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## Determinants of Detraditionalization of the Division of Housework and Family Work in Swiss Couple Households<sup>1</sup>

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### 1 Introduction

The gendered division of domestic labour has gained more and more attention due to the gender and social inequalities it causes. Although being an unavoidable necessity contributing to the well-being and wealth of our society, unpaid work leads to personal disadvantages such as fewer employment opportunities, insufficient social security coverage, fewer educational opportunities and career advancement, as well as a higher risk of poverty (FOGE 2010). This is especially affecting women who mostly do unpaid work at home. Their qualifications gained through domestic work are often not valued within paid employment. At the same time, gaining qualifications in the labour market is difficult since a lot of women are at most able to work part time because of family responsibilities. This so caused dependence on the main wage earner is of importance particularly with regard to changes of familial and gender norms in the last decades. Rising divorce rates, decreasing numbers of marriage, a significant drop of birth rates and an increase of non-traditional family households are consequences of this development. These changes have an impact on the division of domestic labour and child care between the partners within a household: traditional perceptions of the division of labour within the family are decreasing, while individual self-fulfilment is becoming increasingly important (Baghdadi 2010). Despite this societal trend towards greater individualisation, Baghdadi (2010, 52) notes, “that childcare is still implicitly seen as women’s work (...). In case of limited options for childcare, mothers (and not fathers) tend to reduce their amount of paid work.”<sup>2</sup> This becomes apparent by having a look at

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1 This study has been realized using the data collected by the Swiss Household Panel (SHP), which is based at the Swiss Centre of Expertise in the Social Sciences FORS. The project is financed by the Swiss National Science Foundation.

2 The prevalent rather traditional cultural values concerning the division of child care are not only internalised by the individuals (Baghdadi 2010). They also have an impact on the institutional context which in turn affects the objective scope of action of individuals (Steiber and Haas 2010). We want to point out that institutional patterns are also important for explaining the gendered division of housework and family work since they “shape the alternatives and make one choice

the labour force participation rate of women in Switzerland. Although 76.7 per cent of women were economically active in 2012, more than half of them worked part-time (FSO 2012a; FSO 2012b). About 30 per cent of mothers with children below the age of 15 are restricted in their possibility to do paid work because of a lack of care facilities (MECOP and INFRAS 2007). In 2006, for seven to eight out of ten economically non-active 25- to 49-year-old women, domestic and family responsibilities were the main reason for their absence from the labour market (Branger 2009).

Therefore, it is not surprising that most political approaches with regard to gender equality focus on making it easier for women to enter the labour market by making available care facilities (Baghdadi 2010). Discussions about the reallocation of unpaid work between women and men within the household are rather unusual. As a result, family responsibilities are still seen as women's work without discussing the contribution of men. In this article we adopt a rarely used approach analysing the division of housework and family work between women and men.

Our contribution focuses on the determinants of the predominant gender-based division of housework and family work using household data. The gendered division of child care has received less research attention than the division of paid and domestic work, "possibly because time for child care has been presumed to have the same determinants as time for household work and because of lack of appropriate data" (Sundström and Duvander 2002, 433). Our approach allows new insights since to date most of the Swiss studies focused on determinants explaining the division of domestic work only; or they explained a merge of housework and child care not distinguishing between these two different aspects of unpaid work. An exception is the study of Schön-Bühlmann and Liechti (2013) in which housework and child care are separately analysed. But as the majority of the studies, it has been carried out with individual data, making it impossible to consider relative resources of the partners. By using data of the Swiss Household Panel we are able to consider data of both partners within the household.

Our empirical analyses follow two questions:

1. What does the division of child care between the partners look like compared to housework? Are there gender-specific tasks?
2. Which determinants affect the division of child care in Swiss households compared to housework? Therefore, using logistic regression models, we analyse the probability of a modern division of child care as well as of housework in couple households. By a modern division of housework and family work we

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more likely than another" (Fuchs Epstein 1988). These structural factors such as the Swiss tax system, labour market factors, provision of external child care etc. are not taken into consideration in our empirical analyses but have to be kept in mind.

mean all forms of distribution of work between women and men that distinguish from the traditional breadwinner model.<sup>3</sup>

Our analyses are based on a theoretical framework which focuses on two crucial concepts: Action-theoretical approaches and gender theories. After an overview of empirical findings, we present the data and the methods used in detail. Further on, we document the main findings of our analyses. We conclude by linking the findings to the debate on the reconciliation of work and family life.

## 2 Theory and hypotheses

The division of domestic work and child care between women and men at home is explained by different theoretical approaches. Some of them derive from sociological, others from economic research, identifying different determinants to explain the division of labour within the family (Lauk and Meyer 2003). On the one hand, we focus on action-theoretical approaches such as new home economics, resource theory and the time availability approach. On the other hand, we use gender theories like role theory, the doing gender approach as well as the gender display approach. Action-theoretical approaches are based on the rational choice paradigm. According to this paradigm, individuals act as *homo oeconomicus*, trying to maximize their utility while minimizing their costs (Röhler et al. 2000). In contrast, gender theories assume that the biological sex and one's gender identity, respectively, matter when explaining the gendered division of family responsibilities. In this article, we give an overview of these approaches constantly deducing hypotheses to be proved in our logistic regression models.

### 2.1 Action-theoretical approaches

The *new home economics* (Becker 1981) as well as *resource theory* (Blood and Wolfe 1960) focus on the human capital endowment of a person. According to new home economics, each partner specializes in a particular working area (unpaid work or paid work) to maximize the utility of the entire household. The specialization of the partners depends on comparative advantages (Becker 1981); the human capital of each partner is especially important. Human capital is primarily gained through investments in education. The higher the educational level the higher the likelihood of high earnings. In order to maximize the overall utility of the household, the partner with higher education will specialize entirely on employment (Becker 1981). Consequently, the person with less human capital will focus entirely on the domestic sphere and thus doing housework and child care (Becker 1981).

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3 See box 2 for a definition of modern division of child care and box 3 for a definition of modern division of housework.



