothetical job scenarios are created randomly to provide participants with different job situations to choose from. The outcome of interest is the intention to return to work under each scenario.

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## 4.1: Alternative Work Models & Inclusion in the Future of Work

### *Multitasking care: Gender differences and historical changes in time use for simultaneous care activities*

*N. Freymuth, N. Klünder*

#### Research interest

In heterosexual relationships, women do most of the unpaid care work. Numerous studies show that care activities are complex and time-consuming. We thus believe that care activities often occur simultaneously, forcing parents to multitask. This became particularly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, when parents suddenly had to take on care work and employment at the same time. The time spent on care work can be quantified using the **German Time Use Surveys**, but the data haven't yet been used to show the simultaneity of primary and secondary activities. In our paper, we calculate the time mothers and fathers spend on multitasking activities, the extent to which care work is performed alongside other activities, and report differences as well as changes over the last 40 years.

#### Theoretical background

Theories consider economic factors, power imbalances, or time availability as determinants for the unequal division of labour. But even though women have entered the workforce in great numbers and should hold equal levels of power, income, and time, inequalities in all domains continue to exist. Time for care work has been converging since the 1960s because women have decreased their housework time significantly – men have increased their time only slowly and especially for childcare. “Feminine” household chores mostly remain the women's duty. We therefore follow the “doing gender” theory, arguing that beliefs about “biological” necessities and “typical male/female” attributes strongly influence the division of paid and unpaid work.

#### Methodological approach

We analyse the four waves of the German time use surveys (1991/92 – 2022). Descriptive results show (1) the time mothers and fathers spend on multitasking, (2) the level of participation in multitasking activities throughout the course of the day, and (3) which activities are carried out simultaneously. To this end, we form various combinations of primary and secondary activities (care/care, care/non-care, non-care/care, and non-care/non-care). Based on our previous considerations, we expect to see mothers multitask more often than fathers, **particularly regarding care activities, but to see an overall decline in mothers' multitasking housework and childcare.** Furthermore, we expect to see an **overall rise in fathers' time multitasking childcare and other activities.** Additionally, we might observe a rise in parents' multitasking employment and care activities in 2022 (COVID-19).

### Preliminary results

In 2012/13, the highest degree of multitasking was found in non-care/noncare activities. Mothers reported multitasking care activities more often than fathers, mostly alongside non-care activities. High degrees of this multitasking are observed between 10 am and 12 pm (10 % mothers, 6,5 % fathers) and between 4 and 6 pm (9 % mothers, 6 % fathers). We will analyse the rest of the data over the summer months.

### Relation to conference topics

Unequal division of labour is one of the root causes of gender inequality. It has a direct impact on **women's income**, pension, and participation. In the eco-social transformation, equal division of labour thus proves an essential factor towards gender equity. It affects individual relationships as well as structural conditions and economic outcomes.

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## *The Effects of Reduced Working Hours on the Daily Lifestyle of Employees and their Social Environment with the Example of the 4-Day Week – A Qualitative Study*

*C. Adam, M. Vilser, S. Kaminski, D. Frey*

### Research interest

In this study, we examine the psychological effects of the 4-day week on employees and their immediate social environment. We examine how employees organize their private and professional lives in the context of reduced working hours with the same salary and vacation

entitlement. We also analyse the opportunities and challenges presented by the 4-day working week model. Considering Jahoda's (1983) categories of experience "time" and "social horizon", we explore the influence of such a reduction in working hours on the life-domain balance (Ulich & Wiese, 2011) and the daily lifestyle (Voß, 1991). The focus lies on the impact the 4-day week has on the organization of social relationships.

### Methodological approach

In the period from December 2023 to August 2024, 20 problem-centered interviews were conducted with employees of different age, job titles and industries. The audio files of the interviews were transcribed using F4x. Using MAXQDA, the interviews were then analyzed according to Mayring's Qualitative Content Analysis. In addition, the perspective of the employees' life partners is also included by inviting them to participate in an online survey with open questions. The responses are also analysed using Mayring's qualitative content analysis to gain broader insights to the effects of reduced working hours on daily lifestyle.

### (Preliminary) Results

The data collection and analysis has not yet been completed. The results of the current study will therefore be presented.

### How the present study relates to the conference topics and sessions

The underlying topic of the study is a highly relevant one with specific regard to the actual societal change (i.e., ageing society and demographic changes) and the increase of perceived relevance of personal well-being as well as healthy lifestyle in the post-pandemic period and changing gender roles (i.e., gender balance and gender shift). Paid work and its time allocation should be explored further through the lense of societal and not only exclusively economic challenges since time and its organisation might have a major influence on social progress. Therefore, the present study aims to close the gap gaining insights into the extent to which a four-day week as organizational arrangement influences the reconciliation of work and private life.

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## *Mumpreneurs in Social Media: Professionalizing Motherhood and Homemaking*

*K. Kuschel, R. Ruiz-Martínez, S. Idrovo Carlier, R. Powosino*

## Research Interest

The intersection of entrepreneurship and motherhood, often referred to as "mumpreneurship," has gained significant traction with the rise of social media. This study investigates how mumpreneurs use social media platforms to professionalize their roles as both mothers and business owners, effectively blending homemaking with entrepreneurial activities. The focus of this research is to understand the dynamics of this professionalization process and its implications for work-family balance, social identity, and gender norms.

The core interest of this research lies in examining how mumpreneurs navigate and negotiate their dual roles in the digital age. By leveraging social media, these women not only promote their businesses but also craft and disseminate their personal narratives around motherhood and entrepreneurship. This phenomenon provides a unique lens to study the evolving definitions of work and family life in contemporary society.

## Theoretical Background

This study is grounded in theories of social identity and gender norms, particularly as they relate to work and family life. The concept of the "entrepreneurial self" is central to understanding how mumpreneurs curate their online personas. Additionally, the study draws on Goffman's theory of self-presentation to analyze how these women manage their identities on social media. The duality of their roles is also examined through the lens of feminist theory, which critiques traditional gender roles and explores how digital platforms can both challenge and reinforce these norms.

## Methodological Approach

A mixed-methods approach is employed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject. The primary data collection method involves a qualitative content analysis of Instagram posts from a sample of 50 mumpreneurs in Latin America. These posts are analyzed to identify recurring themes and strategies related to self-presentation, professionalization of motherhood, and business promotion. Complementing this, semistructured interviews with 15 selected mumpreneurs provide deeper insights into their motivations, challenges, and perceptions of their dual roles. Thematic analysis is used to process and interpret the interview data.

## Preliminary Results

Preliminary findings suggest that mumpreneurs strategically use social media to construct a professional identity that integrates their roles as mothers and entrepreneurs. They often employ narratives that highlight their ability to manage both domains successfully, thus

redefining traditional notions of motherhood and entrepreneurship. These narratives not only serve to promote their businesses but also to create a supportive community of like-minded women. Additionally, the results indicate that while social media provides a platform for empowerment and visibility, it also imposes pressures related to maintaining a curated, idealized image.

### Relevance to CWF Conference Topic

This research is particularly relevant to the conference topic of "Social Change and Community Work and Family" as it explores how digitalization and social media influence work-family dynamics. By focusing on mumpreneurs, the study sheds light on how entrepreneurial activities are reshaping traditional family roles and work structures. The findings contribute to a broader understanding of the social change brought about by digital platforms, highlighting both the opportunities and challenges faced by women in balancing professional and familial responsibilities.

Moreover, this research aligns with the session #2 on "New Work – new Inequalities? The ambivalent effects of digital work on job quality, work-life balance and employee wellbeing." It provides empirical evidence on how digital work influences job quality and worklife balance for mumpreneurs, illustrating the complexities and ambivalences of these effect.

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## *Childcare Support Networks: Alleviating Adverse Effects of Work-Time Demands on Work-to-Family Conflict*

*A. Matysiak, A. Kurowska, A. Pavelea*

### Research Objective

In this study, we investigate whether the perceived availability of informal childcare support moderates the effect of work-time demands (i.e., work hours, time pressure at work, and nonstandard work schedules) on work-family conflict among mothers and fathers in dual-earner couples.

### Abstract

Recent changes in the labor market, such as the shift to a knowledge-based economy, digitalization, and the increased prevalence of non-standard work schedules, have heightened the work demands employees face. As a result, reconciling work and family

responsibilities has become increasingly difficult. In particular, work-time demands increase work-to-family conflict, as more time spent on work necessarily reduces the time available for family life.

The impact of work-time demands is especially pronounced for dual-earner parents, who must balance both partners' work demands with childcare responsibilities. Research shows that work-time demands, such as long work hours, time pressure, and non-standard work schedules (Van Veldhoven and Beijer, 2012; Laß and Wooden, 2022), increase work-to-family conflict for both mothers and fathers. When confronted with considerable work-time demands, parents may turn to social support (Hobfoll et al., 1990) to balance conflicting responsibilities. In other words, supportive social networks can moderate the effect of work-time demands on work-family conflict.

Previous studies have investigated the moderating role of organizational support and supervisor support (Stewart et al., 2023; Nayak and Pandey, 2022) on the effect of work-time demands on work-family conflict. However, the literature lacks studies considering the moderating effect of social support in helping working parents with childcare in emergency situations. This is particularly important, as previous studies show that informal childcare providers play a crucial role in enabling parents, especially mothers, to balance work and childcare needs. Support with childcare can significantly reduce parental stress (Craig and Churchill, 2018) and improve subjective well-being (Ryser and Heers, 2022) and satisfaction with worklife balance (Arpino and Luppi, 2020).

We fill this gap in research by investigating the moderating role of the perceived availability of informal childcare support on the effect of work-time demands on work-to-family conflict. To this end, we use three waves (6, 8, and 10, collected between 2013 and 2018) of the Panel Analysis of Intimate Relationships and Family Dynamics (PAIRFAM). Our sample includes mothers and fathers in dual-earner households with at least one child aged 10 or below, followed for at least two waves. We focus on three measures of worktime demands, namely work hours, perception of time pressure in the job, and work outside of standard work schedules (i.e., after 7 p.m.). To measure the perception of the availability of social support with **childcare, we use answers to a question: ‘Who could come to your aid in an emergency involving your child’s daycare?’** and focus on four major sources of familial and non-familial support. The results indicate that the availability of social support with childcare significantly reduces the effect of all work-time demands on work-family conflict for mothers. In particular, help from grandparents alleviates the effect of work-time demands. We do not find evidence of a moderating effect for fathers.

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## 4.2: Flexibility, Working Time Pattern and COVID-19

### *Working time flexibility and the new logics of the gender pay gap*

*Anne Grönlund, C. Magnusson*

Over the past few decades, Swedish women have made significant strides in higher education and shifted from part-time to full-time work. Yet, they still lag behind men in key labor market indicators. To unravel this paradox, we will explore fresh mechanisms that shed light on women's work-family trade-offs. This paper delves into how labor market flexibilization has **affected Swedish women's room for maneuver, aiming to pinpoint the mechanisms sustaining and reshaping gender inequalities** Flexibilization emerges as a pivotal factor, explaining persistent gender wage gaps among highly educated full-time women while also generating class differences within the female workforce. Our aim is to investigate how employee-oriented flexibility (schedule control) and employer-driven demands (constant availability) intersect with gender and class inequalities in wages.

Our study will examine the complexity of trends toward flexibilization. While access to flexible scheduling, defined as the ability to influence work timing, has increased (Eurofound 2017), such flexibility remains absent in many jobs. This divide between those who have flexibility and those who lack it spans both high- and low-skilled groups, as well as men and women.

Presumably, low-flex jobs are particularly widespread among low-skilled women and when flexibility is lacking, part-time work may be a main strategy to cope with high demands from work and family though part-time work often entails worse wage. Schedule flexibility is more available to the highly educated, however research shows that is often provided in exchange for long hours and constant availability (Lott & C hung 2016, Magnusson 2021). Arguably, then, high-flex jobs could present women with new dilemmas regarding the balancing of career and family.

Our hypothesis is that flexibilization has created new divides between high- and low-skilled women. High-skilled women may be penalized for having flexibility, while low-skilled women are affected due to their lack of flexibility. For instance, low-skilled women may turn to part-time work to manage work and family demands in the absence of flexibility, which can affect the relationship between flexibility and wage outcomes. High-skilled women may work full-time but avoid family-unfriendly flexibility demands.

The overall question raised in the paper is: To what extent can employee-oriented flexibility and employer-oriented demands for flexibility account for gender-class patterns in wages? How are these relationships mediated/moderated by time in paid and unpaid work?

Both well-known and novel indicators of flexible work arrangements from the latest Swedish Level of

Living survey 2021-22 will be used to examine whether high flexibility or the lack of flexibility contribute to gender wage gaps. Interaction variables between gender and education/class will study how the relationship between flexibility and wages varies between groups.

Preliminary multivariate regression analyses show gender differences in both the amount and the pay-off to employee-oriented flexibility and employer-oriented demands for flexibility which contribute the gender wage gap.

This paper has strong connections with the issues addressed in the description of the session: Flexible work and (new) social inequalities among families. In particular, we aim to examine how flexible working conditions, can shape (new) inequalities both between genders and among women.

## *How Do Working Time Patterns Shape the Division of Domestic Work Among Dual-Earner Couples? The Role of Household Income*

*S. Jung*

What are the distinct working time patterns among dual-earner couples, and how do these patterns vary across gender role attitudes and class? While the impact of working time on family well-being and gender inequality is well-established (Chung, 2022; Van der Lippe, 2010), there remains a gap in understanding how different working time dimensions are combined within dual-earner households. This study aims to establish a typology of dual-earner couples based on a multidimensional approach, expanding the concept of working time to include not only the number of working hours but also the timing of work and flexibility. A key idea in this paper is that gender role attitudes (GRA) – beliefs about the social roles that men and women should perform – **are important in explaining couples' working time behaviours.**

GRA is often found to be associated with women's employment decisions and gendered division of labour (Bittman et al., 2003; Fuwa, 2004), but the degree to which these attitudes **influence couples' working time may vary depending on class.** On one hand, GRA plays a crucial role, with individuals adhering to traditional gender roles may lead to more paid work for men and more unpaid work for women (Nordenmark, 2004). On the other hand, engagement in employment may also be driven by household necessity for financial security, especially in lower-income households, where both partners may need to participate more in paid work out of necessity, thereby limiting the extent to which they can "do gender" (Lyonette & Crompton, 2015). This is especially relevant in Korea, characterised by long work hours, traditional GRA, and substantial gender inequalities in both labour market and family roles. Additionally, **Korea's dualized labour market with secure "insider" jobs and precarious "outsider" jobs** underscores the importance of examining class alongside GRA.

This study uses the data from the 2019 Korean Time Use Survey (KTUS). I use a mix of indicators rather than focusing on a single aspect: (i) working hours, (ii) non-standard work schedules (evening/night work), and (iii) flexible working (working from home). Using latent class analysis (LCA), four distinct working time patterns were identified: **'dual-standard', 'dual-ideal', 'mismatch', and 'flexibility for wives'.** This classification reveals that couples' working time is more intricate than a simple distinction of long versus short hours, highlighting the significance of work schedules and flexibility. Furthermore, multinomial regression analysis is **used to examine how husbands' and wives' gender role attitudes and class influence their selection of these four working time patterns.** To examine class, this study considers couples' educational attainments and occupational status.

