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TITLE

Gender role-set
family orientations,
and fertility intentions
in Switzerland

Research paper

Authors

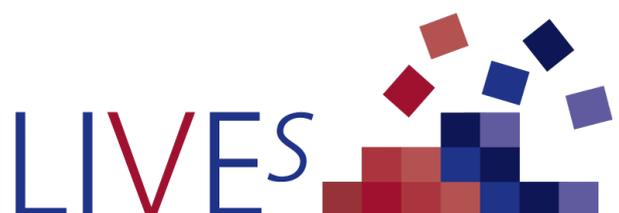
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Abstract

This paper investigates women's attitudes towards paid employment and family in relation to the share of paid and domestic workloads within a couple and in relation to the intention to have a child. We use longitudinal data from the Swiss Household Panel that questions both partners separately on family and work values, fertility intentions, and gender division of tasks. Our multilevel estimations confirm the important role of subjective evaluations of the couple's role-set : being satisfied with the couple's role set favors fertility intentions for women who are already mothers. However, for childless women, aspirations to economic independence and being employed have an independent and negative effect on fertility intentions.

Keywords

Fertility intentions | Gender

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1. Introduction

Contemporary low levels of fertility in Switzerland as well as in many other European regions raised questions about the determinants of shrinking family sizes and the rise in childlessness. Most studies in post-industrial societies indicate that if the family size which people desire, expect, or consider ideal as declared in surveys were realized, fertility rates would be up to levels at around replacement. However, in most cases both at the macro and at the micro level there is a gap between the expected number of children and the actual number of children born (Le Goff, Sauvain-Dugerdil, Rossier, and Coenen-Huther, 2005). It has been claimed, paraphrasing the more famous expression "unmet need for contraception", that we face a sort of "unmet need" for children which would justify both attention by family researchers and intervention thorough child-friendly family policies (Chesnais, 1998). Identifying the determinants of the intentions-realizations gap in fertility is therefore crucial. One key aspect is the gendered nature of parenthood and the different gender norms ruling representations and practices of appropriate parental roles for men and women.

The terms "stalled revolution" and "second shift" (Hochschild and Machung, 1989) are by now accepted and powerful synonyms for a situation in which women are increasingly active in the labor market while men prolong their absence from the domestic sphere. Similar meanings are suggested by expressions like "dual-burden," "double-burden," and "double-day" (Baxter, 2002; Bittman, 1999; Bittman and Matheson, 1996; Harrington, 1998; Meissner, Humphreys, Meis, and Scheu, 1975; Pahl, 1984; Shelton, 1992). While these terms describe an actual division of tasks between partners, the value and normative dimension surrounding the stalled revolution are implicit in the half cynical term "supermom" (Hochschild and Machung, 1989; Shaevitz, 1984), indicating attitudes and norms which expect women to successfully fulfil their aspirations in the domestic and labor market without asking for help from her partner, or from society at large. Gendered practices are not necessarily perceived as unfair, but are rather talked about and explained in discourses of partners' free choice and gendered preferences or abilities for given tasks. In turn, these preferences and abilities are justified in terms of socialization and attitudes to given gender roles or in terms of the different biological predisposition of men and women in parenting (Blain, 1994).

The stalled revolution and the double burden have been indicated as two of the causes for the emergence and persistence of low fertility and increased childlessness in the late twentieth century. McDonald's (2000) seminal paper on gender systems and family dynamics argues that those gender systems in which equality is expected and supported in the public sphere of the market and the law, but not in the domestic sphere of family relations and responsibilities, are likely to experience low fertility. McDonald's prototypes for such gender systems are contemporary Southern European countries like Italy and Spain, where high expectations on women's time in the domestic sphere would be avoided by delaying or forgoing additional family responsibilities represented by children.

While McDonald's arguments are macro, his explanation relies on the micro level: A woman who competes in the public sphere on a basis of gender equal treatment and who expects at the same time to be mostly responsible for house and child care will perceive high costs-opportunities in having a first child or an additional child. On the one hand, an unequal treatment of men and women in the labor market granting women some sort of privileged status to compensate for their extra labor in the domestic sphere is not viable because it would be perceived as unfair in modern democratic societies, which equality for all citizens. On the other hand, the need to choose part time employment or to opt for a temporary or permanent exit from the labor market would reduce

women's life-long earnings and career opportunities. The double burden under these conditions becomes a too disadvantageous option for women and would have discouraging effect on fertility.