Being a special application of exchange theory, *resource theory* (Blood and Wolfe 1960) differs from this by assuming that in exchange situations within a partnership, resource imbalances are possible. Additionally, the theory states that housework and family work are perceived as unpleasant by the partners. Both partners, therefore, attempt to minimize their housework and family work in order to gain time for activities perceived as useful such as leisure or paid work (Künzler 1994). Unlike the new home economics, according to resource theory, partners in a household do not try to maximize the utility of the entire household but only their own. This may lead to negotiation, cooperation and conflict (Lauk and Meyer 2003). By trying to avoid housework and child care, partners are forced to negotiate the mutual contributions to tasks occurring within the household (Künzler 1994). The decision-making power of each partner depends on the valued resources<sup>4</sup> brought into the relationship. “Because the partner with more resources would lose less if the marriage dissolves, she or he (usually he) has greater bargaining power within the relationship” (Hopkins and Webster 2001, 1). Therefore, the partner with more resources may reduce his or her time for housework and child care (Künzler 1994).

Several studies confirmed the impact of human capital endowment and economic resources, respectively, on the division of housework and family work in couple households. Most researchers attach great importance to the *labour force status* of women relating to the division of housework (Levy and Ernst 2002; Schmid and Schön-Bühlmann 2003; Strub et al. 2005; Röhr-Sendlmeier and Bergold 2012). The more integrated women are in the labour market, the more equally the housework is shared between women and men. When women are economically active, they do less housework and their partners do more. But interestingly, the labour force status of women has no impact on the maternal engagement in child care. A closer look at past research on the division of child care suggests that the labour force status of men is important. Men spend less time with their children the more they are economically active (DeMaris et al. 2011; Röhr-Sendlmeier and Bergold 2012; Schön-Bühlmann and Liechti 2013). Yeung et al. (2001) note that fathers’ working hours are negatively correlated with the time they spend with their child on weekdays, but not on weekends. Regarding the employment models in couple households, there are inconsistent findings. Some studies find a positive relationship between women’s labour force status and paternal involvement level in child care, while others find no indication for such a relationship (Sundström and Duvander 2002; Walter and Künzler 2002; Schön-Bühlmann and Liechti 2013).

1. Hypothesis *employment model*<sup>5</sup>: having a traditional employment model in a couple household lowers the probability of a modern division of housework and family work.

4 Valued resources include particularly the economic resources of the partners such as education, labour market position and income.

5 See table 1 for a definition of employment models.

Regarding the influence of *education* and *income* on the division of housework and family work, only inconsistent empirical results are available. Contrary to Becker's (1981) assumption, education of the partner has no major influence on the division of housework (Levy and Ernst 2002), but higher education seems to be important for the division of family work. Several studies find a positive correlation between parents' educational level and time invested in child care (Yeung et al. 2001; Sundström and Duvander 2002; Walter and Künzler 2002). The reason for this finding is "that better educated parents are more concerned with their children's academic development; consequently, they spend more time with their children, especially in achievement-related activities" (Yeung et al. 2001, 138). Since research shows that both maternal and paternal involvement increases with higher educational level, the question arises how this affects the relative division of labour within the household.

Levy and Ernst (2002) investigate the influence of both, the relative and the absolute personal income. They conclude that the higher the personal income of the partners, the less housework and family work they do. But, according to Levy and Ernst, the relative ratio of resources between women and men has also an impact on the division of housework and family work. If the income of the woman is higher than that of her partner, the division of domestic work is more equal. If the opposite is true, a traditional gendered division of housework and family work is intensified (Levy and Ernst 2002). Considering only the division of child care, it is more equally distributed between the sexes when mothers contribute a higher proportion to the household income (Sundström and Duvander 2002). However, Sundström and Duvander (2002) put their finding into perspective, since the income variable turns insignificant when controlled for labour force status. Finally, Van Dijk and Siegers (1996, 1024) note that in households where the mother's potential wage rate exceeded the father's, "mothers spent significantly less time and fathers spent significantly more time in child care than in other households." According to Van Dijk and Siegers (1996), mothers with higher absolute income spend less time with their children. The same relationship is found for fathers: "Father's earnings have a negative and significant effect on their involvement levels with children" (Yeung et al. 2001, 148). Furthermore, there is a significant positive relationship between the male income and a mother's time spent on child care. The research on the influence of the mother's absolute income on the paternal involvement level provides inconsistent findings: Yeung et al. (2001) do not find any significant relationship between the income of the mother and paternal involvement. In contrast, Van Dijk and Siegers (1996) note that the mother's absolute wage has a significant positive effect on the time the partner spends on child care.

2. Hypothesis *education*: The higher the educational level of women and men, the higher the probability of a modern division of housework and family work.
3. Hypothesis *income*: The higher the personal income of the man, the lower the probability of a modern division of housework and family work, and the

higher the personal income of the woman, the higher the probability of a modern division of housework and family work.

The *time availability approach* (Wheeler and Arvey 1981; Coverman 1985) is based on the assumption that the available time of the partners is decisive for the division of domestic work and child care. According to this approach, a specific amount of housework and child care has to be done in every household, depending on certain circumstances such as the type of household. Children increase the amount of housework and family work (e.g. causing care necessities; cleaning up the child's room) (Künzler 1994).

Empirical findings show that a large *number of children* correlates negatively with the paternal involvement level causing a traditional division of child care (Van Dijk and Siegers 1996; Walter and Künzler 2002). According to other scholars, fathers with a large number of children spend less time with each child but invest more time in overall child care (Sundström and Duvander 2002). Finally, there are researchers finding no relationship between the number of children and the division of child care between the partners (Wengler et al. 2009). Not only is the number of children important, but also their age. *Children's age* seems to be negatively correlated to both, mother's and father's involvement: "[a]mong the most consistent findings in the literature is the lower level of parental involvement, in absolute terms, with older children" (Yeung et al. 2001, 138).