**By exploring the interplay between couples' working time, GRA, and class in Korean contexts,** this study contributes to the literature in several ways. Firstly, it advances the discourse on working time by considering more nuanced attributes beyond simple hours worked. Secondly,

by integrating GRA and class, it demonstrates how these factors interact rather than compete in explaining working time behaviours. Lastly, it provides insights into Korea's unique institutional context, suggesting implications for the labour market and family policies in the country.

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## *How Worker Power and Time-related Constraint Shape Schedule Flexibility*

M. Chae

Schedule flexibility is now seen as key elements of a high-quality job. Empirical evidence reveals the significant effects of schedule flexibility on worker well-being, health, and workfamily conflict. Despite previous studies focusing on various outcomes of more or schedule flexibility, the literature has not extensively examined the factors contributing to variation in schedule flexibility across occupations.

An account focusing on occupational differences suggests that time-related constraints inherent in certain occupations inevitably limit workers' ability to enjoy schedule flexibility. Goldin (2014) observes that professionals such as lawyers often need to communicate frequently with clients and colleagues and make urgent decisions, resulting in more on-call work hours and less control over their schedules. In contrast, occupations like pharmacy, which involve fewer clientspecific relationships and more structured job duties, allow workers

greater schedule flexibility (Goldin & Katz 2016). However, retail sales workers experience inflexible work schedules with short notice and without worker input despite facing relatively low time-related constraints (Lambert 2008).

In this paper, I argue that not only time-related constraints but also worker power are crucial factors in determining workers' schedule flexibility. Building on insights from rent-based theory, I investigate the role of workers' advantageous positions in the labor market and employment relations in contributing to schedule flexibility. I propose that workers in less advantaged positions may be unable to secure schedule flexibility, even when occupational tasks do not inherently limit schedule flexibility. Employers might still impose inflexible schedules when their workers lack the power to make claims. Alternatively, in occupations with high time-related constraints, even powerful workers may struggle to claim schedule flexibility.

To estimate the combined effects of time-related constraints and worker power on schedule flexibility, I use data from the American Time Use Survey (ATUS) along with detailed occupational information from the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET). I begin by comparing workers across different occupations that have varying levels of time-related constraints. Then, I construct two proxies for worker power that have been widely used in the literature: working in occupations with requirement for license and a labor union coverage. I compare workers with more and less power along these dimensions to explore the link between worker power and schedule flexibility. Finally, I examine how these two operationalizations of worker power make a difference in the association between time-related constraints and schedule flexibility to determine whether more powerful workers enjoy greater schedule benefits when time-related constraints are lower.

The findings show that workers in occupations with requirements for license enjoy greater schedule flexibility when time-related constraints are low. However, labor union coverage is associated with decreased schedule flexibility across varying levels of occupational constraints. These results imply that the factors affecting the temporal dimension of job quality may differ from those determining wages, where union coverage typically provides an advantage.

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### *The pandemic as equaliser or divider?*

#### *Working from home before and during the Covid-19-Pandemic*

*S. Altschul, A.-C. Bächmann, C. Frodermann, S. Wolter*

In this paper, we analyze how working from home has changed during the Covid-19 pandemic in Germany. In particular, we focus on gender differences in working from home and its connection to gender inequalities in working hours and pay.

From a theoretical perspective, we argue that the possibility of working from home could have an ambivalent effect on existing gender inequality and in particular on the gender pay gap: On the one hand, working from home could lead to greater flexibility and thus to a better reconciliation of work and family life, which should especially relieve female workers who still bear the main burden of housework and care work. Thus, the offer of remote work could **increase women's wage prospects, for example by enabling them to work more hours.** On the other hand, against the theoretical background of compensating differentials, the possibility of working from home could also have negative wage effects if employers penalise these flexible working conditions because they interpret them as a compensation for higher wages. This could also affect women in particular and thus widen the gender pay gap. As Covid-19 substantially increased the rate of working from home, it is a perfect setting for us to analyse the relationship between working from home and gender inequalities.

For this purpose, we use the Linked-Personal-Panel (LPP)–a longitudinal linked employer and employee survey that can be enriched with administrative information on the firm and employee side. Based on linear probability and fixed effects models, we find a large gender gap in working from home in 2019. Although women were more likely to work in jobs with a high potential for working from home, even before the pandemic, they less often worked remotely than men. In 2021, this gap narrows significantly. Using RIF regressions, we reveal that women in medium paying jobs drive these results. Moreover, we use Kitagawa-Oaxaca-Blinder Decompositions to show that working from home has the potential to reduce the gender gap in working hours. In further analyses, we aim to explore the linkage between working from home and the gender wage gap.

**Our research thus contributes to the conference topic “New work – new Inequalities?”** in a twofold way: On the one hand, we can identify gender differences in working from home before and during the Covid-19 pandemic and on the other hand, we provide new insights into the relationship between the possibility of working from home and key gender inequalities in the labor market.

### 4.3: Global and Comparative Perspectives on Work-Family Issues

#### *Amplifying marginalised voices: The intersectional experiences of black child-free women in the South African workplace*

*N. Acheampong, F. Farista*

The rising number of individuals identifying as child-free has sparked a growing interest in **understanding this demographic's unique challenges and opportunities**. Existing research underscores that child-free individuals often encounter stigmatisation and othering, impacting their professional and personal lives. In the South African workplace, these challenges are particularly pronounced and disproportionately affect individuals along racial, gender, class, and age lines due to family caring expectations, societal norms, and a general lack of cultural acceptance of the child-free choice.

While previous literature has illuminated child-free experiences, decision-making, and lifestyles predominantly within the global North, there remains a paucity of research in the global South. The experiences of black and young individuals navigating their child-free identity in the South African workplace are likely distinct from those documented in other contexts due to the legacy of apartheid which has left deep-seated racial and economic disparities that continue to shape the professional lives of black South Africans. Additionally, in many communities, clan family cultures play a crucial role, emphasising strong familial ties and expectations regarding marriage and parenthood. In such cultures, the decision to not have children can be seen as deviating from traditional values, leading to social **marginalisation and questioning of one's commitment to family responsibilities**. Therefore, the intersection of these factors within the South African workplace creates a distinctive environment that profoundly affects the professional and personal lives of black, child-free individuals, necessitating a contextualised understanding of their experiences.

This paper delves into these specific dynamics. Through an intersectional lens and the application of role theory, this paper provides a more nuanced perspective on how individuals navigate and negotiate their social roles and identities. We conducted semi-structured, in-depth interviews with 15 black child-free women in South Africa, exploring how age, race, gender, and social class shape their workplace experiences. All women were formally employed and resided in South Africa, identifying as black<sup>1</sup>, and between the ages of 25-38, with at least two years of full-time working experience.

By employing an integrated framework, our research provides a nuanced understanding of how race, gender, and class shape black **child-free females' workplace experiences**. Thus,

responding to calls to explore the issue of child-freeness among marginalised groups, thereby including and amplifying the voices of underrepresented individuals in research who are often overlooked. By highlighting these perspectives, our study informs organisational policies and practices that promote inclusivity and support the well-being of all employees, regardless of parental status. Further, this study advances theoretical contributions in the field of work-family research by demonstrating how the interaction of various social identities with societal expectations of family roles shapes workplace experiences. Our research encourages a critical examination of existing frameworks and practices, advocating for organisational action and inclusivity within diverse contexts, thereby enriching the discourse on intersectionality in the global South.

*Keywords: Voluntary child-free, child-freeness in the workplace, intersectional feminism, role theory, workplace diversity and inclusion, South Africa and global South*

**Topics:** Global perspectives on CWF, Social inequality structures of CWF

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<sup>i</sup> The term 'black' is an inclusive term encompassing racially classified population groups, including coloureds, Indians, and Africans during Apartheid South Africa (Manzo 1998, p. 107)

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## ***Mothers not choosing all-day childcare in urban area in Japan : individual normative factors or working conditions?***

*A. Yamada*

This study explores the factors influencing mothers' use of kindergartens compared to nursery schools in urban Japan, focusing on Tokyo and Kanagawa Prefecture. The choice between kindergartens and nursery schools is closely linked to women's career decisions. Kindergartens offer 5 hours care for over 3 year-old children, while nursery schools can provide 11 hours for all age children. This study examines the labour and policy conditions under which childcare services for children under three are used, contrasting Tokyo, with its high use of nursery, and Kanagawa, with its high use of kindergartens.

In Japan, the traditional male breadwinner model dynamic is changing, as evidenced by the rising demand for childcare and the increasing rate of women taking parental leave—from 56.4% in 1999 to over 90% in 2008. Despite these changes, access to childcare for children under three remains disproportionate. Typically, mothers using nursery schools are those pursuing full-time careers, whereas those using kindergartens often work part-time or are full-time housewives. Notably, full-time housewives using kindergartens in urban areas like Tokyo and Kanagawa are often highly educated.

Previous studies have highlighted cultural norms, working environments, and social class distinctions as key factors in women's employment continuity. This research adds an analysis of public policy barriers, examining why highly educated, high-income mothers prefer kindergartens over childcare facilities.

The central question is: under what conditions do mothers in highly educated, high-income areas choose kindergartens or childcare facilities? Two hypotheses are proposed: first, kindergarten mothers are privileged and opt not to work based on personal values; second, kindergarten mothers face unfavorable working conditions, prompting them to choose kindergartens. Using fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis (QCA), this study aims to identify the combination of conditions leading to these outcomes.

Currently, interviews have been conducted with approximately 20 mothers in Kanagawa Prefecture, supported by one large kindergarten and several childcare facilities. Participants, mainly from higher socioeconomic backgrounds, included both full-time and part-time workers and housewives. The analysis process involved measurement and calibration, necessity analysis, and sufficiency analysis. Measurement calibrated the degree of kindergarten and nursery use, while necessity analysis identified prerequisites for the outcomes.

Necessity analysis revealed that without having family-oriented norm was a necessary condition for childcare use. Sufficiency analysis identified two main pathways to kindergarten use: 1) family values combined with non-family-friendly workplaces, and 2) family-friendly workplaces combined with policy barriers. The results indicate that many kindergarten users face significant challenges, such as inflexible working conditions and policy obstacles, rather than merely being privileged. Many of these mothers have a high level of employment awareness.

Interviews in Tokyo will follow, and it is anticipated that notable differences will emerge. Tokyo, with excellent career opportunities and childcare access, sees many university-educated women balancing work and childcare, contrasting with Kanagawa. Through regional comparisons, this study aims to identify which working conditions and policies best support women's desired balance between family and work.

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## *Separation and Unemployment Across the Life History of Older European Men in Welfare Context*

*M. Brandt, B. Zeyer-Gliozzo*

In ageing societies, the well-being of older people is of growing importance. It is the result of a life course in different contexts, with complex links to and between different life course

domains, such as work and family (Artazcoz et al., 2004; Brandt et al., 2012). Although the direction of causality is debated, detrimental effects of events like unemployment or separation are likely to lead to cumulative disadvantages (DiPrete & Eirich, 2006). Despite many studies analyzing these links, few international comparative studies exist, indicating substantial differences (e.g., Cooke & Gash, 2010). Understanding underlying mechanisms can help to mitigate such cumulative inequalities. Evidence is scarce, especially for men, and findings for women are not directly transferable. Therefore, we aim to analyze the bidirectional links between unemployment and separation for European men and examine explanations for cross-country differences.

While unemployment influences separations through specialization between partners (Becker, 1981) and unmet economic and emotional expectations (Hansen, 2005; Kraft, 2001), the reverse relationship can be attributed to loss of social capital, negative psychological and health consequences and increasing autonomy (Covizzi, 2008; Kalmijn, 2005). Macro-level mechanisms are less clear. Male breadwinner norms and policies can play a role, with male unemployment contradicting societal expectations (Gonalons-Pons & Gangl, 2021), alongside women facing limited separation options (Blossfeld & Müller, 2002). Public benefits also appear relevant, alleviating financial hardship while reducing work incentives (Blekesaune, 2008). Finally, macroeconomic conditions may matter, as economic downturns increase financial and labor market pressures (Solaz et al., 2020).

Our analyses are based on the retrospective life histories of over 25,000 European men from 28 countries aged 50 and over today, collected in the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (Börsch-Supan, 2022a, 2022b). Unemployment and separation are measured as self-assessed changes from working/cohabiting to not working/cohabiting. We consider unemployment rate and GDP for macroeconomic conditions, the ratio of female to male labor force participation rate and family/child expenditures as inverse measures of traditional settings, and unemployment benefits for public transfers. To account for the specific structure of the data – observation nested in years, nested in countries – we estimated three-level multilevel regressions.

The results show a higher likelihood of unemployment following separation in the previous year and vice versa, with stronger effects on the work than on the private sphere. The links vary considerably across countries. Cross-level interactions suggest that economic circumstances contribute more to these disparities than socio-political settings. When economic downturns occur, they further exacerbate the "downward spiral" of life-disrupting events. We conclude that the (economic) context plays a major role in buffering cumulative inequalities across different life domains. However, competing mechanisms behind such complex micro-macro links or simultaneity still leave open questions.

Our research aligns with the conference theme by offering an international perspective on the bi-directional links between work and family, analyzing the impact of policies and

economic circumstances shaped by global changes like COVID-19 and wars. Our findings reveal nonobvious effects of these changes on work and private life, contributing to debates on their role for cumulative inequalities.

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## ***The COVID-19 pandemic and Fathers' Care Practices in South Africa and the United Kingdom***

*S. Haffejee, K. Twamley*

Emerging literature suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on family dynamics and parental roles. In this presentation we explore how the pandemic and the respective policy responses to the pandemic in South Africa and the UK **shaped fathers' care practices**. These two case studies emerge from the international consortium project *Families and Community in the Time of COVID-19 (FACT)*. FACT was a longitudinal qualitative study exploring the experiences of families with children during the COVID pandemic across ten different countries. We focus here on South Africa and the UK as countries in the global south and north that enacted public health responses in contrasting ways, but with similar results for the family and in particular, **fathers' care practices**. The initial responses to the pandemic varied between South Africa and the UK, with South Africa implementing swift lockdown measures and the UK adopting a more cautious approach. In both countries, as schools closed, families were compelled to reassess their parenting practices and childcare responsibilities.

Here we draw on data from mothers, fathers and children aged 12 and over to reflect on how fathers cared for their families during this time. The data were collected via multimodal diaries and interviews between June 2020 and March 2021 in South Africa and between May 2020 and June 2021 in the UK. The use of diaries provided real-time responses to developments in the pandemic, as well as rich contextual information and insight into family life over an extended period.