Several studies apply McDonald's analysis at the micro level by studying the relation between couples' role-set and fertility (Cooke, 2003; Mills, Mencarini, Tanturri, and Begall, 2008; Olah, 2003; Tazi-Preve, Bichlbauer and Goujon, 2004; Torr and Short, 2004). Indeed most of this empirical evidence shows a negative effect of the unequal role-set on fertility for both second and third births. The perception of an unfair division of domestic labor within the couple has been associated with a greater likelihood of depression and divorce, negative opinions of marital quality, and overall satisfaction (Coltrane, 2000). However, such studies raise the issue of whether the share of domestic tasks alone does accurately tell the whole story. In other words, fertility decisions may be related not only to the amount of domestic work, but also to the *overall* workload share (*total time* spent on paid and unpaid work taken together) between men and women in each couple. Such shares are broadly similar in most industrialized countries (Bianchi, Robinson, and Milkie., 2006; Bittman and Wajcman, 2000; Greenstein, 2000; Robinson and Godbey, 1997; Shelton and Firestone, 1989).

2. Switzerland: Inconsistent Public and Private Gender Spheres

Contemporary Switzerland fits well in McDonald's category of countries where gender spheres are inconsistent. On the one hand, equality between men and women at the institutional level is granted. At each political level (e.g., confederation, canton, and municipality), as well as at the level of other types of institutions (e.g., universities), there are gender equality offices in charge of promoting women's professional careers and often men's participation in domestic work. Social beliefs and norms favor gender equality and particularly childless couples value it (Le Goff, Levy, Sapin, and Camenisch, 2009; Levy, Joye, Guye, and Kaufmann, 1997). On the other hand, gender practices show a different picture of the labor market, one much more gender biased than that portrayed in the official regulations. Despite the promotion of gender equality at the institutional level, the development of part time jobs has contributed to keeping women in lower paying jobs with less responsibility. Then, several studies have shown that inequalities between men and women are part of everyday experience, especially after the transition to parenthood. Most women reduce the time they spend working once they become mothers (Levy, 2006; Le Goff *et al.*, 2009). According to the state regimes of time policy proposed by Anxo *et al* (2006), Swiss women's patterns of labor market participation can be labelled as *maternal part time work*. Data from the Swiss census 2000 show that part time working schedules became the norm for mothers in Switzerland. While at the end of the 1980s the pattern was rather characterized by the discontinuation of participation in the labor force by mothers of young children, during the 1990s part time employment became the preferred alternative. Only 20% of them go back to full time employment after a period of interruption, while a little more than half of the mothers continue working part time (Levy, 2006; Le Goff *et al.*, 2005; Widmer and Ritschard, 2009). The lack of explicit life course policies supporting mothers' full participation in the labor force translates therefore into a life course *regime* (an empirically dominant model of practices) in which women interrupt their careers when they become mothers. By contrast, men's participation in the labor market, mostly full time, is insensitive both to parental status and to the number of children men have. The decrease in the time that women spend working in the labor market after the transition to parenthood corresponds to an equivalent increase in the time they devote to domestic work (Henchoz and Wernli, to be published) and to the emergence of a more traditional gender role-set even among those couples who before the birth of the child declared being in favor of equal sharing (Le Goff *et al.*, 2009).

In the Swiss context, giving birth represent a turning point in a woman's life course. The origin of this phenomenon is to be found in the gendered nature of cultural and institutional integration of

women in Swiss society. The theory of gendered master status postulates that family and work represent the two major spheres of social integration for individuals, and that these differ for men and women (Krüger and Levy, 2000, 2001). The priority integration for women is the domestic sphere (family); this does not mean that women are excluded from the labor market (work), but that their professional path is subordinate to family life. For men, professional integration has the priority, while family life is subordinate to it. Several recent studies demonstrate that women's and men's professional trajectories remain quite different (Levy, Gauthier, and Widmer, 2006). These studies specify that, compared to those of men, women's professional trajectories are more heterogeneous and sensitive to characteristics such as education level, number of children, and cohort. These different studies show that women's working patterns are constructed and negotiated within the limits represented by family life, while men's family involvement is limited by the demands of the professional life. Given that motherhood represents such a turning point in women's professional life course and more in general in their social integration patterns, it is crucial to take into account the function of the gender role-set within the couple, as well as take into account how each partner's gender orientation within the couple affects his or her intentions to have a child.

3. Fertility Intentions and the Gendered Workload

Childbearing behavior may be predicted by declared intentions to have a child. For this reason, research on fertility intentions attracted the attention of social psychologists and demographers (Miller and Pasta, 1995; Philipov, Thévenon, Klobas, Bernardi, and Liebroer, 2009) as important antecedents of fertility. Yet, the empirical literature highlights that there are often large discrepancies between declared intentions and realized behavior due to the instability of intentions, to external and unpredicted factors intervening between the intention formulation and its foreseen realization. However, the gap in intention-realization is substantially smaller when intentions refer to a precise and relatively short time interval (2-3 years) rather than the whole life course, and when they are formulated with respect to the next child only rather than to the overall fertility (final number of children) of a couple. Fertility intention is often found to be correlated to individual socio-demographic characteristics similar to those that matter for behavior (e.g., age, parity, marital and employment status), for ideational factors like norms and values (e.g., religious affiliation and practices, family and gender values), and for institutional opportunity structures (e.g., childcare availability and social networks support).