4. Hypothesis *number of children*: The higher the number of children, the lower the probability of a modern division of child care and housework.
5. Hypothesis *age of children*: The older the youngest co-resident child, the higher the probability of a modern division of child care and housework.

Furthermore, the *marital status* has an effect on the division of housework and family work. Several studies show that housework and family work are more unequally distributed between married partners than between cohabiting partners (Schmid and Schön-Bühlmann 2003; Baumgartner 2005; Strub et al. 2005). Studies do not indicate if the marriage is actually linked to a behavioural change and thus marks the transition from a rather egalitarian to a traditional division of roles between women and men (Schmid and Schön-Bühlmann 2003). According to Klaus and Steinbach (2002) the behaviour of couples does not change because of the marital status, but rather depends on the individual phases of the human life cycle (e.g. birth of a child; reduction of the female work time as well as an increase of the male workload) and on the partner's age or on the duration of the relationship, respectively.

6. Hypothesis *marital status*: The probability of married partners to have a modern division of housework and family work is lower than the one of cohabiting partners.

In summary, action-theoretical approaches are characterised by their assumption of symmetrical changes in the division of labour between the partners. As a woman increases her resources relatively to the ones of her partner, she is able to lower her amount of domestic work and child care causing a growing involvement of her partner. In this context, gender is not relevant to the division of domestic and family work (Schulz and Blossfeld 2006).

## 2.2 Gender theories

In contrast, according to *gender theories*, one's gender identity is central for explaining the gendered division of housework and family work. The *doing gender approach* distinguishes between "sex" and "gender." While sex is ascribed biologically, gender is an achieved status which is constructed through psychological, cultural, and social means (West and Zimmermann 1987). "Doing gender involves a complex of socially guided perceptual, interactional, and micropolitical activities that cast particular pursuits as expressions of masculine and feminine 'natures'" (West and Zimmermann 1987, 126). In that sense, gender is not a given characteristic of a person but is rather repeatedly produced in social interaction. Consequently, gender differences are created by people continuously constructing their gender and thus their gender identity (Leitner 2005).

According to the *gender display approach*, domestic tasks are part of the female "gender display" serving to construct a female gender identity. In contrast, men confirm their gender identity by doing paid work (Brines 1994). The gendered division of labour thus represents a dual production process:

*[s]imultaneously, members "do" gender, as they "do" housework and child care, and what [has] been called the division of labour provides for the joint production of household labour and gender; it is the mechanism by which both the material and symbolic products of the household are realized. (Berk 1985, 201)*

*Role theory* explains the gendered division of labour by latent *gender role attitudes* internalised during socialisation in childhood and adolescence (Huinink and Reichart 2008). Gender role attitudes are a special type of attitudes emphasizing the subjective position of women and men of what is believed to be right (Krampen 1980). They include moral judgements of the behaviour of women and men and of how they should be (Krampen 1983), ranging between two extremes:

*[r]ole theory implicitly posits that gender role attitudes have only one dimension and that they vary between the extremes of traditionalism and liberalism: Supporters of the traditional model of separate spheres for women and men are firmly convinced that there are natural differences (...) between women and men. (Künzler et al. 2001, 67)*

In this view, a gendered division of labour is a consequence of traditional attitudes towards gender roles. Men with liberal attitudes will do more housework than men with traditional attitudes, whereas women with liberal attitudes will do less housework than women with traditional attitudes (Künzler et al. 2001; Levy and Ernst 2002; Huinink and Reichart 2008).

7. Hypothesis *gender role attitudes*: The more traditional gender role attitudes – be it men's or women's – the lower the probability of a modern division of housework and family work.

The assumptions of role theory are confirmed by numerous studies (Van Dijk and Siegers 1996; Bianchi 2000; Levy and Ernst 2002; Röhr-Sendlmeier and Bergold 2012). The empirical findings of Levy and Ernst (2002) show that men's attitudes are more significant than women's attitudes in explaining the distribution of household tasks. They conclude that if a man has liberal gender role attitudes, housework and family work are more equally distributed. However, if a man has traditional gender role attitudes and is convinced that mothers are primarily responsible for the family's needs and especially for child care, the division of housework and family work is actually more unequal. In contrast, female gender role attitudes remain largely irrelevant (Levy and Ernst 2002). With regard to child care, different studies show that liberal gender role attitudes lead to lower maternal but higher paternal involvement (Van Dijk and Siegers 1996). A father's involvement in child care is particularly high when he has a feminine self-stereotyping (Walter and Künzler 2002). Röhr-Sendlmeier and Bergold (2012) note that a woman's gender role attitudes are also important as she co-determines how many tasks are left to the partner. Nevertheless, even in couples with both partners having liberal gender role attitudes, large gender differences remain with regard to child care (Deutsch 2001).

### 3 Data and methods

We use Swiss Household Panel data (SHP, see box 1) from wave 12 (2010)<sup>6</sup>, restricting our analytic sample to heterosexual couples with at least one child less than 15 years of age living at home. Households with a third adult person residing (except for adult children) and/or in which one or both partners receive a social benefit (old age insurance, unemployment insurance, invalidity insurance) are excluded from the analyses.<sup>7</sup> The sample of our analyses includes 525 couples both married and unmarried (cohabiting) of which the women as well as the men have answered the individual questionnaire.

6 We chose wave 12 because it was the most current wave available. Moreover, it includes the most cases of couple households after wave 6 (2004).

7 Strub et al. (2005) as well as Evertsson and Neramo (2004) point out that the limited or non-existent employment may influence the relative division of domestic work and child care at home.



### Box 1                      Swiss Household Panel (SHP)

The Swiss Household Panel (SHP) is a yearly panel study initiated in 1999 following a random sample of households in Switzerland covering a broad range of topics and approaches in social sciences. The population of the SHP includes all persons living in private households in Switzerland having a telephone connection. Data are collected annually by computer-assisted telephone interviews using three different types of questionnaires (SHP 2014): The grid, in which information about the type of household is collected, the household questionnaire, whose questions are only answered by the so called reference person of the household and the individual questionnaire (including a proxy questionnaire for children less than 14 years of age). This data collection methodology allows us to analyse dynamics at the household level.