Our findings show that in both countries gendered divisions of care endured. For the majority of women in the study, unpaid care work increased significantly more than it did for men. This, despite **fathers' increased** time in the home and with their children. We suggest that two key issues inhibited change during the pandemic. First, the pandemic was a time of high anxiety, making it difficult for parents to imagine or pursue changes in gendered parenting practices as they were primarily **focused on 'getting by' and managing daily challenges**. Second, the logic of pandemic policies did not support transformations in caregiving divisions or prioritize the care needs of families, thereby maintaining the status quo in both countries.

By integrating perspectives from the Global North and South, this presentation offers valuable insights into the persistent and disproportionate burden of care that women carry.

Despite varying public policies, social inequalities, and cultural contexts, the unequal distribution of unpaid care work remains consistent during times of crisis like the pandemic and in non-crisis periods.

## 4.4: Politics and Policymaking Processes of Community, Work and Family

### *Two decades of research on ‘family policy change’: A qualitative systematic review*

*S. Blum, I. Dobrotić*

Family policy has risen to a mature field of comparative social policy, going hand-in-hand with the higher political salience of the policy area and its implications for gender equality. The evolving landscape of family-related policies across different countries boosted comparative family policy research interested in identifying trends, similarities, and differences in family policy development. Research **sought to understand ‘policy changes’, e.g. attending to socioeconomic, political and ideational factors that influence family policies and their adaptations over time. Over the past 20 years, investigating and explaining ‘policy change’** has indeed been one of the core themes of comparative family policy, aiming to capture the complexity of policy dynamics within diverse environments. Yet relatively little attention has **been paid to the question of what ‘policy change’ is, what processes and dimensions of change it may include, and how these can be operationalised and measured.** To explore **conceptualisations and also explanations of ‘policy change’ in comparative family policy,** we conduct a qualitative systematic review using the PRISMA method. We conduct a Web of Science search to identify articles published between 2003 and 2023 which explicitly directed at investigating family policy change. We assume that the literature interested in family policy change would benefit from integrating the advancements in policy change research that have been developed by public policy research.

**Keywords:** family policy, policy change, public policy, systematic review

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### *Work-Life Balance for All Parents? Assessing the EU Work-Life Balance Agenda Inclusiveness, Flexibility and Complementarity*

*I. Dobrotić, M. Uzunlioğlu*

The centrality of work-care policy to the EU work-life balance agenda has evolved over the past few decades, expanding minimum expectations and standards for care leaves, flexible working arrangements and care services in Member States. These policy developments have increasingly recognised, and often exclusively targeted, dual-earner couples. Improving gender equality, especially through enhanced and better-paid leaves, early childhood education and care and flexible work arrangements, became commonplace both at the EU level collectively and at the Member States level individually. While appreciated, the strong emphasis on parents in standard employment arrangements raised concerns that the EU's approach to work-care policy does not adequately address different care needs. The concerns became particularly pertinent to generally more disadvantaged families, such as lone-parent families, same-sex families, low-income parents with non-standard work arrangements, migrant parents and so on. There appear to be gaps in the recognition and resourcing of these families in the EU legislation and initiatives. Consequently, three questions arise:

- i) What are the policy shortcomings within the current EU work-care policy framework?
- ii) How well does the EU work-care policy framework respond to the realities of different families?
- iii) How well does this response contribute to their resilience in the face of various social and economic challenges?

Given this context, this article aims to provide a detailed analysis of key EU directives that define minimum standards for care leaves, labour market protection, and flexible working arrangements for carers—regardless of the intensity of their caregiving. The article will deliver this by employing a conceptual framework approach based on three policy review criteria: inclusiveness, flexibility and complementarity. The key Directives of concern here are Directive 92/85/EEC on maternity leave, Directive 2006/54 regulating legal protection for parenting leaves, Directive 2010/41 on maternity leave for self-employed workers, and Directive 2019/1158 on work-life balance, which plays a crucial role in shaping the work-care policy landscape. The article will also examine other related policies, such as the Recommendation on Early Childhood Education and Care and the Recommendation on the European Child Guarantee, assessing the extent to which they recognise and resource the care needs of different families and their situations.

Adopting an intersectional-sensitive approach to the work-care balance policies, the analysis will not only highlight the gender dimensions of the EU work-care policy framework but also assess its orientation towards different social classes and diverse family constellations. It will also evaluate how well the main EU policy initiatives on employment, social inclusion, and gender equality are integrated and mutually reinforcing, supporting all parents in balancing employment and care responsibilities.

## *Changing Gender Attitudes and Childcare Policy Reforms in the Federal States of Germany*

A. Blome, K. Mueller

Representing the prototype of a male-breadwinner model-oriented society for a long time, Germany adopted several reforms in the mid-2000s to enhance mothers' employment and to achieve a more gender-equal participation of men and women in work and care. Research has suggested that people's changing normative beliefs towards working mothers fuelled these reforms when political parties competed for new groups of voters. Yet, the expansion of public provision of childcare varies strongly across regions and take-up is stratified by mothers' education. In this paper we will investigate regional heterogeneity and inequalities in normative beliefs as a causal factor behind the diverging developments. We look into the causal mechanisms which underlie this relationship by focusing on the changes of attitudes and policies across regions over time. Can the *expansion* of subsidized care be (partially) attributed to the evolution of preferences over time? Or is the converse relationship true, i.e. **does the expansion of childcare precede the adjustment of people's preferences?** What role does polarization of normative beliefs within a region play, i.e. are regions with more heterogenous normative beliefs towards working mothers characterized by less expansion of subsidized care?

Our theoretical framework is based on theories of policy responsiveness and policy feedback, and cultural views on the development of social policies. Our data includes survey information on attitudes merged with regional childcare data, and complemented by political, institutional, socio-demographic and economic covariates. Covering 30 years, we investigate the question in different static and dynamic model specifications controlling for time-invariant unobservables.

### 5.1: Community, Care and Work

## *Work-life balance for who? An exploration of the role of Pastors' wives based on Christian blogs in the South American Protestant church Communities*

V. Orbea

Religion has been always an important matter across humanity and, to a more or less degree, religious services tend to be required for different occasions in the life of people, like marriage, funerals, a celebration of the birth of a baby, or to bless a new house or acquired car. In any case, pastors must offer not only a religious ceremony depending on the circumstance but **also be the “cornerstone” of the community's well-being** (Adams et al., 2017; Avent et al., 2015; Pittman, 2019). While it is true that religious attachment is not as strong as it was five centuries ago, the churches and religious communities remain strong throughout the countries of South America, which is one of the world's most religious regions. What's even more intriguing is the way that certain newly formed church affiliations have undermined the Catholic faith, which is the main religious identity on the continent (de la Torre & Martín, 2016).

**Pastors are extremely important for the community's well-being**, and their role tends to be extremely fluctuant and requires a considerable amount of adaptability from the pastor, and **his family. Some studies about the Pastor's role mention that this is an activity that belongs** to the helping professions group in which the main attribute of these workers is the interaction with the people they help or approach which is not only close or maintained on a personal level but also because they need to deal with people that tend to go through hard situations (Adams et al., 2017; Rogers, 2023). Yet, a major aspect that pastorhood differs from other helping professions is that pastors' work directly impacts their families, especially their wives (Pittman, 2019).

Pastors, as any other professional, receive a formation that allows them to execute their duties, there are many roles of a Pastor (preacher, priest, and teacher) that are legitimated **by a “holy scripture” or a founded religious ideology (Blizzard, 1981). Also, there are other roles that tend to be more “worldly” that are integrated into the Pastor's job according to the** demands of the society and the church community. The activities of the pastor must be explained since, in any case, the pastor has been provided with a set of abilities that will allow him to fulfill his responsibilities and respond to community needs.

The pastor's wife, however, is nevertheless carrying a heavy burden despite lacking this kind of preparation (Pittman, 2019; Rebuli & Smith, 2009).

As was previously noted, being a pastor involves a variety of demands from both the outside and the inside of the church community (Hove, 2023). The pastor's family has also expectations that will affect them, in particular to his wife, who is going to be seen as the **“right hand” of him, and the principal influence in his work. The role of a pastor's wife is** unclear, and many of the women who fill this function are unsure of what actions to take in this case (Pittman, 2019).

It is important to note that there is not a position in the church organizations for the wife of the Pastor, however, there is a big amount of expectations about her behavior and level of involvement in the church activities (Pittman, 2019; Rebuli & Smith, 2009). Additionally, the role of a wife in the ministry of his husband the pastor (who can be in charge of one or more

churches) s is the result of Modernity. After the reformation of the church, the rise of Protestantism made the participation of women in the ministry of the Gospel, and during the Victorian time the role of a wife started to be charged with many expectation roles with an intent to engage the community into the Gospel duties (Finch, 1980).

The role impositions of a woman whose husband is a pastor tend to be seen as a privilege that also brings a lot of responsibility. However, the kinds of roles tend to differ according to many opinions. Furthermore, no regulation explains these roles and according to what or who are **based on. Some theologians tend to mention that the pastor's wife is a helper of her husband as any other wife in the church, and since the Bible doesn't offer any specific instruction about the role of a pastor's wife, the role requirements would be deduced by biblical instructions given in general terms to women (and men in certain cases) (Rebuli & Smith, 2009).**

**Some of the roles that frequently are mentioned for a pastor's wife are related to being a good wife and mother who has an organized house and offers support to his husband by providing him with a warm place in which he can feel open to share his concerns about his work. Also, a pastor's wife must offer support and/or request support from other pastors' wives to ensure his work within the church members (Pittman, 2019; Rebuli & Smith, 2009).** These roles tend to be general ideas that might have some variations or interpretations depending on the religious denomination, however, based on these approaches this paper will try to make some conclusions based on the analysis of Christian blogs for Spanish Speakers **that are dedicated to the church communities in South, and explain the role of pastor's wife or offer some narratives about the experiences of pastors' wives who have been working for the church as "a pastor wife".**

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***The Post-pandemic Effects on Migrant Women's Transnational Care Arrangements. Analyzing the interplay of structural constraints and coping strategies in local contexts.***

*S. Willers*

This paper examines the life course effects of crisis events on migrant mothers in the urban area of Berlin. The last few years have seen several crisis events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic consequences, and the Russian war against Ukraine. The research therefore asks about the long-term effects of the crisis on women's care arrangements and options for social protection. Based on a qualitative methodology through narrative interviews and participant observation in 2021/2022 and follow-up interviews in 2024, this paper explores the effects on migrant women's labor market trajectories and their interactions with their local and transnational care arrangements from a biographical perspective. In doing so, it critically examines the care constellations between nation-state social welfare provision and transnational arrangements of care and social protection. By opening up the perspective to the extended family, it is possible to understand the interconnectedness of socio-political changes and economic crises for families that depend on transnational care exchanges in the broadest sense, including remittances, but also on hand care and emotional support. In doing so, it seeks to contribute to an understanding of the gendered impact of these events and the long-term effects of the crisis on migrant women, resulting in gaps or imbalances in care provision, and to the current debate on formal and informal social protection.

## *Parents and partners as enablers of work in the creative industries*

*W. Been, E. Loots, Y. Wijngaarden*

The cultural and creative industries (CCIs) are a popular sector. However, working conditions are often precarious and pay is low. In particular, early careers are characterised by low earnings and unpaid internships are a common way to enter the sector. During this period, however, attrition rates are high and unequal: those with a disadvantaged position in the labour market are more likely to leave the sector. Qualitative studies show that new entrants to the sector use a range of coping strategies to survive this period of low income and high insecurity. Frequently mentioned strategies include working several jobs, having a partner with a stable income or living with parents. One possible explanation for the inequality in attrition could be the unequal access to these enablers, which help to survive the early career stages in the CCI. In this study, we delve into these enablers by addressing: 1) how widespread these coping strategies actually are; 2) the extent to which different coping strategies prove successful in the early years of a career in the sector; and 3) what this means for inequality in attrition from the sector. We use registration data from Statistics Netherlands and follow all workers (employees and self-employed) who entered the sector in 2013 until the end of 2019 (using monthly observations of their labour market position). We use a combination of sequence analysis and multinomial logistic regression analysis to distinguish different types of careers (e.g. 'leaving soon', 'leaving later', 'interrupted work in the sector' and 'staying') and to determine which coping strategies prevail in which types of careers. Based on this data, we can identify which coping strategies are more or less successful and who eventually leaves the sector.

## 5.2: Social Inequalities, Infrastructure and Resilience

### *The traps and trade-offs of small-town life. Geographic residence, gender wage gaps and work-family deliberations*

*A. Grönlund, I. Öun*

The paper adds to the literature by studying labour market gender inequality from a geographic perspective. The main aim is to examine whether the decision to settle a small town or rural municipality implicates lower earnings compared both to men and to other

women in larger cities. To assess whether such patterns reflect a 'trade-off' based on a different valuation of career, family and place we study if earnings disadvantages are explained by preferences and to what extent they are compensated by job satisfaction.

The societal problems related to the exodus of young adults from rural areas has been extensively discussed and rural-urban migration flows have long been dominated by women. Still, we know relatively little about what women gain and lose from settling in a small town or rural municipality rather than in a larger city.

A main reason why young people leave for larger cities is the access higher education and greater career opportunities after graduation. However, social ties and compensatory benefits such as a less stressful life may also motivate individuals to remain in (or return to) less urbanized areas. These dilemmas may be particularly pronounced for women who invest heavily in education but also put a high priority on family. Sweden provides an interesting case for studying these dilemmas due to its long-standing support for gender equality as well as the geographic challenges, characterized by a strong urbanization and a vast, sparsely populated 'periphery'.

The paper utilizes a recent survey targeting individuals aged 30-50 who grew up in areas classified as small towns and rural municipalities (n= 2241). The analyses include OLS regressions on hourly wages and work hours (two dimensions of earnings) as well as job satisfaction. A main focus is on the importance of education. Preferences, captured as career-versus family/place orientation in occupational strategies, are considered in all analyses.

Preliminary results show that for women who lack tertiary education, the decision to settle in a mid-sized city or a small town involves an earnings disadvantage, compared to both women in large cities and men in small towns/mid-sized cities. Tertiary education largely compensates **for women's geographic disadvantage in hourly wages but not in work hours.** Regardless of educational level, the gender gap in work hours is significantly larger in small towns and rural municipalities than in large cities. Finally, for women with non-tertiary education, job satisfaction is significantly lower in small towns. In terms of preferences, women in less urbanized areas report the highest levels of family/place orientation but are no less career-oriented than other groups. Also, preferences do **not explain women's geographic disadvantages. Thus, these disadvantages do not seem to reflect a 'trade off' between career aspirations and commitment to family and place.**

The findings suggest that Swedish women are faced with geographic dilemmas in their quest **for gender equality, but also indicate that higher education could improve women's prospects** in less urbanized contexts. The relevance for the conference session is intersectional approach, which highlights the interplay between gender, geography and education.

## ***‘Digital Caregiving’ in the Era of Digitalised Public Services: A New Form of Gendered Domestic Labour?***

*S. Bailey, G. Netto, F. Islam, A. Kukulska-Hulme, E. FitzGerald*

The digitalisation of public services, a process which was accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic, has emerged as a global phenomenon. This transition requires service users to engage with providers through web and smartphone applications. In Western welfare state systems, it also requires service users to assume tasks that were previously managed by the state, such as booking GP appointments through online interfaces. This socio-technical transformation can, therefore, be conceptualised as a new form of recommodification. Technological change and evolving patterns of decommodification and recommodification have been shown to impact the structure, organisation, and gender division of unpaid social reproductive work, including domestic labour. However, the specific effects of the digitalisation of public services on domestic labour remain understudied.

This paper addresses this gap by examining the impact of digitalisation in primary healthcare and social housing services on the domestic labour of migrant families living in the UK. Drawing on in-depth interviews with 50 first-generation migrants and 48 adult children of first-generation migrants residing in England and Scotland, our analysis is underpinned by a critical realist intersectional approach. This approach acknowledges that organisational systems and processes are deeply influenced by societal power dynamics and it views individuals as members of multiple groups rooted in embodied and inseparable categories of social difference.

Our paper makes two key contributions to the literature. First, we found that many first-generation migrants are unable to navigate digitalised services independently and are, therefore, reliant on informal support from their adult children, who provide language, **administrative, and digital assistance. We term this emergent form of support ‘digital caregiving,’ following Tronto’s ‘phases of care’.** Second, we identified gendered differences in the experience of digital caregiving. Male adult children of migrants were more likely to report digital caregiving to be fulfilling and meaningful than female adult children, who more commonly experienced it as burdensome, reporting increased mental load, heightened stress, and reduced self-care capacity. We argue that these gendered experiences of digital caregiving can be explained by the intersecting disadvantages faced by women with migrant backgrounds.

This paper aligns with the conference theme by exploring the long-term implications of Covid19 and digitalisation.

*Possibilities of promoting digital inclusion in civil society organizations: presentation of the results of the project "With technology and education we can do everything"*

*L. Rašić, H. Vusić*

In modern society, the need to promote digital inclusion - an idea that implies enabling access to and use of information and communication technologies for every individual within the community - is increasingly emphasized. Civil society organizations play an important role in this promotion, as their activities undoubtedly contribute to achieving equality and inclusion within the community. This role was readily accepted by the civil society organization called **"Woman" from Drniš, Croatia**, which was the holder of the project "With technology and education we can do everything".

The goal of this two-year project was to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations to apply STEM in everyday activities when working with target groups through a partnership with a university. The project was intended for three Croatian civil society organizations that provide social services to vulnerable social groups, namely people with intellectual disabilities, Croatian war veterans, and elderly women. Project activities included organizing training for trainers and a study trip, equipping three LAB classrooms, and organizing multi-day workshops for end-users and one-day events.

An analysis of the relevant project documentation revealed that some of the results of the project were as follows: 1) conducted research on the application of STEM in which 100 civil society organizations participated, 2) implemented three training modules for trainers, 3) acquired planned equipment, 4) implemented four five-day workshops in three partner organizations, 5) held 40 days of open doors for the purpose of popularizing STEM and raising awareness of the field. The main result of the project is the strengthened capacity of three civil society organizations, 43 employees and volunteers for the application of STEM, and raised awareness of the importance of STEM among 457 people (185 people through multi-day workshops and 272 people through open days). The aim of this paper is to provide a detailed insight into the results of this project, which represent an example of good practice and can be used for the creation of future projects and project activities focused on the application of STEM as a tool for promoting digital inclusion in civil society organizations.

**Key words:** digital inclusion, civil society organizations, project, STEM

Friday, 28 March 2025

## 6.1: Elderly Life and Care

### *Does relationship satisfaction suffer when one partner needs to care for the other?*

*E. Verbakel*

#### Research interests

Against the background of population ageing, the demand for informal care will increase. Partners are the first providers of care in case someone has health problems. This study assesses to what extent providing informal care to or receiving informal care from the partner affects satisfaction with the partner relationship. Not much is known about the consequences of providing care to the partner in terms of relationship satisfaction. However, high-quality partner relationship may serve as a buffer against the stressful elements of informal care, and thus help caregivers to continue providing care, which is essential against the background of increasing demand for care in ageing societies. Both the perspective of giving and receiving informal care will be assessed.

#### Theoretical background

Opposite hypotheses are formulated. On the one hand, it is expected that relationship satisfaction suffers from providing or receiving partner care because (1) providing care is stressful, which may induce irritation that harms the relationship, and (2) equity may reduce if one partner becomes dependent for care on the other and/or if one partner can contribute less in terms of paid and unpaid work because of health limitations, which in turn may jeopardize relationship satisfaction.

On the other hand, it can be expected that relationship satisfaction increases when caring for or receiving care from a partner because (1) caregivers may feel closer to the care recipient due to the (emotional) intimate act of providing care, and (2) care receivers may feel gratitude towards their partner for helping them.

Gender differences in the effects of informal caregiving to the partner or receiving care from the partner will be explored.

## Methodological approach

Fifteen waves of the Dutch Longitudinal Internet Studies for the Social Sciences (LISS) panel were combined, covering the period from 2008 to 2023. The data include 2,289 observations in which care was received from the partner, and 1,068 transitions into this state.

Fixed effects analysis will be used to assess to what extent changes in informal care provision to the partner correlate with changes in relationship satisfaction. In fixed effects analyses, potential confounding effects of time-invariant characteristics are ruled out.

## (Preliminary) results

Preliminary fixed effects analyses suggested that relationship satisfaction was negatively related to providing partner care, but positively related to receiving care from the partner. Moreover, female caregivers showed bigger reductions in relationship satisfaction than male caregivers. No gender difference was found in the effect of receiving care from the partner on relationship satisfaction.

## Connection to conference session “Social Inequality Structures of CWF”

Major social changes are ahead of us due to ageing societies, amongst which an increasing demand for informal care. Important existing research has demonstrated that informal care **enhances social inequalities, for example because of caregivers’ reduced labour market outcomes**. This research looks at a different type of outcome, namely relationship quality with the partner, thereby enlarging the scope of social inequalities possibly emerging from the provision of informal care.

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## *Dynamics of Later-Life Caregiving and Health. Insights From Biomarker Data and Cognitive Tests*

A. Bertogg, P. Präg, K. Raiber

## Motivation

As populations age and informal caregiving becomes more widespread, the health consequences of providing care are becoming a key concern for societies (Patterson and Margolis, 2019). Sociological theories of stress appraisal and role strain posit detrimental consequences to the health and wellbeing of caregivers (Uccheddu *et al.*, 2019). Conversely, enhancement theory holds that caregiving can have positive consequences. Our *research*

*questions* thus asks how transitions into and out of informal caregiving are associated with later-life health, and if informal caregiving intensity makes a difference. We look at two innovative and complementary health outcomes and use high-quality longitudinal data.

## Research design and methods

Using data from the English Longitudinal Study of Aging (ELSA) collected among adults aged 50 years or older with a follow-up period of up to 17 years (2002–19,  $N \approx 10,000$  participants, Steptoe et al., 2013), we examine associations between transitions into and out of caregiving, and two key health outcomes which have been understudied as consequences of caregiving, namely: allostatic load and cognitive functioning. We estimate asymmetric fixed-effects models (Allison, 2019) which model changes in health outcomes as a function of transitions into and out of caregiving while accounting for unobserved between-person heterogeneity.

## Results

For the biomarker-based allostatic load, we found that men could improve their health when starting to care, yet these results seem to be less robust. For cognitive health and for both women and men, we were able to show that starting to provide care was associated with better health. No effects of transitions out of caregiving were found. For women, the transition into more intense caregiving was also related to better cognitive health. Results do not differ by caregiving intensity.

## Discussion and implications

Our findings provide tentative support for role enhancement theory, suggesting that caregivers benefit in terms of cognitive functioning, even if a biomarker-based approach to measuring stress-related health outcome does not corroborate an overall health benefit. We formulate implications for policymaking and directions for future research.

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## *Gender differences or inequalities? Emotional work, families and social networks in the face of demographic ageing*

*T. Nazio, L. Cataldi*

Demographic ageing is a challenge for Western societies that are preoccupied with welfare sustainability, but also for the capacity of families to withhold their unpaid work (care) provision through intergenerational support along with paid employment. This is especially true for prospective caregivers who are to be employed until they reach ever older ages and are squeezed between multiple responsibilities across generations: downwards, sideways, **and upwards. Increasingly 'thinner and longer' families (i.e. 'beanpole' family, Bengston 2001)** and social networks are what provide the larger part of informal care and emotional support **throughout individuals' life courses (Vacchiano et al. 2024; Lin & Marin 2022).** Depending on the country (Saraceno & Keck 2010), they complement or substitute for welfare (shortage) for both younger and older generations.

Social networks are more than a bundle of social contacts; they provide emotional, practical and material support, especially around pivotal life transitions, and are associated with individuals and older people's better health and well-being (Huxhold et al. 2020). As social networks both influence and are influenced by life course changes, we integrate social networks theory and life courses to better understand social and individual dynamics (Buchmann 2024). We investigate how pivotal life events such as separation and divorce, retirement, and widowhood (Lin and Marin 2022; Marsden 2024), occurring in the later stages **of individuals' lives, impact social networks' size and composition, testing whether this effect** is moderated by gender and education.

Networks are a function of family structures and their changes over time (Hollstein 2023), e.g. widowhood affects both the size and the properties of social networks, but the family also shapes caring responsibilities. With data from waves 4 to 9 of SHARE surveys across a total of 26 European countries we reveal that personal core networks are predominantly made by family members, either "ascribed" (to the family of origin) or "gained" (through unions and births) and only to a much lesser extent by non-family members (friends, neighbours, coworkers, etc.). Importantly, while social network size decreases with age at the aggregate level, every new birth cohort enjoys average larger networks at the individual level. Further, familial network resources are more persistent through the natural process of network loss that occurs with ageing. This phenomenon becomes particularly noticeable from the age of

75 onwards (especially so for women), increasing the female share in the network composition over time and signalling an unequal burden of care responsibilities and support from and to women. The centrality of family-related core relations not only applies to traditionally familistic countries such as the Mediterranean ones but also to the Eastern European and, to a lesser extent, Continental and Nordic countries. From a gender perspective, empirical results reveal that care remains mostly a responsibility -and burden- of the families and especially women therein. Ultimately, personal networks and family structures convey different capacities to afford care, contributing to the structural conditions of inequality among individuals and older people and affecting the health and well-being of care recipients and the employment opportunities of care providers.

## 6.2: Gender Norms and the Division of Labour

### *Night-time care in Finnish families with young children*

*E. Grigorjew, P. Eerola, M. L. Böök*

This study examines how Finnish parents with young children experience night-time care. The **aim is to explore parents' understandings and practices of night-time care** and how the night-time care is intertwined in parenthood and the daily life of families. Night-time care is a novel approach in care and family studies, as there are very limited number of previous studies on the topic. This research produces new understanding of parenthood and the everyday life of families and theoretical knowledge on night-time care. The study is done as part of research project *The Parental Night Shift: Gendered Inequalities in Night-time Care*.

In earlier research night-time care in families with young children has been described as a **'parental night shift'**. The night shift consists of caretaking responsibilities such as handson care, emotional labour, awakenings and intermittent sleep and worrying about child(ren) and family. In this research both parenting and sleep are understood as practices that are connected to different social, cultural and gendered structures. The previous studies highlight the gendered nature of night-time care and sleep. Parents and especially mothers sleep less than before having children. Mothers' sleep is more interrupted and disturbed than their spouses'. This is because mothers have the responsibility for nighttime care as they respond to children's needs, whereas fathers' sleep is usually prioritized and protected. The couples base this division on father's employment and ensuring his coping at work. Night-time care remains mother's responsibility even after they return to work.

The empirical data were collected in Finland. Finland is a Nordic dual-earner welfare state with strong support for gender equality, but parenting and childcare are still gendered. The **data consists of two data sets: parents' writings on night-time care** (N = 52) and individual interviews with mothers and fathers (N = 50). The sample included parents from mixed-sex and same-sex parent families and single parents. The majority of the interviewed parents (n = 35) had at least one child aged 2 or under, and in the rest of the families the youngest child was 6 years or under. The writings and interviews elicited experiences of night-time care, day-time care, and navigating paid and unpaid work. The data are being analysed with a narrative approach.

The analysis is still in process and more comprehensive results are under way. The preliminary results show that **night-time care is most active for parents during the child's first years**. Parents described many activities as part of night-time care, but facilitating sleep for themselves and their children was the greatest concern. Care practices at night were often reported as gendered: **the night-time care was primarily presented as the mother's responsibility** and only few fathers were main carers for the children during night. Parents expressed diverse feelings about night-time care, such as the intimacy created in taking care of a child late at night, but also sadness when responsibilities were not perceived to be evenly divided.

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## *Gender Conformity in the Division of Labor and Stress at Midlife*

*K. Begall, P. Präg*

### Motivation

Increases in female labor force participation and female outperformance of men when it comes to educational attainment are two key structural forces in Western societies. They go along with increasing social norms in families for men to participate in housework and childcare, challenging the long-standing male breadwinner norm (Kim and Luke, 2020). This **discordance between social norms and economic conditions can be challenging to individuals' wellbeing** (Daminger, 2020). In this study, we use British cohort data and biomarker measures of stress consequences to address two *research questions*: How do **men's and women's** deviations from the male breadwinner norm (as evidenced by a non-traditional division of labor) relate to physiological stress at age 46? Does the association between a non-traditional division of labor and stress vary by gender attitudes?

### Data and method

We analyze *data* from the 1970 British Cohort Study (Elliott and Shepherd, 2006), a cohort study of all 17,000 Brits born in one week of 1970. The data allow us to assess the division of labour at ages 30, 34, and 42 by combining information on family formation (partnership and childbirth), employment, housework and earning patterns. Our *outcome variable* is allostatic load (McCrory *et al.*, 2023), measured at age 46. Allostatic load is a measure of physiological consequences to the experience of chronic stress.

## First findings

In a first set of analyses, we regress stress at midlife indicated by allostatic load on two key indicators of the division of labor, the average proportion of income respondents earned and the average proportion of household tasks they conducted at ages 30, 34 and 42 and include gender attitudes measured at age 30 as a moderator. Having a non-traditional division of labor that deviates from the male breadwinner norm is stressful at midlife for women holding traditional gender attitudes. For men, violating the male-earner norm appears to be more stressful when holding egalitarian gender attitudes. A higher contribution to household tasks is associated with less stress among egalitarian men.

## Tentative conclusions and future plans

Our study of a cohort of British men and women revealed two key findings:

1. Having a non-traditional division of labor that deviates from the male breadwinner norm is stressful at midlife for women holding traditional gender attitudes.
2. For men, violating the male-earner norm appears to be more stressful when holding egalitarian gender attitudes. A higher contribution to household tasks is associated with less stress among egalitarian men.

So far, our study highlights the biological consequences of social change, yet also emphasizes the importance of attitude change. In future analyses, we will gauge the sensitivity of our findings to unobserved heterogeneity and will explore the mechanisms underlying our findings.