From our theoretical framework and the empirical findings we deduce the following seven indicators as predictor variables to explain the gendered division of housework and family work: At the individual level as well as at the (relative) couple level we include (1) employment model, (2) educational level, (3) personal income and (4) gender role attitudes. The type of household is characterised by (5) the number of children and (6) the age of the youngest co-resident child as well as by (7) the marital status. Table 1 gives an overview of the operationalization of the predictor variables.

In the following, we give an overview of our dependent variables concerning child care tasks in order to subsequently focus on the dependent variables regarding housework.

The question concerning child care addressed to the reference person of the household reads as follows: “[r]egarding the children in your household, can you tell me who usually takes care of the following tasks?” (SHP 2011, 113–114). The SHP includes four child care task items: child care – in case of illness; child care – playing with them; child care – taking them to kindergarten, school; child care – help with homework. Respondents were asked to indicate for each child care task whether it is usually performed by the reference person itself, by the partner and the reference person in equal parts, by the partner itself or by a third party. Due to their nominal scale, the variables only allow us to state who usually takes care of a certain task concerning child care. We are not able to either evaluate time spent on child care nor can we state whether an activity was done with or without the presence of the partner. Child care data are collected using the household questionnaire. Therefore, only one person is responding to the questions concerning child care tasks. In 57.4 per cent of the households, the reference person is female; in 42.6 per cent it is male.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> A short analysis revealed that the sex of the reference person influences the answers to these questions indicating a lack of validity since they are representing subjective perspectives.

Table 1 Operationalization of the Predictor Variables

Variable	Operationalization and Reference Group
<b>Employment model</b>	<p>Three groups of employment models: Male breadwinner model (man works fulltime/ woman is not economically active, reference group), modified/dual breadwinner model (man works fulltime/woman fulltime or part-time work), modern employment model (man not economically active or works part-time/woman works part-time or full-time).</p> <p>Due to the small number of cases it was impossible to create a category for fulltime worker couples. We put these cases into the category "modified/dual breadwinner model" since in most of these cases it is the man who is the main breadwinner of the family (earning more than his partner).</p>
<b>Educational level</b>	<p>Individual educational level and relative educational level of the partners. Women's educational level is measured by three groups: compulsory schooling (primary and lower secondary level, reference group), post-compulsory schooling (upper secondary level), tertiary education (includes universities [cantonal universities and Federal Institutes of Technology], universities of applied sciences, universities of teacher education, professional education and training [PET] colleges, preparatory courses for federal PET diploma and advanced federal PET diploma [EDK 2014]).</p> <p>Level of education for men is measured by two groups only due to the small number of cases: Compulsory/post-compulsory schooling (reference group) and tertiary education. Relative educational level of the partners is measured by three groups: higher male educational level (reference group), equal educational level and higher female educational level.</p>
<b>Income</b>	<p>Based on the median income of women and men, personal income is split into two groups: an upper income group and a lower income group, with the upper income group as reference group (median income women: CHF 26 000 per year; median income men: CHF 89 100 per year). Due to the sample size it was not possible to recode the income variable in more than two income categories.</p>
<b>Gender role attitudes</b>	<p>Question used: "please tell me how far you would agree with the statement I am going to read to you now, if 0 means 'I completely disagree' and 10 'I completely agree'. A pre-school child suffers, if his or her mother works for pay" (SHP 2011, 353). Dummy variable: liberal attitudes (0–5), traditional attitudes (6–10, reference group).</p> <p>All estimated logistic models showed that women's gender role attitudes do not have any significant influence on the distribution of house or family work. Therefore, this variable was removed from the overall models.</p>
<b>Other predictors</b>	<p>Number of children (1 child/2 children/3+ children, with 3+ children as reference group), age of youngest co-resident child (youngest child 0–6 years and youngest child 7–14 years as reference group), marital status (cohabiting or married as reference group).</p>
<b>Control variables</b>	<p>Nationality (Swiss couple, reference group, bi-national couple, foreign couple), age (due to multicollinearity problems, it was not possible to include both the age of men and of women in the logistic models). In each model, we also include the other dependent variables as control variables: illness, playing, housework.</p>



### Box 2                      Definition Modern Division of Child Care

The two dependent child care variables *illness* and *playing* were dichotomised as follows: Cases in which the woman is usually responsible for child care were coded as *traditional*. All other cases – that is, when the man usually takes care of the task, both partner contribute equally or a third person assumes child care – were coded as *modern* (for number of cases see table 2). We focus on main responsibility, since for fathers, it is relatively easy to increase time spent with children, but it is more difficult for them to take primary responsibility.

Since the four child care variables are unsuitable for creating an index, we focus on the following two tasks separately: “[l]ooking after children in case of illness” (in what follows: “illness”) and “playing with the children and/or taking part in leisure activities with them” (in what follows: “playing”). On the one hand, the other two variables have too many missing values because children are still too young or already old enough and neither need help with homework nor assistance when going to kindergarten or school. On the other hand, by using the two above mentioned variables we are able to have a look at structural differences between the partners: Since the sickness of a child is an unforeseeable event, the caregiver needs to react in a more flexible way e.g. concerning paid work in comparison to playing with children. This is an activity which can be done in the evening after paid work or on weekends. These two variables are therefore useful to see who has to cover basic needs concerning child care and who voluntarily performs child care by playing

### Box 3                      Definition DODL Index

The *DODL index* (Gershuny et al. 1997) expresses the wife’s hours of housework as a proportion of the couple’s total hours of housework. An index value of 1 stands for the woman doing 100 per cent of the total housework done in a couple household. An index value of 0 means the man carries out the housework on his own. We split the index at a value of 0.6 resp. 60 per cent. All couples with the woman doing more than 60 per cent of the overall housework were coded as *traditional*. Cases were coded as *modern* if the woman does 60 per cent of total domestic work or less. The decision to define the cutting point at 60/40 per cent bases not only on logical but also on empirical aspects. Splitting the index at 50/50 per cent would be a rather rigid cutting point. Doing so, only one hour difference in the weekly time for housework would define if a couple was assigned to the traditional or the modern category.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics