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## *Money, In-Laws, and Children: Negotiating Gendered Expectations in the Transition to Marriage in South Korea*

Y. Cho, Y. Kim

This study examines how young men and women in South Korea negotiate multiple gendered expectations that heterosexual marriage entails. A persistent puzzle for gender scholars in recent decades has been the unevenness of change in patterns of gender inequality. Mothers' employment is now considered normative in many countries, whereas husbands' unemployment still leads to relationship dissolution to a greater extent compared to wives' unemployment (Gonalons-Pons and Gangl 2021; Killewald 2016). Against a backdrop of such uneven changes, some studies have shown how young adults negotiate their desires with persistent institutional and cultural barriers (Damaske 2011; Gerson 2011; Oh 2018; Wong 2017; Wong and Daminger 2024). Although these studies provide valuable insights, they either downplay differences across social class or focus on highly educated couples committed to egalitarian relationships.

Extending this line of work, this paper examines how young adults of diverse social class backgrounds negotiate gendered expectations associated with marriage in a context where these expectations are likely to undergo uneven change. The case of South Korea is informative in that marriage rates have declined dramatically, and that there is additional uncertainty regarding whether the younger population in general supports egalitarian relationships with the recent expansion of antifeminist narratives that have also been observed globally (García Mingo and Díaz Fernández 2023; Ging 2019; Kim and Lee 2022).

This paper uses in-depth interview data with 52 South Koreans under the age of 40 to answer the following interrelated questions: How do South Korean men and women perceive and

respond to multiple gendered expectations associated with marriage? What are the **implications of these processes for young adults' transitions to marriage and marital experiences?**

Based on analysis of interview data, we identify three dimensions where gendered expectations regarding marriage need to be negotiated: division of marriage expenses (i.e., expectations for men to provide the marital home), relationships with parents-in-law (i.e., **expectations for women's deference to their husband's family**), and division of housework and childcare (i.e., expectations for women to take on a greater share). Despite acknowledging expectations for men to provide the marital home, respondents across social class backgrounds accepted sharing marital expenses with their partners. Gendered expectations regarding in-law relationships were resisted among women of all social class, but only those with more resources were likely to gain independence from their in-laws. Importantly, sharing the burden of marital expenses was rarely coupled with an equitable sharing of household labor. For those who believed that they had much to lose across these three dimensions, marriage was largely viewed with ambivalence. Consequently, uneven changes in gendered expectations across different dimensions reinforce college educated, **high-income men's advantage through heterosexual marriages.**

This study contributes to gender scholarship by illustrating how culturally gendered expectations shift in varying degrees, how women and men respond to these changes under different constraints, and how these processes reproduce (and challenge) classed and gendered privilege in family life. In addition, these findings point to mechanisms that may lead to class-differential transitions to marriage in South Korea and elsewhere.

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## ***Finnish first-time parents' emotional and practical external support and psychological distress during the COVID-19 pandemic – a longitudinal study***

*I. Kuusiahho, P. Eerola, A. Rönkä, M. Böök, S. Moilanen, K. Malinen, L. Leach*

### **Objective**

The aim of the study is to examine the changes in the amount and sources of support among firsttime parents during the pandemic, and to additionally investigate the association between psychological distress and changes in received support.

### **Background**

Throughout history, new parents have sought support for their parenthood from society, their local networks, or both. However, during the pandemic, this support diminished significantly by COVID-19 restrictions and increased the potential level of psychological distress over the long term. The importance of support for parental well-being has been demonstrated in numerous cross-sectional studies before and during the pandemic, but longitudinal study about quality and sources of received support examined together with the level of psychological distress is limited.

## Method

We utilize longitudinal survey data collected from 288 Finnish parents at two time points: when their first child was 6 months old and when the child was 18 months old. We use both quantitative and qualitative data to expand and deepen our understanding of the support received by first-time parents and its sources during the pandemic. The association between psychological distress and changes in the amount and sources of support is examined using linear regression, and open-ended responses regarding the experienced impact of COVID-19 on received support are analyzed through thematic analysis.

## Results

We found both change and stability in the levels of practical and emotional support received from relatives and friends over time. The stability in the insufficiency of support is associated with higher psychological distress, while support remaining at an adequate level predicts lower levels of psychological distress. Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, practical support has been harder for parents to obtain and reach out for, but some parents found elements during the pandemic that facilitated receiving support, while others found no experienced impact on support due to COVID-19.

## Conclusion

During the pandemic, there were no possibilities to build new support networks, therefore already existing strong support networks protected parents during the early stages of parenthood and against the social restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, and those parents who had only a few support providers were at the greatest risk of lacking support and being exposed to higher levels of psychological distress.

## 6.3: Community, Work and Family

*Between family love and formalities On intra-family negotiations of citizenship constructions, belonging and acts of citizenship of mixed-status families in Jordan*

*B. Kawalla*

In migration research and citizenship studies, the family unit has been gaining importance for the analysis of migration movements since the early 2000s. But migration movements within the Global South and thus also postcolonial migration and naturalization regimes in these countries remain unconsidered in most research.

Building on these considerations, my dissertation project examines migration and naturalization configurations for families in a postcolonial context using the example of Jordan.

I focus on heterosexual mixed-status families in which the mothers have Jordanian citizenship but are unable to pass it on to their foreign husbands and their children due to Jordan's restrictive and patriarchal citizenship laws (Frost 2022). Without a Jordanian citizenship the access to public education, healthcare and certain jobs is limited which causes specific challenges for these mixed-status families and their communities. With this research scope my project develops thoughts concerning the effects of (citizenship policy based) inequality structures and the agency of family members navigating these structures; both mentioned topics of the conference.

My dissertation builds on a praxeological conceptualization of citizenship (Isin 2008). This approach places practices, according to Isin so-called *acts of citizenship*, at the center of the analysis, with which individuals, whether legal citizens or not, position themselves in relation to the state and its actions. In my work, I expand this praxeological understanding of citizenship by taking up feminist criticism (Köster-Eiserfunke et al. 2014) of Isin's concept and making it empirically usable. Hereby, I focus on those actions that take place outside the political public sphere due to the vulnerable social positioning of the actors. In concrete terms, this means that my research will focus not only on performative acts but also on affective (Fortier 2016) and intimate (Plummer 2003) *acts of citizenship*.

My research focuses on the question of which intra-family practices and negotiation processes shape the lifeworld of mixed-status families in Jordan. Here, both affective questions of belonging to the Jordanian state, are considered, as well as how the families deal with the challenges associated with the lack of Jordanian citizenship for the women's relatives, and their actions aimed at responding to these challenges. The following questions guide the research:

- How do members of mixed-status families in Jordan construct their family in relation to the Jordanian state in the narration of their life stories?
- How are different experiences of migration and citizenship status and their effects negotiated within the family?
- What roles do social positionings such as class, gender, religion, nationality and ethnicity play?

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The core of the study consists of biographical-narrative family and individual interviews, which will be analyzed with the help of biographical case reconstruction (FischerRosenthal, Rosenthal 2000) and biographical evaluation of policies (Apitzsch et al. 2008). The interviews will be held both in English and/or Arabic between September and December 2024 during a field trip in Amman, Jordan. First results of the field trip may be presented during the workshop at the conference.

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## *Embracing Contextual Plurality: The Mental Well-being Experiences of Black*

### *Low-income Women and Mothers during the COVID-19 Pandemic in South Africa*

*I. Lentsoe, A. Jaga*

The COVID-19 pandemic plunged populations into alternate realities characterised by limited social engagement, elongated periods of lockdowns and the cessation of all non-essential activities. The unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 pandemic saw researchers and experts scour to document and explore these COVID-19-induced alternate realities. Mainstream research findings suggest that the regulations introduced by national governments to curb **the spread of the virus negatively affected people's mental well-being** and earning capacity. Moreover, these effects have been disproportionate in Global South communities because of the socioeconomic and historical-political landscapes that contribute to and perpetuate existing inequalities. In these communities, Black low-income women, and mothers in particular, have borne the burden of income shocks and impeded mental well-being because of their intersecting and marginalised identities. Yet, the theorising and the empirical findings explaining the experiences of mental well-being and economic precarity remain located in the hegemonies of white, middle-class samples in the Global North and formal economies. To uncover the implications of the pandemic, many researchers resorted to quantitative and positivist methodologies that rely on observable, measurable and, objective truths, and thus largely utilised statistical scales and analyses to make sense of reality.

This paper responds to the skewed geopolitics of mental well-being theory and knowledge production. It aims to expound plural ways of understanding and engaging with the mental well-being experiences of Black low-income women and mothers as inextricably entwined with their livelihoods and the capacity to care. Importantly, this research further seeks to centre and explore the experiences associated with accessing livelihoods within informal economies and contexts — insights that economic and labour-focused statistical agencies so often neglect.

The conceptual underpinnings of this research are the frameworks of Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) and ‘triple oppressions’ (Jones, 1949) which, when integrated, describe the mutual engagements between Blackness, womanhood and social class that work specifically to oppress poor Black women economically, socially and politically. Using an exploratory qualitative design and intersectional analytical lens, data were gathered from eight Black low-income women residing and working in South Africa. Semi-structured interviews were the mode of data collection. Thematic analysis of the data revealed three themes: 1) Precarity and informality shaping adverse mental well-being outcomes for women; 2) Economic and food insecurity steering the women towards women-centred networks of care; and 3) Social welfare and doing entrepreneurship mitigate sudden income loss and economic shocks.

The preliminary findings highlight local contextual complexities that help advance plural ways of understanding mental well-being and economic precarity in diverse contexts. Women-centred networks of care and community emerge as crucial in easing the burden of caregiving and mothering amidst economic precarity. Relatedly, the findings affirm the necessity of social welfare as an effective barrier against adverse economic outcomes and emotional distress. Importantly, the findings also highlight the **women’s innovative and entrepreneurial** approaches to help them cope within a constrained context. This research contributes to a more representative understanding of mental well-being experiences in precarious and diverse contexts while acknowledging Black low-income **women’s agency and affirming their** dignity.

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## *Liminality of Forced Displacement: Syrian Refugee and Immigrant Lives in the US*

A. Ferris

Migration involves complex decisions shaped by changing circumstances, motivations, and experiences (Crawley & Skleparis, 2018). In displacement contexts, people may have migration aspirations but with more constrained mobility (Muller-Funk et al., 2023). Fewer people in conflict situations are able to migrate, resulting in circumstances of immobility for many and revealing the importance of understanding how socioeconomic background, family structures, and gender may influence migration decisions (Boyd & Grieco, 2003). The **framework of “new economics of labor migration”** suggests that the starting point is households – families and households make decisions about migration based on economic circumstances (Stark, 1991). However, it is assumed that forced migrants do not migrate based on economic conditions due to their credible fear of persecution (Mingot & de Arimateia da Cruz, 2013). Forced migration can be motivated by a complex relationship between economic and existential or survival stakes, and spaces and stages of displacement

are also connected to family ties and household considerations. In forced displacement contexts, families may attempt to manage the risks of violence and poverty through household decisions about migration. When refugees reach a destination country, they will consider restrictions on work and mobility, possibilities for family reunification, or send remittances to support family members. Forced migration affects families, households, and communities across geographical spaces and places - places of origin, transit, and destination (Arar & Fitzgerald, 2023).

Governments have been reluctant to provide permanent humanitarian protection and immigration legal categories protecting non-Convention refugees, such as subsidiary protection in the EU and TPS and humanitarian parole in the US, are a growing phenomenon. These temporary provisions are alternatives to refugee status and access to certain rights within the host country - namely, the right to work and temporary protection from deportation (Seele et al., 2024). However, temporary provisions often leave families in vulnerable positions and find themselves in limbo for months or years waiting on pending applications, have their asylum claims rejected, or find themselves in a status that places **them in the “in-between” reality (Birger, 2024). Transnational families also face institutional** barriers to reunification, profoundly shaping their social and economic trajectories (Debruyne et al., 2023).

This paper looks at how migration legal and geographic pathways shape transnational Syrian families in the US. I focus on the Syrian refugee and immigrant community and interview those who migrated to the US after the Syrian war. I utilize targeted and snowball sampling to recruit Syrians who migrated to the US and hold different humanitarian protection statuses. Through in-depth interviews, I gain insight into how Syrians navigate the complex US immigration system while managing the precarity associated with prolonged family separation and how their migration pathways shape these trajectories. I employ the Life History Calendar (LHC) method and embedded semi-structured interview questions to discuss those migration histories. Preliminary findings suggest that Syrians across different migration pathways and statuses experience extensive periods of family separation and US immigration and family reunification policies sustain patterns of inequality.

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## ***Impact of Family Reunification Policies on Academic Migrants’ Quality of Life: A Case Study of African Scholars in Germany***

*D. B. Ojo*

This paper examines the profound impact of family reunification policies on the quality of life of academic migrants from Africa to Germany, contributing to the continuing debate about community, work, and family (CWF) in the context of global transformation. Migration

regulations, particularly those governing family reunifications, have a significant impact on the lives of academic migrants, influencing both their emotional well-being and professional success. This study focuses on African scholars, who face distinct problems and opportunities in Germany's academic landscape. This study employs a qualitative interview to investigate how academic migrants experience family reunification process and how this affect several elements of their life in Germany. Emotional stress, Mental health, social integration, knowledge productivity, and overall life satisfaction are all significant domains identified in the study. According to the study, the tight regulations typically result in extended family separations, which raises diverse stress for the academic migrant and the left-behind family members, isolation, and reduce knowledge output. Conversely, more inclusive policies that facilitate timely family reunification contribute to better mental health outcomes, greater social cohesion, and enhanced academic productivity.

This paper also situates the discussion within the broader context of ongoing global dynamics such as the COVID-19 pandemic, digitalization, and socio-political changes. The pandemic, in particular, has exacerbated the challenges faced by academic migrants, highlighting the critical need for responsive and flexible migration policies. Digitalization presents both opportunities and challenges, offering new ways for academic migrants to connect with their families and professional networks, while also introducing potential barriers related to digital literacy and access. The study draws on personal narratives and empirical data to illustrate the real-world implications of family reunification policies. These narratives provide a human face to the statistics, showcasing the resilience and agency of African academic migrants as they navigate complex migration landscapes. The findings underscore the importance of policy adjustments that are sensitive to the needs of diverse migrant populations, advocating for a more inclusive approach that prioritizes family unity and well-being. Ultimately, this research aims to inform policy discussions and contribute to the development of more supportive frameworks for academic migrants. By highlighting the intersection of family reunification policies with the quality of life of African scholars in Germany, the paper calls for a re-evaluation of existing policies to foster environments that enable academic migrants to thrive both personally and professionally. This is essential not only for the well-being of the migrants themselves but also for the enrichment of the academic institutions and communities they contribute to.

**Keywords:** family reunification, academic migrants, quality of life, African scholars, Germany, migration policies, community, work, family dynamics

## 6.4: Organisations, Behaviour and Work Devotion

### *Managing the Transition to Parenthood in Small and Medium-Sized Workplaces – Pathways to Good Practice*

*B. Stumbitz, H. Norman, E. Banister, C. Santos, A. Burnett, B. Chabé-Ferret*

#### Research interest

Becoming a parent is one of the most impactful processes in a person's working life course. For many expectant and new parents, this time of excitement is accompanied by worries about how best to combine their new parenting role with work. At the same time, smaller employers in particular often feel overwhelmed by the need to support pregnant staff and new parents while continuing to run their business on a day-to-day basis.

Although SMEs account for more than 90% of the global business population, most research on the experiences of pregnancy or parenthood and employment focuses on large firms and thereby excludes the experiences of the majority of (parental) workers and their employers. The management of new parenthood in smaller workplaces is different from large firms as they often operate with scarce resources, and lack a dedicated Human Resources department and written maternity/paternity policies. This 3-year mixed-methods study seeks to address this knowledge gap by developing recommendations for the management of maternity and paternity in SMEs which work for both parents and employers.

#### Theoretical background

In our analytical framework, we embed maternity/paternity management in theory about gendered organizations (Acker, 1990) and SME management (Stumbitz et al., 2018a), conceptualising adaptations to maternity/paternity as a process of mutual adjustment (owner-/manager and employee ad hoc bargaining) and dynamic capability (owner-/manager re-visioning and reorganization of resources into renewed capabilities). Smaller employers tend to adopt an informal management style, emergent from the absence of formal human resource management expertise and policies, owner desire for autonomy and flexibility, close spatial and relational working relationships that create a shared sense of belonging, interdependence and 'family-ness' (Ram and Edwards 2003; Ram et al. 2001, 2007).

#### Methodological approach

Our study includes in-depth interviews with 35 SME employers and employees (respectively) at different time points over a 12-month period, and two large-scale cross-sectional surveys of employees and employers working in SMEs. In addition, the involvement of potential beneficiaries and users (i.e. employers, employees, support organisations and policy makers) in all key stages of the project ensures the research meets their needs and is targeted. We will present interim findings based on our surveys, and in-depth qualitative interviews conducted with employers and employees (both expectant and new parents).

## Preliminary results

Our presentation will present both common challenges of managing maternity/paternity in resource-scarce environments, as well as good practice examples which demonstrate that supporting new parents at work does not have to be an unreasonable financial and administrative burden.

## How does the research relate to the conference topic or session?

Our project addresses a global problem: SMEs are under-researched despite employing the majority of (parental) workers worldwide. Findings will inform key policy debates and business practices related to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, particularly equality of opportunity and pay and the reduction of maternal and infant mortality. Furthermore, we will develop targeted, context-sensitive, low-cost and scalable solutions that support both owner-/managers and employees in the transition process.

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## *Life puzzling: moving beyond work-life balance*

*J.-C. Languilair, L. den Dulk*

Work-life balance is a popular term in both the public debate and in the academic literature. Work-life balance emerged as an answer to the criticisms on the widely use of the term work-family conflict. This answer covered a first shift from work-family to a broader consideration of work and non-work aspects within people's life (Kelliher, Richardson & Boiarintseva, 2018; Languilair, 2009). It also refers to a second shift that relates to a more positive approach towards the work-life interface (Kelliher, Richardson & Boiarintseva, 2018; Wayne et al., 2017). In addition, there has been a shift from focusing on cross-domain transfers or interaction towards a global evaluation of combining work and non-work aspects in relation to people's own life priorities and social expectations (Wayne et al., 2017). Although these shifts in conceptualization have been undeniable valuable, "work-life balance" is also a debated term.

Firstly, the hyphen between work and life implies that work and life are distinct, even opposed spheres, but work is part of life, isn't? The term "Work versus non-work" is also used in academia but can life be so binary? Moreover, existing research often used a restricted conception of both 'work' and 'life', in which life refers mainly to childcare responsibilities and work to traditional employment (fulltime, permanent employment with one employer). Consequently, existing research has mainly focused on working (employed, heterosexual) parents and less on, for instance, the self-employed, LGBTQ+ persons, gig workers, or single people without children, ignoring the increasing diversity of the workforce and households across societies (Kelliher, Richardson & Boiarintseva, 2018). Secondly, the term 'balance' is criticized as it often aligns with the idea of "equality" of time spent between domains. "Balance" ignores the individual and social construction of the phenomena, and that balance can have different meanings. Research on different groups of workers, but also international research has fully demonstrated that. Finally, balance is conceptualized as a result, a perceived outcome, even a (static) outcome (Adkins & Permeaux, 2019) of what everyone is doing or desiring. But can balance be static and can we predict the outcome in our changing context? We argue that it is time to take a new step forward, especially in a society full of complexities and uncertainties. It is time to move beyond work-life balance and focus on the processes individuals constantly engage in to make LIFE happen. It is time for a more inclusive conceptualization that is focusing on the processes developed by each of us to make life functioning. In this paper we therefore introduce the concept "life puzzling" emphasizing a more dynamic and process approach of creating life domains and managing them together in time and place.

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## *The association between work-family conflict and eating behavior in men and women: Can coworker encouragement of healthy eating buffer the effect?*

*L. Maciejewski, A. van der Put, T. van der Lippe*

### Objective

This study examines the role of coworker encouragement of healthy eating in moderating the effects of work-to-family conflict (WTFC) and family-to-work conflict (FTWC) on the frequency of fruit and vegetable intake among men and women.

### Background

Society is undergoing significant change: the number of dual-earner couples has risen due the increase in **women's** labor market participation, leading to more individuals having to manage multiple roles that can sometimes become incompatible. This challenge is exacerbated by new working conditions that blur the boundaries between work and private life. At the same time, we are seeing an increase in chronic diseases across society, many of which are preventable by adopting healthier lifestyles, including healthier eating habits. A healthy diet is very beneficial for overall health, but the stress associated with WTFC and FTWC may undermine these benefits, posing potential health risks. Two mechanisms can explain a less healthy eating with higher conflict levels: First, individuals might lack resources and will prioritize work and family demands over time for eating. Second, employees may engage in a less healthy diet to cope with stress and regulate their emotions. Additionally, gender differences in time commitment to work and family, as well as vulnerability to different stressors, might lead to varying outcomes for men and women for both conflict directions. Lastly, coworkers encouragement of healthy eating might mitigate the negative effects of WTFC and FTWC on eating behavior, as individuals might perceive their coworkers encouragement as a form of social control or as a signal of a social norm that helps them maintain a healthy diet as they experience higher levels of WTFC and FTWC.

### Method

This study uses data from the second wave of the European Sustainable Workforce Survey and a sample of 2,792 employees between the age of 18 and 64 years from nine European countries. Multilevel linear regression models are used to assess the effect of WTFC and FTWC on eating behavior in men and women and to examine whether coworker encouragement of healthy eating serves as moderator in this relationship.

### Preliminary results

The results indicate that WTFC is significantly associated with less healthy eating, while no significant effects are found for FTWC. Regarding gender, the analysis reveals that only WTFC is associated with less healthy eating habits for women, but not for men. Furthermore, the perception that coworkers encourage healthy eating seems to reduce the negative association of both WTFC and FTWC with eating. However, this effect is only found in women.

## Conclusion

The findings highlight the need to distinguish between both conflict directions of workfamily conflict by gender. In order to support employees, in particular women, in managing conflict and maintaining a healthy diet, coworker encouragement of healthy eating among employees should be promoted and a norm of healthy eating should be established in organizations.

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## *Adversity in life puzzling for gay people*

*J.-C. Languilaire*

Managing one's full range of life responsibilities and activities is crucial for every individuals' well-being. One theoretical lens to explain that has been "boundary management" and more recently "life puzzling" between the work and non-work domains as a multi-level contextual process. This relates to a fit between on the one hand individuals' life puzzling strategies and on the other hand individuals' understanding of their personal, organizational and societal contexts. Each of these levels may represent different constraints and/or opportunities for the individual to perform boundary management and thus puzzle one's life as one wished to. What happens when these levels do not align? What happens when tensions between these levels represent contradicting constraints and/or opportunities? What happens when tensions are interpreted as controverting messages to individuals regarding how, according the "level-based norm", one shall or should manage one's work-nonwork boundaries? How complex may become boundary management and life puzzling in such non-alignment and in such dualities leading to an adverse context? Are there positive and/or negative consequences for individual's well-being when puzzling life in such adversity context? This paper opens such pandora box for gay homosexual men. It considers the perceived constraints and/or opportunities at each level as a level-based normative view on gay lifestyle and choices to which one individual may have to conform. It discusses then how the normative acceptance or not at each level may affect one's boundary management as part of one's life puzzling processes. In turn, it draws attention towards the consequences of such specific life puzzling on one's well-being. This paper ought to provide a life puzzling frame at first for gay men and theoretically for LGBTQ+ as well as a life puzzling frame for alternative lifestyles. i.e. lifestyles and choices that are out of the normative thinking.

## 7.1: Policies and Outcomes of Community, Work and Family

### ***Lone mothers' welfare exits via employment: The role of stepping-stone jobs and jobcentre counselling***

*Z. Kasrin, M. Kreyenfeld, C. Zabel*

In Germany, lone parents' economic situation is more difficult than for other family types. This is reflected in **this group's** high rate of dependency on basic income support for jobseekers. Of lone parent households, 37% depend on this welfare benefit, compared to only 7% of two-parent households, indicating a high level of economic inequality between family types. This inequality cannot easily be confronted by merely encouraging any form of employment. In fact, lone mothers on basic income support enter employment at similar rates as childless single women and at higher rates than mothers with a partner. The problem lies in the fact that lone mothers often enter into employment that provides insufficient earnings to cover their household needs, leading to continued dependency on welfare benefits. Moreover, welfare receipt can be stigmatizing, especially because of the conditionality of the benefit and the need to regularly report to the jobcentre and to engage with its requirements for further job search.

In this paper, we adopt a longer-term perspective on lone mothers' benefit and employment trajectories by studying the impact of stepping-stone jobs on **lone mothers' exits** from benefit receipt. We ask whether taking up a first, lower-paying job, while remaining on benefit receipt, facilitates benefit exits in the long-term. In this context, we also look into the role of jobcentre counselling, to determine whether the frequency of jobcentre counselling sessions for lone mothers affects their exit rates from benefit receipt when taking up a job. Jobcentre counselling can affect taking up a first stepping-stone job, as well as direct exits from benefit receipt via employment. Effects of steppingstone jobs and jobcentre counselling are likely to be of interest from a policy perspective, as they indicate the relevance of a longer-term approach when developing policies for lone parents.

Our analyses are based on large-scale administrative data, to which we employ methods of eventhistory analysis. We estimate entries into jobs without exiting benefit receipt and exits from benefit receipt via employment as parallel processes. For exits from benefit receipt via employment, we estimate the effect of having already entered a first job without exiting benefit receipt to test the stepping-stone hypothesis. We control for selectivity by controlling for the correlation of the error terms in both processes.

## ***Support for women belonging to “sandwich generation” in reconciling work with providing care over dependent persons in family.***

*H. Kelm*

Informal caregiving extends beyond childcare to include care for dependent adults, particularly those with disabilities and the elderly, and is predominantly undertaken by women. According to the latest National Census of Population and Housing (2021) in Poland, nearly 400,000 women are inactive in the labor market due to caregiving responsibilities for children or adults, compared to about 43,000 men (GUS 2024).

The current demographic situation is unprecedented due to the phenomenon of the "sandwich generation," where working-age individuals care for both their children and their aging parents or grandparents. This results from two overlapping demographic trends: delayed parenthood due to the desire to complete education and stabilize careers, and the rapid aging of populations in developed countries. The convergence of these social and demographic changes increases the caregiving burden on working-age women, potentially leading to reduced or completely abandoned professional work, thus worsening the family's financial situation. From a labor market perspective, the economic inactivity of working-age individuals amid a shrinking labor force, due to the aging population and the retirement of the baby boomer generation, is undesirable.

To maintain women's professional activity despite caregiving burdens, appropriate social policy tools are needed to support families. This research aims to answer whether existing tools genuinely offer women the choice between work and caregiving.

The analytical framework for this research will utilize the Capability Approach (CA), a paradigm for defining and measuring social development, welfare, quality of life, poverty, and social justice and inequality (Comim et al. 2010), as developed by A. Sen (1983, 1985) and further by M. Nussbaum (1987, 2000). This approach assesses real opportunities available to society, emphasizing individual agency over resource-oriented evaluations. The CA is subjective, focusing on the individual's perspective and the ability to choose a preferred lifestyle (Kurowska 2017). Social policy's role is to enable this choice, upholding the right to self-determination.

In this approach, services are not the key to high quality of life; rather, it is their properties that enable individuals to achieve desired lifestyles (functionings). The set of capabilities, representing potential ways of being and doing that a person can achieve with available resources, forms the basis of potential individual functioning. Conversion factors—personal, social, and environmental—transform goods and services into achievable functionings. These

factors influence the extent of an individual's ability to achieve a preferred lifestyle, based on personal resources and societal conditions (Robyens, 2005).

The Capability Approach has been applied in social policy by the EU (e.g., Europe 2020) and in social policy analyses, covering welfare states (Korpi 2000, Kurowska 2016), family policies (Korpi in. 2013), work-life balance (Hobson 2011, Fahlén 2012), childcare systems (Yerkes, den Dulk 2015), and parental leave systems (Javornik, Kurowska 2017).

This research will apply the Capability Approach to evaluate the real choices available to women in Poland between professional work and caregiving for dependent family members. A systematic literature review will identify previous uses of the Capability Approach in public policy evaluations. Based on this, a framework will be developed to assess Polish social policy solutions supporting women in caregiving roles.

Subsequently, the identified support tools will be evaluated using the developed framework. A database analysis will compare the situation of informal caregivers in Poland with other EU countries. Finally, social policy instruments in Poland will be compared with those in selected EU countries where the caregiving burden on women is minimal.

Research questions include:

1. Do women in Poland have a real choice between informal caregiving and professional work?
2. Do social policy tools in Poland enable women to make choices that enhance their quality of life?
3. How does the situation of Polish women compare with women in other EU countries?
4. What solutions are implemented in EU countries where women have the least caregiving burden?

This paper aims to extend career advancement theory by proposing a model that incorporates the impact of spousal influence on career advancement. Human capital and social capital both influence career success ([Bagdadli & Gianecchini, 2019](#); [Kwon & Adler, 2014](#)). The human capital stream of career advancement literature focuses on individual characteristics that **influence career success. This perspective assumes that the individual's personal qualities** alone indicate suitability and potential for career advancement ([Hollenbeck & Jamieson, 2015](#)). Social capital literature explores social capital as an alternative mechanism for positively influencing career advancement. Social capital is the benefit that accrues from social networks which consist of actors connected by ties ([Kilduff & Brass, 2010](#)). Networks can lead to finding jobs and getting promoted because they generate resources which can be leveraged.