	N	%
Division of housework (N = 513)		
Modern	103	20.1
Traditional	410	79.9
Division of child care in case of illness (N = 522)		
Modern	123	23.6
Traditional	399	76.4
Division of child care when playing (N = 514)		
Modern	376	73.2
Traditional	138	26.8
Women's yearly personal income (N = 500)		
Upper income group	245	49.0
Lower income group	255	51.0
Men's yearly personal income (N = 490)		
Upper income group	245	50.0
Lower income group	245	50.0
Women's educational level (N = 525)		
Compulsory schooling	41	7.8
Post-compulsory schooling	297	56.6
Tertiary education	187	35.6
Men's educational level (N = 525)		
Compulsory/post-compulsory schooling	211	40.2
Tertiary education	314	59.8
Women's gender role attitudes (N = 518)		
Traditional	187	36.1
Liberal	331	63.9
Men's gender role attitudes (N = 515)		
Traditional	252	48.9
Liberal	263	51.1
Marital status (N = 525)		
Married	475	90.5
Cohabiting	50	9.5
Number of children < 15 (N = 525)		
1 child	129	24.6
2 children	245	46.6
3 or more children	151	28.8

*Continuation of table 2 on the next page.*

*Continuation of table 2.*

	N	%
Age of youngest co-resident child (N = 525)		
Youngest child 0–6 years	254	48.4
Youngest child 7–14 years	271	51.6
Employment model of couples (N = 519)		
Male breadwinner	86	16.6
Modified/dual breadwinner model	349	67.2
Modern	84	16.2
Educational relation (N = 525)		
Higher male educational level	201	38.3
Equal educational level	258	49.1
Higher female educational level	66	12.6
Nationality (N = 525)		
Swiss couple	415	79.0
Bi-national couple	77	14.7
Foreign couple	33	6.3
	Mean	SD
Woman's age (in years) (N = 525)	39.9	5.9
Man's age (in years) (N = 525)	42.8	6.7

Source: SHP wave 2010 (unweighted).

with the children (Walter and Künzler 2002). In this regard, Craig (2006, 262) notes: “[i]f the tasks that men and women undertake with their children (...) are different, increased father time with children may still leave mothers inadequately assisted in the challenge of balancing work and family commitments.” To analyse these nominal scaled child care tasks we opted for binary logistic regression models.

In the SHP, data concerning housework are collected for each partner in hours per week.<sup>9</sup> We measured each partner's share in total housework and thus the relative division of domestic work applying the “index of the division of domestic labour” (DODL; see box 3).

9 The SHP also includes variables considering the responsibility of the partners for different household tasks such as cleaning, shopping, doing the washing/ironing and practical jobs such as doing repairs (SHP 2011, 119 ff.). In line with other studies (e. g. Bühlmann and Schmid 1999; Schön-Bühlmann 2009; Baghdadi 2010), our descriptive analysis – which is not shown in this paper – clearly shows that there are gender-specific tasks: while women do the daily, repetitive tasks (cleaning, washing, ironing), men tend to do sporadic and exceptional housework such as gardening or doing repairs. The analysis can be requested by the authors.

We designed four models for each of the three dependent variables. In the first the variables of the female partner's characteristics were included; in the second the variables of the male partner's characteristics were integrated. The third model covers all variables at household level. The fourth model forms the overall model including, additionally, various control variables. Table 2 shows descriptive statistics for all variables included in the models.

## 4 Results

Different child care tasks lead to different types of division of labour. While in 76 per cent of households child care in case of illness of the child/children is usually done by the woman, in 73 per cent of households both partners are responsible for playing with the children. These results show that there seem to be gender specific tasks concerning child care. Thus, in most of the cases mothers cover basic needs and react more flexibly. Men do activities which can be done in the evening after paid work or on weekends such as playing. Looking at housework, on average, women do nearly 80 per cent of overall housework while men take over 20 per cent. Only in 5.8 per cent of all households, the man does more than 60 per cent of the housework.

At multivariate level, tables 3–5 show the logistic regressions for each of the four models of the three dependent variables.<sup>10</sup>

In what follows, we discuss the results of the tests of the hypotheses developed above. Education, personal income and gender role attitudes are individual variables and are therefore included in the models for women and men. The employment model, number and age of children as well as the marital status are household variables.

According to our hypothesis concerning *education* we stated that the higher the educational level of women and men, the higher the probability of a modern division of housework and family work. Empirically, we do not find proof of an effect of neither men's nor women's educational level on a modern division of domestic and family work.

Regarding the *income* variable, we hypothesized that the higher the personal income of the man, the lower the probability of a modern division of housework and family work, and the higher the personal income of the woman, the higher the probability of a modern division of housework and family work. The hypothesis has to be partly rejected. A higher income of men indeed lowers the probability of a modern division of child care in case of illness and when it comes to housework. No significant effect can be found for the variable child care while playing. We therefore can partly approve the results of Yeung et al. (2001, 53) stating that

<sup>10</sup> All models are in compliance with the requirements of logistic regressions (e. g. multicollinearity).