The emergence of dual career couples ([Williams et al., 2013](#)) adds a new dimension and complicates career advancement because dual career couples jointly navigate the effects of

career and family decisions, which may then impact promotion opportunities ([Petriglieri, 2019](#)). Twentieth century research on dual career couples often focused on how one partner possessed the lead career whilst the other played a supporting role ([Achey Kidwell & Kidwell, 2006](#)). However, men and women in the twenty-first century have a more egalitarian perspective in relation to personal and professional roles, and are increasingly pursuing success across both domains ([Stone, 2007](#)). Supportive spouses are more motivated to provide partners with access to valuable networks, especially when they intersect with pertinent elite groups ([Einarsdottir et al., 2020](#)). Thus, it is important to understand how dual career couples **influence each other's professional lives.**

This paper presents a theoretical model that suggests career advancement is influenced by employee human capital, employee social capital, and partner social capital. It argues that spousal characteristics moderate the relationship between employee social capital and partner social capital. The discussion expands on the theoretical contributions and practical implications and outlines future research directions.

The proposed model offers three key contributions. First, it extends careers literature by incorporating the combined effects of human and social capital along with spousal social capital in a theory of career advancement. Second, the model extends OB/HR research on career advancement by broadening the focus of career success to include the power of intimate partnerships. Third, it highlights the importance of spousal characteristics for individuals with ambitious career goals.

Being aware of the potential effects of couple dynamics may offer useful insights regarding agency and the politics of work and family. Whilst familial advantages in recruitment are associated with nepotism and the reinforcement of social class structures ([Gorji et al., 2021](#); [Lamaison & Bourdieu, 1986](#)), the effects may not always be negative. For example, in the **context of government employees a spouse's social network can increase access to** government contacts and expedite the resolution of complex problems. Furthermore, dual career couples are likely to troubleshoot problems at home because they enjoy discussing/thinking about work. This form of unpaid labour may offer significant benefits for government and international community sectors.

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## *Modernizing Family Policies: How Gender-Equal Are Parenting Leave Provisions?*

*S. Burman*

Parenting leave provisions that grant job-protected time-off from work are important policy tools for supporting care responsibilities early in parenthood and promoting gender-equal

care among parents. In recent years, many countries have created or expanded paternity and parental leave rights for fathers to enable and encourage their involvement in caring for their children. In particular the EU Work-life Balance Directive, that came into force on 1 August 2019, has expedited the possibility of more equal sharing of parental leave within the EU. Previously, research on family policy developments combines distinct social provisions into policy packages or measures provisions at limited cross-sections. Thus, we still no little about how leave provisions for mothers and fathers develop over time with respect to each other. In this paper, I identify different types of parenting leave provisions and examine the annual development across 31 countries over the past half century. I use unique indicators that measure the share of annual wages covered by each leave benefit, which enables comparisons of policy developments across countries and over time. Using these indicators, I then assess whether and how countries are approaching gender equality in leave provisions. Another unique feature of the data is the separate measures for transferable and non-transferable parental leave, which is a meaningful distinction that is not yet measured by other available indicators. When making assessments, I am mindful that non-gendered provisions and gender-equal benefits that are equally low can still have gendered consequences for leave uptake and divisions of care work.

I believe my paper is a good fit for Session 8 (parenting leaves, care leaves and (in)equality), because it addresses gender (in) equality in parenting leave provisions. I also expect the indicators I have developed will be of use to other researchers studying policy design and inequalities in leave use and labour market outcomes.

## 7.2: Work, Family and the Division of (In)Formal Care

### *Unpaid care over the lifecourse*

### *Does informal care in mid-life depend on care motivations and work-family patterns earlier in life?*

*K. Begall, E. Verbakel*

#### Motivation and research question

Ageing societies and welfare state retrenchment imply that the demand for informal care will increase substantially across post-industrialized countries in coming decades. Persistent gender differences in work-care patterns today create tension between policy goals of **women's further** integration in labour market versus maintaining fertility and informal care

supply. We posit that against this backdrop, a better understanding of involvement in paid and care work as interrelated processes in the life course is needed which acknowledges path-dependency and includes individual preferences and dispositions for care vis-à-vis structural and normative opportunities and constraints. We post the following research question: *In how far is the likelihood of providing (intensive) informal care to parents (in law) in mid-life dependent on care motivations in adolescence and work-care patterns earlier in life? To what extent do these patterns differ for men and women?*

## Data and method

We analyze data from the 1970 British Cohort Study, a prospective cohort study of all

17,000 Brits born in one week of 1970. Our outcome variable is the provision of care to parents (in-law) at age 42. Our first key explanatory factor is the early motivation to care measured by the interest in care typed work reported on an occupational interest test at age 16. Our second predictor are work-family patterns at ages 16 to 42 which we identify inductively using latent class analysis on employment (years in full-time employment) and family (years spent in partnership, division of childcare- and household tasks, number of children, age at first birth).

We test whether early care motivations (age 16) relate to specific work-family patterns ages 16-42 and in how far early care patterns and work-family patterns predict informal care at age 42.

## Preliminary findings

We distinguish five work-family patterns, of which four are identical for men and women. These represent the modified male-breadwinner models, egalitarian working parents, childless partnered individuals and childless single individuals. These work-family patterns are differentially associated with the likelihood to provide informal care, but the observed patterns do not confine to theoretical notions of path-dependency but rather hint towards time availability as an explanatory factor. Early care motivation is not systematically related to workcare patterns but appears to predict providing informal care. Specifically, a higher score on the care-dimension of the occupation interest score is associated with a higher likelihood to provide intensive (5+ hours per week) informal care to parents (in-law). This effect does not differ by gender.

## Conclusion

Our results show that individual preferences and motivation to provide care present at an early age predict the provision of informal care roughly 30 years later. We also conclude that early care motivation does not play a role in the selection into ‘care-heavy’ work-family life courses as indicated by low involvement in paid work, early and high fertility and high shares of unpaid tasks and neither are these ‘care-heavy’ life courses predictive of informal care provision.

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### *Cumulative employment outcomes of informal care and childcare over the life-course*

*A. Güneyli, E. Verbakel, K. Begall*

The need for combining paid work and unpaid care arises for ever larger parts of the population, as governments shift formal care-provision onto informal carers in the face of population ageing. Next to this increasing demand for informal care, which encompasses care provided to family, friends, or neighbors with health problems, childcare responsibilities continue to comprise a significant portion of unpaid care for many individuals. Many thus provide both types of care, typically at different stages in the life-course but sometimes also simultaneously, facing conflicting work-care demands each time. These limit the possibility to fully attend to both roles, likely creating human capital disruptions and employment disadvantages that accumulate over time. Using a life-course perspective, this study examines the cumulative impact of both childcare and informal care over the life-course on employment outcomes in mid-life. Thereby we extend previous work that has mostly treated childcare and informal care separately, rather than integral to most individuals’ care experiences. Specifically, we answer to what extent variation in care-heaviness, based on the cumulative duration and intensity of childcare and informal care episodes over the life-course, relates to employment outcomes at age 50-53. Furthermore, we examine how outcomes differ by gender and education, as some trajectories might be particularly disadvantaging for certain groups. Combining retrospective survey data on informal care with annual data on childcare from the LISS Panel in the Netherlands, we capture careheaviness over the life-course until age 49 (N=1,378). Using regression models and employment information from LISS, we investigate to what extent factors that contribute to care-heaviness (first care timing, care intensity, care duration, and the number of overlapping informal care and childcare episodes) are associated with employment status, hourly wages, and the match between current job and skills across ages 50-53. Preliminary findings showed that care intensity increases the likelihood of not working or working inconsistently, but this effect was significant only for women. However for men, young parenthood was a factor decreasing the likelihood of working across ages 50-53. Regarding hourly wages, an increase

in overall care intensity came with 7% lower wages for women. Furthermore, while first timing of informal care had no significant effect on wages, first childcare timing mattered. Compared to starting childcare during (young) adulthood, both relatively early and relatively late parenthood had negative consequences on hourly wages. Overall, these results suggest that the accumulation of unpaid care during the life-course has implications for employment, with gender differences playing an important role.

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## *Maternal Work Trajectories and Childcare Histories: An In-Depth Exploration of the Interplay*

*S. Schmid, H. Steinberg*

In most industrialised countries maternal employment has increased over the past decades, reflecting altered gender norms regarding paid and unpaid work. This trend has transformed family life and early childhood education and care (ECEC) environments of children. For example, dual-earner-families perceive higher time pressure, impacting their parental wellbeing that can affect parental interactions (Allen et al., 2000; Hess & Pollmann-Schult, 2020; Tammelin et al., 2017). To facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life, particularly mothers have been shown to adjust their careers to workplaces, where organizational norms fit their needs (e.g., Felfe, 2012). At the same time when ECEC options are scarce, parents need caregivers other than the mother herself to take care of the children. The choice of a certain childcare arrangement can reflect normative beliefs about non-parental-care, which is often accompanied by scepticism within early childhood (e.g., Diabaté & Beringer, 2018; Lietzmann & Wenzig, 2017). Despite a broad literature about the interplay between the uptake of maternal employment and the supply of institutional childcare (e.g., Bauernschuster & Schlotter, 2015), little is known about the mutual dependencies of (1) how different employment characteristics of mothers are linked to the usage of certain types or combinations of childcare and (2) about its consequences for child development.

The following study addresses this gap by examining the relation between childcare trajectories and employment histories using multichannel sequence analysis based on the German Educational Panel Study (NEPS). **This dataset, recently enriched with mothers' administrative employment trajectories from social security records (NEPS-Network [LIfBi] et al., 2023; NEPS-SC1-ADIAB7521, 2012-2021, doi: 10.5164/IAB.NEPS-SC1-ADIAB7521.de.en.v1), includes children born in 2012 and their mothers, providing comprehensive information on the children's childcare trajectories and various developmental outcomes. Drawing on the lifecourse perspective this article focuses on the linked lives paradigm and explores the interplay between maternal and child life domains (Elder et al., 2003). Moreover, following the principle of life-span development (Elder et al., 2003), we aim to examine the association of**

certain childcare-employment-combinations and early child development outcomes within the first ten years of life. We contribute to the literature by presenting (1) first descriptive evidence about the interplay of maternal employment histories and the prevalence of childcare decisions from a perspective of trajectories, rather than focusing on singular events; and by emphasizing (2) how maternal employment characteristics shape family spheres and, thus, affect child development, which contributes to (3) identifying potential risk groups.

Preliminary results regarding childcare trajectories show different trajectories of external **formal and informal childcare usage within the first years of children's lives in Germany**. We find seven distinctive early childcare usage patterns, which are partly explained by socioeconomic and contextual factors and demonstrate large heterogeneities in childcare usage in the earliest years of childhood. **Future plans** for this study comprise analysing the trajectories of childcare together with the maternal employment histories to emphasize their mutual dependence. Lastly, we will identify which patterns of employment and childcare histories occur for which social groups in order to determine possible risk groups and the consequences for child development.

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## *Families between choice, compromise and sacrifice: conceptual reflections on the interplay between social policy, family wellbeing and resilience.*

*I. Naumann*

There exists a growing body of research examining how different social policy packages can support the work/life balance of families, as well as pointing to the gaps in policy support for families, resulting in families facing intense challenges in juggling work and childcare – some groups of families struggle more than others, and in some countries more so than in other countries. What is often overlooked is that families do not just juggle work and care, families also juggle the multiple needs, interests and aspirations of individual family members and of the family as a group. Individual life-styles and preferences play a role in how families organise their everyday lives, but this is heavily mediated by structural constraints such as labour market requirements and social policies. For example, in the face of insufficient availability of high-quality childcare services, parents (often mothers) may reduce working hours and forego career aspirations for the sake of their children or partners; grandparents may forego leisure and respite time to look after grandchildren; children may spend long hours in (potentially) inadequate childcare for the sake of parental employment; families may forego financial security for the sake of family time, and so on. With other words, family choices tend to be “**constrained choices**”, often involving compromises or even sacrifices.

Recent research on the impact of the COVID-pandemic on family wellbeing (see e.g. “[www.childcarecovid.org](http://www.childcarecovid.org)”) **suggests that it matters** to what extent work/life balance decisions are based on compromises or sacrifices: prolonged sacrifices result in decline of

individual and family wellbeing, while certain forms of compromise may boost the resilience of families. There is indication that where women addressed the increased demands of home schooling, extra childcare, domestic work and home office by sacrificing personal respite time, this resulted in a decline in maternal health and wellbeing with negative knock-on effects on child wellbeing (Naumann et al. 2021). Where dual earner parents were able to balance extra domestic tasks by both reducing working hours, the family as a whole coped better.

**This paper focuses on the interplay between social policies and the “constrained choices”** families make to juggle work/care requirements and to balance needs and interests within families. What does **“choice”** mean in the context of complex relational family ecologies? When does compromise become sacrifice? How do choices, compromises and sacrifices affect the wellbeing and resilience of individuals and of families? And how could social policy packages support choices, steer compromises or prevent sacrifices that may be normatively unacceptable (e.g. from a gender equality perspective) or harmful to individuals (e.g. from a children’s rights perspective)?

The paper aims to develop an analytical lens based on the concepts of **“choice”**, **“compromise”** and **“sacrifice”** with which to examine how work/life balance policies can support the wellbeing and resilience of individuals and families. While the paper is mainly explorative and conceptual in nature, it draws on empirical data (qualitative and quantitative) from a recent UKRI-funded project on **“Childcare and Wellbeing in Times of Covid-19”**.

### 7.3: Flexible Working Arrangements, Boundary Management and Work-Life Balance

*The transition into informal caregiving, family-to-work conflict and discrepancy between desired and actual working hours: A difference-in-differences approach with propensity score matching*  
C. Kunz, A. Bertogg

Demographic ageing poses various challenges to most societies, affecting individuals, families, healthcare systems and labour markets. Germany is no exception to this: the number of those in need of care has been rising for the last decades, while the number of informal caregivers decreased. In the majority of cases, care is partially or exclusively provided by partners, children, or other family members who are often active in the labour market. In turn, caregiving affects employment and living situations and thus is a cause for new social inequalities.

According to role theory, providing care while being employed might cause different role conflicts (e.g., family-to-work conflict or work-to-family conflicts). As a response to such conflicts, changes in labour market participation have been observed, both in terms of labour market exits and working time reduction. Among others, the experience of care and particularly **family-to-work conflicts, may alter caregivers' preferences** regarding their working hours to rebalance time demands from different domains. Studies also showed **caregiving employees' wish for flexible work**. Our study sheds light on two understudied aspects in the care-work nexus. More specifically, we investigate the association between the provision of informal care and family-to-work conflict on the one side and the discrepancy between desired and actual working hours on the other.

Data comes from the BAuA-Working Time Survey (BAuA-WTS), which is a representative panel study of dependent employees and self-employed in Germany. In this study, we used the waves 2017, 2019 and 2021. An indicator for family-to-work conflict was created using confirmatory factor analysis. Discrepancy in working hours was generated by subtracting real from desired working hours. Caregiving – as the treatment variable – was measured using both a dummy variable indicating the provision of care regardless of its frequency and dummy variables using several cut-offs (e.g., at least monthly, at least weekly). For each respondent, we retained two waves ( $n > 2,000$ ). We applied a difference-in-differences approach, predicting changes in the two outcome variables with the treatment interacted with a dummy variable indicating the progression of time. To adjust for differential selection into caregiving based on socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics, we corrected for such selection using propensity score matching.