Table 3 Logistic Regression: Division of Child Care in Case of Illness of the Child/Children

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<b>Female partner's characteristics</b>				
Yearly personal income (ref.: upper income group)				
Lower income group	0.328***			0.511*
Educational level (ref.: compulsory schooling)				Omitted
Tertiary education	0.904			
Post-compulsory schooling	0.686			
Gender role attitudes (ref.: traditional)				Omitted
Liberal	1.193			
<b>Male partner's characteristics</b>				
Yearly personal income (ref.: upper income group)				
Lower income group		3.168***		3.677***
Educational level (ref.: compulsory/post-compulsory schooling)				
Tertiary education		1.913**		1.639
Gender role attitudes (ref.: traditional)				
Liberal		3.273***		2.498**
<b>Household characteristics</b>				
Marital status (ref.: married)				
Cohabiting			0.898	0.838
Number of children < 15 (ref.: 3 or more children)				
1 child			2.297**	2.101+
2 children			1.379	1.573
Age of youngest co-resident child (ref.: youngest child 7–14 years)				
Youngest child 0–6 years			1.019	0.792
Employment model of couples (ref.: male breadwinner)				
Modified/dual breadwinner model				1.220
Modern				3.303*
<b>Control variables</b>				
Educational relation (ref.: higher male educational level)				
Equal educational level				1.301
Higher female educational level				0.775

*Continuation of table 3 on the next page.*

Continuation of table 3.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Nationality (ref.: Swiss couple)				
Bi-national couple				0.804
Foreign couple				1.347
Woman's age (in years)				0.998
Division of housework (ref.: modern)				
Traditional				0.527*
Division of child care (while playing; ref.: modern)				
Traditional				0.489*
Constant	0.529	0.048***	0.211***	0.067 <sup>+</sup>
N	491	480	522	446
–2 Log-Likelihood	494.196	460.222	561.089	366.999
Chi-Square	30.666***	44.086***	8.928 <sup>+</sup>	100.151***
Nagelkerke's R <sup>2</sup>	0.092	0.135	0.025	0.311
Hosmer-Lemeshow Test	4.197 (0.650)	2.466 (0.781)	4.171 (0.525)	4.402 (0.819)

Notes: Only couple households with children aged 0 to 14 years. Estimated is the probability of a modern division of child care in case of illness of the child/children (odds ratios). <sup>+</sup>  $p \leq 0.10$ , \*  $p \leq 0.05$ , \*\*  $p \leq 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$ . Source: SHP wave 2010 (unweighted).

“fathers’ earnings have a negative and significant effect on their involvement levels with children (...).” This holds true for an urgent and unavoidable part of child care, but not for activities that can be handled flexibly like playing with children. The fact that the effect of men’s income is the same for housework and for child care in case of illness supports the assumption that inflexible and necessary tasks (housework, child care in case of illness) have to be separately analysed from flexible and voluntary activities (playing with children).

The effect of women’s income on the way housework and family work is shared is in line with the above drawn hypothesis. A higher female income leads to a higher probability of a modern division of both child care tasks and housework. The reasons for this result are two-fold. Firstly, the more a woman earns, the higher is the probability that she is more involved in her job. Secondly, a higher income results in a greater bargaining potential within the relationship (Hopkins and Webster 2001). The results of *gender role attitudes* can be put in a nutshell as follows: Men’s attitudes rule, women’s do not. We hypothesized that traditional gender role attitudes – be it men’s or women’s – lead to a lower probability of a modern division of housework and family work. For men, the results point in the direction of our hypothesis.

Table 4                      Logistic Regression: Division of Child Care while Playing with the Child/Children

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<b>Female partner's characteristics</b>				
Yearly personal income (ref.: upper income group)				
Lower income group	0.462***			0.607+
Educational level (ref.: compulsory schooling)				Omitted
Tertiary education	1.079			
Post-compulsory schooling	1.124			
Gender role attitudes (ref.: traditional)				Omitted
Liberal	1.098			
<b>Male partner's characteristics</b>				
Yearly personal income (ref.: upper income group)				
Lower income group		1.427		1.027
Educational level (ref.: compulsory/post-compulsory schooling)				
Tertiary education		1.518+		1.329
Gender role attitudes (ref.: traditional)				
Liberal		1.496+		1.196
<b>Household characteristics</b>				
Marital status (ref.: married)				
Cohabiting			0.887	1.036
Number of children < 15 (ref.: 3 or more children)				
1 child			0.957	0.599
2 children			1.084	0.969
Age of youngest co-resident child (ref.: youngest child 7–14 years)				
Youngest child 0–6 years			0.566**	0.442**
Employment model of couples (ref.: male breadwinner)				
Modified/dual breadwinner model				1.788+
Modern				1.858
<b>Control variables</b>				
Educational relation (ref.: higher male educational level)				
Equal educational level				0.888
Higher female educational level				1.079

*Continuation of table 4 on the next page.*



Continuation of table 4.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Nationality (ref.: Swiss couple)				
Bi-national couple				0.907
Foreign couple				1.905
Man's age (in years)				0.953*
Division of housework (ref.: modern)				
Traditional				0.626
Division of child care (case of illness; ref.: modern)				
Traditional				0.475**
Constant	3.415**	1.389	3.631***	61.740***
N	483	474	514	446
–2 Log-Likelihood	555.299	552.814	588.873	481.221
Chi-Square	15.135**	7.940*	9.158+	47.919***
Nagelkerke's R <sup>2</sup>	0.045	0.024	0.026	0.147
Hosmer-Lemeshow Test	0.586 (0.989)	4.867 (0.561)	1.475 (0.916)	2.282 (0.971)

Notes: Only couple households with children aged 0 to 14 years. Estimated is the probability of a modern division of child care while playing with child/children (odds ratios). +  $p \leq 0.10$ , \*  $p \leq 0.05$ , \*\*  $p \leq 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$ . Source: SHP wave 2010 (unweighted).

Traditional gender role attitudes of men lead to a lower probability of a modern division of child care (playing and illness) and housework.<sup>11</sup> The results are in line with those of Levy and Ernst (2002), emphasizing that especially men's gender role attitudes influence the division of housework and family work. Although women may co-decide what and how many activities are left to men (Röhr-Sendlmeier and Bergold 2012) women's gender role attitudes show no influence on the division of housework and family work in our models.

Having a look at variables at household level, we hypothesized that a traditional *employment model* lowers the probability of a modern division of housework and family work. The results show that couples with a modern employment model have a significantly higher probability of having a modern division of child care in case of illness. In that particular case, the female employment status seems to be the most important factor. This result is in line with findings of Schön-Bühlmann and Liechti (2013), Röhr-Sendlmeier and Bergold (2012) as well as Baumgartner (2005) and can be explained by the time availability approach. Moreover, couples where the

11 The effects of men's gender role attitudes in the model while playing and the housework model are significant in the partial model only (see table 4, model 2 and table 5, model 2).

Table 5 Logistic Regression: Division of Housework

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<b>Female partner's characteristics</b>				
Yearly personal income (ref.: upper income group)				
Lower income group	0.276***			0.533+
Educational level (ref.: compulsory schooling)				Omitted
Tertiary education	0.835			
Post-compulsory schooling	0.711			
Gender role attitudes (ref.: traditional)				Omitted
Liberal	0.803			
<b>Male partner's characteristics</b>				
Yearly personal income (ref.: upper income group)				
Lower income group		2.522***		2.371*
Educational level (ref.: compulsory/post-compulsory schooling)				
Tertiary education		0.991		1.085
Gender role attitudes (ref.: traditional)				
Liberal		1.788**		1.076
<b>Household characteristics</b>				
Marital status (ref.: married)				
Cohabiting			1.068	0.973
Number of children < 15 (ref.: 3 or more children)				
1 child			2.566**	1.484
2 children			1.569	1.318
Age of youngest co-resident child (ref.: youngest child 7–14 years)				
Youngest child 0–6 years			1.211	1.159
Employment model of couples (ref.: male breadwinner)				
Modified/dual breadwinner model				0.823
Modern				1.563
<b>Control variables</b>				
Educational relation (ref.: higher male educational level)				
Equal educational level				1.963+
Higher female educational level				1.493

*Continuation of table 5 on the next page.*

Continuation of table 5.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Nationality (ref.: Swiss couple)				
Bi-national couple				1.436
Foreign couple				2.306 <sup>+</sup>
Man's age (in years)				1.004
Division of child care (case of illness; ref.: modern)				
Traditional				0.459 <sup>*</sup>
Division of child care (while playing; ref.: modern)				
Traditional				0.617
Total housework time (in hours per week)				0.953 <sup>***</sup>
Constant	0.644	0.106 <sup>***</sup>	0.141 <sup>***</sup>	0.402
N	484	471	513	446
–2 Log-Likelihood	458.949	451.127	502.875	368.132
Chi-Square	28.748 <sup>***</sup>	19.696 <sup>***</sup>	11.644 <sup>*</sup>	83.172 <sup>***</sup>
Nagelkerke's R <sup>2</sup>	0.091	0.065	0.035	0.267
Hosmer-Lemeshow Test	3.651 (0.601)	2.046 (0.843)	1.886 (0.930)	4.132 (0.845)

Notes: Only couple households with children aged 0 to 14 years. Estimated is the probability of a modern division of housework (odds ratios). <sup>+</sup>  $p \leq 0.10$ , <sup>\*</sup>  $p \leq 0.05$ , <sup>\*\*</sup>  $p \leq 0.01$ , <sup>\*\*\*</sup>  $p \leq 0.001$ .

Source: SHP wave 2010 (unweighted).

man works fulltime and the woman part-time or fulltime have a significantly higher probability of a modern division of child care while playing than couples having a male breadwinner model. Interestingly, a modern employment model has no effect on how playing with the child/children is divided between the partners. Concerning the division of housework, no effect of the employment model can be found.

The impact of children on the division of housework and family work is measured by the *number of children* and the *age of the youngest co-resident child*. Our hypothesis states that the higher the number of children, the lower the probability of a modern division of child care and housework. Empirically, households with three and more children have a higher probability of a traditional division of child care in case of illness compared to households with one child only. Having a high number of children leads to a *traditionalization* of the division of child care. This does not hold true for child care while playing since we could not find any significant effect of the number of children. A modern division of child care while playing is not a question of the number of children but of their age. In our hypothesis we noted that the older the youngest co-resident child, the higher the probability of a modern division of child care and housework. In households in which the youngest

co-resident child is seven years of age or older, the probability of a modern division of childcare while playing is significantly higher compared to households with the youngest child being six years of age or younger. In contrast, the child's age has no impact on the division of child care in case of illness of the child. The effects of the number and age of children on the division of housework are comparable to the effects they have on the division of child care in case of illness. A higher number of children raises the probability of a traditional division of housework while the age of the youngest co-resident child has no significant effect.<sup>12</sup> Again, the results show that there are flexible and voluntary activities (playing with children) as well as inflexible and necessary activities (housework, child care in case of illness). It becomes evident that the latter tasks are by trend left to women. This effect is intensified by the number of children living at home.

According to our hypothesis, the probability of married couples to have a modern division of housework and family work is lower than that of cohabitating couples. We could not find any proof of such an effect.

The distinction between inflexible and necessary activities on the one hand, and flexible and voluntary activities on the other hand is partly supported by effects of the variables concerning the division of child care on the division of housework and vice versa. A traditional division of housework lowers the probability of a modern division of child care in case of illness but it has no impact on the division of child care while playing. Nevertheless, there is a negative effect of a traditional division of child care in case of illness on the division of child care while playing.

## 5 Conclusion

Drawing on action-theoretical approaches and gender theories, we examined the decisive determinants of the gender-based division of child care tasks and housework in Swiss couple households. Our contribution to the actual research is two-fold: Firstly, we focused on child care tasks. It has often been presumed that the division of child care between the partners has the same determinants as the division of housework. For this reason, it has received less research attention than the division of paid and domestic work. Secondly, using data of the Swiss Household Panel we were able to consider data of both partners within the household by analysing relative resources of the partner.

Our analyses demonstrate that nearly two third of the overall housework is done by women. When it comes to child care, the data clearly show that there are gender-specific tasks. While women seem to do less flexible tasks like caring in case of illness of the child, men choose activities which can be done in the evening after

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12 The effects of children in the housework model are significant in the partial model only (see table 5, model 3).

paid work or on weekends, such as playing. These descriptive results raise questions about mothers' ability of reconciling work and family life since increased fathers' time with children may not solve mothers' problems of balancing work and family commitments. This is a first hint of the importance of disaggregated analyses of child care tasks.