We found that taking over informal care significantly increased the family-to-work conflict. However, the impact on the discrepancy between desired and actual working hours was not statistically significant at conventional levels. This may be due to the need for income, which **discourages working time reductions, or caregivers' use** of the workplace to experience respite from caregiving demands. Results were similar for different caregiving frequencies, indicating an overall impetus from caregiving. The findings highlight the need for social policies at both national and communal levels, **as well as companies' efforts (by e.g., flexible work) to improve employees' compatibility of informal care and employment in order to maintain their capabilities of participating in the labour market**.

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## *Autonomy on days working from home and work-life integration. A gender and parental perspective*

*I. Entgelmeier*

Working from home is discussed as an important tool for better work-life integration and as a resource for working parents in particular. However, research also shows that working from home can lead to increased conflicts between different life domains, especially due to overtime or working at socially busy times such as evenings or weekends (Abendroth & Reimann, 2018; Chung & van der Lippe, 2020; Glavin & Schieman, 2012).

This ambivalent state of research may be due to differences in the formal organisation of working from home. Opportunities to integrate private and work demands vary according to the extent to which employees work from home (Mergener et al., 2024). Work-life integration is only rated better when working from home is regulated by the company (Backhaus et al. 2019; Lott, 2020), when time worked from home is fully recognised (Mergener et al., 2023; Ojala et al., 2014) and also depends on the organisational culture (Lott & Abendroth, 2019).

In addition to these framework conditions, the opportunities and risks of working from home also differ by gender. For example, informal overtime when working from home is associated with poorer work-life integration only for women, but not for men (Mergener et al., 2023). Women experience greater conflicts between life domains than men when working from home is not agreed by the company (Entgelmeier, 2022) and rate their work-life integration worse than women who do not work at home when the extent of working from home is high. For men, however, the extent of homeworking makes no difference to work-life integration (Mergener et al., 2024). This article examines the relation of autonomy on days employees can work from home and their work-life integration. It also examines whether this relation differs according to gender and parenthood. First descriptive and multivariate analyses using data from the BAuA Working Time Survey 2023 show that women with and without children are less likely to have (very) high autonomy on days they can work from home compared to men with and without children. (Very) high autonomy on homeworking days is associated with better integration of private needs into the working day, while low autonomy makes this less likely. Women with and without children rate their ability to integrate work and private demands worse than men without children, whether they have high or low autonomy on days they can work from home. These first empirical findings underline the importance of the organisation of homeworking and highlight differences according to gender and parenthood.

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## *Investigating the effects of work intensification, illegitimate tasks and psychological detachment from work on work-family conflict*

*C. Andrade, P. C. Neves*

Technological advancements and organizational restructuring have been linked to increased work intensification through longer workdays, increased responsibility, and increased pressure to meet high standards. Work intensification can have several negative effects such as the increase of work-family conflict. Moreover, due to the demands related to work intensification workers can be asked to perform illegitimate tasks. Since illegitimate tasks at work may be viewed by the worker as a waste of time and resources, illegitimate tasks can **have a detrimental effect on workers' morale** and can impact the psychological detachment from work. The aim of the present study was to analyze the role of intensification of work on work-family conflict, testing whether this relation is mediated by illegitimate tasks and psychological detachment from work. Participants (N = 480) were workers who filled out an online questionnaire that was disseminated using social media. The findings suggested that work intensification affected work-family conflict and this relationship functioned through the two sequential mediators of illegitimate tasks and psychological detachment from work. Although past research has claimed that work intensification impacts the work-family conflict, results showed that illegitimate tasks and psychological play a critical role in this process. This study theoretically contributes to the work-family literature by revealing the **sequential mechanism through which workers' perceptions of work intensification, performance of illegitimate tasks and psychological are linked with work-family conflict**. Practical contributions, limitations of this study and future research directions are discussed.

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## *Work location, transitions and work-life balance: a daily diary study*

*L. den Dulk, S. Metselaar, J. van der Meer*

Today, an increasing number of employees can switch between working from home and working at the office during a regular work week. This spatial flexibility is often seen as a mean that facilitates the combination of paid work and other life domains. Whether this claim is true is still unclear (Kossek, Perrigino & Lautch, 2023). To increase our knowledge on the relation between spatial flexibility and work-life balance we use boundary management theory to investigate the day-to-day effects of working from home compared to working at the office on work-life balance satisfaction. We will examine the mediating role of work-to-home transitions and boundary management preferences as a cross-level moderator, thereby addressing the following research question: what is the effect of day-to-day use of working

from home compared to working at the office on work-to-home transitions and work-life balance satisfaction and how do boundary management preferences affect this relationship? To answer this question, a diary study among Dutch employees working in public sector organizations (N = 290) has been conducted. Participants filled in a baseline questionnaire and a daily questionnaire for 10 consecutive workdays, resulting in a total of 2610 observations. A requirement of participation in the study was that employees switched between working from home and working at the office during a regular work week. Multilevel structural equation modeling in R will be conducted to test the formulated hypotheses.

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## 7.4: Entrepreneurship, Career and Work Trajectories

### *It is a free decision? career and motherhood, the pressures of the environment.*

*M. J. Bosch, M. Braun*

The impact of motherhood on women's income has been a subject of extensive research, revealing a significant motherhood penalty across various countries (Miller, 2009). This penalty extends beyond income to potentially affect women's happiness in caregiving roles, prompting a deeper exploration into the interplay between motherhood, income, and happiness (Kahn et al., 2014). By analyzing data from the European Value Survey and considering factors like work centrality and gender norms, researchers have uncovered how these variables influence women's happiness in both work and caregiving responsibilities (Budig & Hodges, 2010). The study highlights the role of cultural variables in shaping caregiving and provider roles, emphasizing the need to consider these aspects when addressing gender equality and supporting women in balancing their professional and caregiving duties effectively (Ginn & Arber, 2002).

Work centrality and gender norms have been identified as key influencers of women's happiness levels while managing work and caregiving responsibilities (Killewald & Bearak,

2014). Understanding how these factors interact with cultural contexts is crucial for policymakers aiming to design interventions that promote gender equality and assist women in navigating their dual roles successfully (Budig et al., 2023). The research underscores the nuanced relationship between motherhood, income, and happiness, shedding light on the complexities women face in different societal settings (Yao & Yang, 2022). By recognizing the influence of cultural factors on women's experiences in the workforce and in caregiving roles, policymakers can tailor interventions to address the challenges specific to various cultural contexts (Budds et al., 2016).

Studies have shown that motherhood delay can lead to increased career earnings but also highlight the impact on wage rates and career hours worked (Boden et al., 2008). The motherhood penalty, often termed a family wage gap, underscores the disparities faced by married women compared to single women in the workforce (Budig et al., 2015). Research has expanded beyond wages to consider factors like labor force participation and occupational status in understanding the long-term effects of motherhood on women's careers (Jee et al., 2018). Additionally, the motherhood wage penalty may vary among low-wage, middle-wage, and high-wage workers, indicating a need for nuanced policy interventions (Kang, 2023).

The timing of motherhood is influenced by cultural definitions of parenthood readiness and 'good' motherhood, shaping women's decisions regarding when to have children. The motherhood penalty is intricately linked to the institutional context of each country, emphasizing the role of welfare states in mitigating or exacerbating disparities faced by mothers in the workforce.

This research contributes to the broader discourse on gender equality and work-life balance by shedding light on the nuanced relationship between motherhood, income, and happiness. By recognizing the influence of cultural factors on women's experiences in the workforce and in caregiving roles, policymakers can develop more targeted interventions to address the challenges faced by women in different societal contexts.

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Tables:

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## *Family Wealth and Entrepreneurial Gender Gaps: Intersectional Inequality in an Era of Global Transformations*

A. Althaber

Entrepreneurship is a critical component of economic development and individual financial growth. However, in an era of unprecedented, multifaceted global challenges, entrepreneurship requires a heightened level of individual responsibility in managing financial risks, with the potential to exacerbate intersectional inequalities. A well-established body of research reveals a persistent gender gap in entrepreneurship, with men experiencing better outcomes on average. At the same time, intergenerational wealth transfers, such as inheritances and inter vivos gifts, play a significant role in facilitating business ventures by providing necessary seed capital and mitigating initial financial risks. Prior research indicates, first, that the receipt of substantial wealth transfers is inherently linked to the individual's position in the wealth distribution and thus also to the concept of social class. Second, men and women receive different types and amounts of wealth transfers.

Motivated by these key findings, I investigate whether intergenerational wealth transfers differentially affect the entrepreneurial transitions of men and women along the wealth distribution, thereby contributing to ongoing discussions on economic inequality and gendered financial opportunities within the family-work-community nexus. The study builds on current debates about wealth inequalities, intersectional feminist theories and entrepreneurship literature, which highlight how gendered social structures and practices influence individual behaviors and outcomes. Gender differences in the receipt of intergenerational transfers, on average, can have profound implications for entrepreneurial activities. The intersection of gender and class gives a more nuanced perspective on these dynamics. Those at higher positions in the wealth distribution have more access to financial resources and social capital, potentially amplifying the benefits of intergenerational wealth transfers. Conversely, individuals at lower positions may find that intergenerational wealth transfers, while beneficial, are insufficient to overcome systemic barriers to entrepreneurship. I hypothesize that men benefit more from intergenerational wealth transfers due to gendered family practices, thus experiencing higher rates of successful business ownership compared to women. Furthermore, I hypothesize that the positive effect of intergenerational wealth transfers on entrepreneurial transitions will be more pronounced for individuals higher in the wealth distribution, with men in higher positions experiencing the greatest advantages.

Utilizing the German Socio-Economic Panel Study (SOEP, waves 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017, 2019), this study analyzes a sample of 1,126 individuals aged 18 to 64. Fixed-effects regression models, stratified

by gender and wealth position, are employed to assess the impact of inheritances and inter vivos gifts on the first transition into entrepreneurship, which allows for a robust examination of causal relationships while accounting for unobserved heterogeneity.

The preliminary findings reveal significant gender disparities in the effects of intergenerational wealth transfers on the likelihood of transitioning into first business

ownership, benefiting men but not women. Additionally, these transfers primarily enhance entrepreneurial outcomes for wealthy men, demonstrating a compounded effect of gender and wealth position that exacerbates intersectional inequalities. Given that entrepreneurship is a critical component of economic development and individual financial growth, these results underscore the need for policies in an era of simultaneous global challenges that address both gender and class disparities in financial dynamics to foster equitable entrepreneurial opportunities.

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### *How people get to the top? A time- and status-sensitive model to explain (gender) inequalities in career trajectories*

*P. Sinzig*

Why are leadership positions filled with similar-looking people from similar backgrounds? Systematic exclusion of any particular group, particularly a group that represents half the population such as women, is ethically and structurally problematic. Efforts to rectify the inequalities in leadership have been many: at the most extreme, some companies and nations have implemented quotas. Other strategies include workplace training in gender and diversity **sensitivity, coaching for male managers and female “high potentials”, rewards for hiring and promoting women, more family-friendly policies, and mentoring programs.** Nonetheless, the inequalities persist, and progress has stagnated. Career paths are increasingly non-linear (Heinz 2004), and inequalities in access to important forms of capital for career progression are becoming more entangled (Fitzsimmons & Callan, 2020; Wittmer et al., 2016).

Various models describe factors that influence the career trajectories towards top positions in an organization, such as the BAFFLE model (Lyness & Grotto, 2018) or the Labyrinth (Carli & Eagly, 2016) **for women’s leadership trajectories. However, these models lack a temporal and diversity dimension.** We propose a new model for describing leadership pathways that provides the necessary three-dimensionality of careers: (1.) various forms of capital and opportunities that can be accumulated, or lost, (2.) hierarchical and non-linear occupational pathways, and (3.) status changes over time. The central point of the model is the position of a person in the middle of their life trajectory within an organization that can dynamically move in 5 directions across the axes. The first axis includes human, social, and cultural capital, aspirations, as well as the resulting symbolic capital: education, work experiences, social networks. Next to these, quotas, and policies are also included as vehicle for capital flow. The second axis describes the status changes and career steps within an organization. Here, we can have up- or downwards movements along the hierarchical ladder of an organization but also standstills or opting out. The third axis is time. The person is continuously moving across

this axis by aging. The position on the time axis also influences movement and timing on the other axes.

Our new model can account for the enduring predominance of certain groups of people (e.g., ideal-worker-norm-affirming men) in positions of power despite a growing diversification of career trajectories and increasing efforts for more diversity in positions of power. The model also reacts to the problems in theorizing more complex solutions for incomplete parity in leadership and decision-making. The model adds sociological lenses to the primarily economic and psychological models of career attainment drawing on core categories of power (Bourdieu, 1985) and the life course paradigm. With the three axes, the research community in leadership and career trajectories and gender inequalities in occupations has a new tool to ask questions, design research, and interpret the complexities of individual lives in a broader societal context.

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## *When would workers want more hours? A vignette experiment exploring part-time worker's intentions to work more*

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Labour market shortages are an urgent societal and economic problem. Demographic trends over the next few decades will prevent the supply of labour in the Netherlands from meeting the demand, with sectors such as healthcare, education and childcare struggling to fill vacancies. One major bottleneck in mobilizing all available talents in the labour market is the large share of the labour force that works part-time in the Netherlands, more so than in any other European country. For that reason part-time workers increasing their hours is one of the solutions to the tight labour market offered in this country. To date, little research has examined what induces people working part-time to work more. In this contribution, we therefore study which factors could play a role in the intention to work more hours.

**We draw on the AMO framework, which posits that people's behaviour is shaped by their motivation, their abilities and opportunities. Motivation refers to employees' drive to work more.** We expect that employees would be more likely to want to work more if they financially gain from this. Additionally, new tasks may make the work more challenging and enjoyable, affecting motivation. Abilities are the skills, knowledge and competencies that play a role in the intention to work more. Here, we hypothesise that employees are willing to work more hours if they could schedule these themselves, as this gives them the ability to combine work and family. Finally, opportunities encompass the conditions and social structure in which employees find themselves. In the Netherlands, there are strong gender norms when it comes to how many hours men and women ought to work, so we also study whether what others do affect the intention to work more.

We used a vignette experiment, which is part of the third wave of the Sustainable Workforce Survey. Employees working part-time were presented with four situations in which they were asked if they would be willing to work more hours in that specific situation. We take into account how the additional hours would be scheduled, the tasks employees would perform, the financial benefits of working more, and how many others in the part-time worker's environment work. We also control for certain background characteristics, such as gender and age, which were measured in the survey.

The preliminary results show that the financial aspect is especially influential: if employees would be financially worse off by working more hours, their intentions are lower, but if they would benefit financially, their intention to work more is higher. The ability to schedule extra hours themselves and to take on additional tasks are also important reasons for part-time workers to want to work more. What others do does not play a role in this decision.

By analysing these dynamics, the study highlights the complex interplay between individual agency, policy frameworks, and social norms. Findings from this study will be incorporated

into a policy program on removing the existing barriers so that part-time workers that want to, can work more hours.