At the multivariate level, the results indicate that not only economic determinants and individual gender role attitudes but also the type of household influence the division of domestic work and child care. There are some variables that affect both, the division of housework and child care, in the same way. This holds true for women's income and gender role attitudes of men. A higher income of women leads to a higher probability of a modern division of both child care tasks as well as of housework. Concerning gender role attitudes it becomes evident that men's gender role attitudes rule. Modern gender role attitudes of men raise the probability of a modern division of housework, of child care in case of illness and of child care while playing. In contrast, women's gender role attitudes are not significant in our models.

Generally, our analyses show that housework and child care in case of illness tend to more often have similar determinants than the two child care tasks. For explaining the division of housework and child care in case of illness, the personal income of men, the number of children, as well as the age of the youngest co-resident child are either decisive determinants affecting these two dependent variables in the same direction or affecting none of them. Thus, a higher income of men lowers the probability of a modern division of child care in case of illness and when it comes to housework, but not in case of playing. Regarding the number of children within a household we can state that a lower number of children fosters a modern division of housework and child care in case of illness, but, again, has no effect on the division of playing. Finally, the age of the youngest co-resident child only has a positive effect on child care while playing, but shows no effect on the division of housework and child care in case of illness. The only variable showing different effects on each dependent variable is the employment model of a couple. We cannot find any significant effect of this variable on the division of housework. But our analyses show a higher probability of a modern division of child care in case of illness for couples with a modern employment model compared to couples having a traditional employment model. Concerning the task playing with children, couples with a fulltime working man and a part-time or fulltime working woman have a higher probability of a modern division than couples with a traditional employment model.

Two major conclusions can be drawn from the results shown above. Firstly, research on the division of housework and family work has to differentiate between inflexible and unavoidable activities – like housework and child care in case of illness – and flexible and voluntary activities like playing with children. This is an important innovative finding we could carve out because of our analytic strategy of analysing different tasks separately. Secondly, our findings show that women are

especially affected by the inadequate support from the partner when it comes to these unavoidable tasks. It becomes evident that this problem cannot be solved by political approaches with regard to gender equality focussing on women's entry into the labour market or by making available care facilities.

Only a reallocation of unpaid work between the partners within a household may be successful. Although there seem to be changes in the way men participate in housework and family work, to a certain degree they still are *cherry picking* instead of being equal partners. If gender equality is a legitimate aim of a modern society, the joys and burdens of employment, housework and family work have to be shared equally between women and men. *Cherry picking* should not be an option.

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**Geschlechterfragen**

Sarah Baumann

## **... und es kamen auch Frauen** **Engagement italienischer** **Migrantinnen in Politik und Gesellschaft** **der Nachkriegsschweiz**

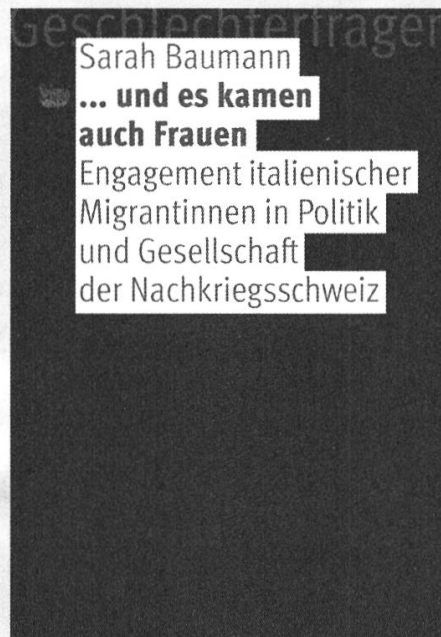
*Fragen entlang der Schnittstellen von Migration, Bürgerrechten und Geschlecht stehen bis heute im Brennpunkt öffentlicher Debatten. Italienische Migrantinnen haben dazu einen gewichtigen Beitrag geleistet.*

In Medien und politischen Debatten begegnen uns Migrantinnen meist als passiv nachreisende Ehefrauen und Mütter, als Hüterinnen von Tradition und der «Kultur» ihrer Herkunftsländer unterworfen. Diese Studie bietet eine andere Perspektive. Sie zeigt Migrantinnen als Handelnde, als soziale und politische Akteurinnen, die das Einwanderungsland Schweiz mitgestalteten und prägten.

Das Buch beleuchtet die Entstehung und Entwicklung eines frauenspezifischen Engagements in der bedeutendsten Organisation italienischer MigrantInnen in der Schweiz: der Federazione delle Colonie Libere Italiane in Svizzera (FCLIS). Tausende von Italienerinnen lebten und arbeiteten in der Schweiz der 1960er und 1970er Jahre – und blieben von der Öffentlichkeit doch ungesehen und ungehört. In der FCLIS aktive Migrantinnen versuchten diese Unsichtbarkeit zu durchbrechen. Sie lösten sich aus dem Schatten des «männlichen Arbeiters» und entwickelten eigene Strategien, um ihre Rechte als Frauen, Arbeiterinnen und Ausländerinnen zu verbessern. Was waren ihre Kritikpunkte und Forderungen? Wo trafen sie mit ihren Anliegen auf Unterstützung und wo auf Gegenwehr?

Das Buch thematisiert das soziale und politische Engagement italienischer Migrantinnen rund um Themen wie die Rechte arbeitender Frauen und Mütter, Bildungschancen für ausländische Kinder, gesellschaftliche Teilhabe und politische Mitsprache von MigrantInnen. Aufgezeigt werden auch die vielfältigen Aktivitäten – wie Kongresse, Petitionen, Manifeste –, mit denen Migrantinnen ihren Anliegen Ausdruck verliehen.

*Sarah Baumann* arbeitet als Diplomassistentin im Bereich Zeitgeschichte an der Universität Freiburg. Zu ihren Forschungsschwerpunkten gehören historische Migrationsforschung, Geschlechter- und Sexualitätsgeschichte. Aktuell forscht sie zur Geschichte der Prostitution in der Nachkriegsschweiz.



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