Despite such a blooming interest in fertility intentions, the effect of paid and unpaid labor shares between man and woman in a couple on their fertility intentions is rarely addressed (Mills et al., 2008). The main question to answer would be: Are couples in which the woman takes on the primary responsibilities of the domestic sphere and share equally with her partner the paid work load less likely to intend or have a child than couples where both partners take equal responsibilities in both spheres? Rizzi, Judd, White, Bernardi, and Kertzer (2008) address this question by analyzing couples' role-sets based on partners' share of domestic and paid work jointly and their relations to women's fertility intentions, controlling for measures of familistic values in the Italian context. The starting point of Rizzi et al. is the identification of a typology of couples' role-sets, built on the basis of the number of hours that each partner devotes to either domestic tasks or paid work and the gaps between the partners' share in *domestic work hours* and in (*paid*) *labor work hours*. Results show that a *traditional role-set*—in which the woman carries out most of the domestic work and the man most of the paid labor—is predominant in Italy, even among working women. The researchers observe no association between the way in which partners arrange their share of paid and unpaid work and women's intentions to have a first child. In contrast, there is evidence of the negative effects of role-sets in which women do most of the domestic work and as much paid work as men on the intention to have a second child; the opposite is true among couples sharing equally in domestic and paid work.

An analysis of the effect of workload share on fertility cannot ignore the important mediating role that perceived satisfaction with the gender division of tasks may have in shaping individual subjective well-being. Subjective well-being and the perceived quality of the relationships have been pointed out in the theoretical literature as crucial, but again little empirical research examines its effects on fertility jointly with the actual workload share. A few exceptions are the study by Benin and Agostinelli (1988) who use U.S. data from the 1980s to show that an important determinant of satisfaction with partners' workload share is its perceived fairness. Women were not happy with just "minimal participation" (p 350) from their partner, disconfirming the idea that just a symbolic participation would be enough to reduce status distinction between partners and therefore be sufficient to satisfy a partner. However, fair arrangements corresponded to very different combinations of shares depending on whether equity was considered as: a) an equal share of household tasks independently of the share of paid work; b) an equal share in household tasks which are typically female (housework chores or care) independently from other tasks (technical, administrative); c) a share in which "people want to maximize their own rewards" (p 350) maximization" depending on exogenously given preferences (women prefer caring tasks, husband's success contributes prestige and status to the family, preference for not having arguments on how tasks shall be performed when they are shared).

The most recent study on fertility intentions in Switzerland based on Family and Fertility Survey data of 1994 (Coenen-Huther, 2005) shows that intentions to have a child within 24 months decreased with the age of women and men, and with parity. Religion also plays a role. Catholics, whatever their level of engagement with religious practices, were more likely to intend to have a child than Protestants. Women who identified as not belonging to any religion more often declared not having intention to have a child. The most frequent reasons for which childless women declared not intending to have a child are related to the difficulty to conciliate family and professional lives, worries associated with parenting itself, and problems related to time scarcity. All these factors are concerned with the responsibility involved in parenting in general and mothering in particular, and not so much with the economic costs of children *per se*. However, mothers of one child or more who do not intend to have another child mention more frequently economic costs than scarce time budget. Difficulties conciliating family and professional lives and worries about parenting do not discriminate between mothers and non-mothers. In the next sections we are going to examine the role of couples' gender role-set, of partners' satisfaction with it, and of attitudes towards family and gender on fertility intentions in Switzerland in the early twenty-first century.

4. Data and Measures

We realized this study using the data collected in the Living in Switzerland project. This project is conducted by the Swiss Household Panel (SHP), which is based at the Swiss Centre of Expertise in the Social Sciences (FORS), located at the University of Lausanne. The project is devoted to analyzing changing living conditions in Switzerland and is funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF). For our purposes, the SHP data are interesting because they are longitudinal data and contain the relevant information on both partners of a couple. Two random samples of households are followed yearly, and all household members older than 14 years are interviewed separately. The first cohort has been followed since 1999, while the second since 2004. Because questions about fertility intentions have been asked only since 2002, we use a subsample of the first cohort starting in 2002 only. About 2,513 women of the two cohorts were asked at least once about their fertility intentions. However, for the purposes of our article, we selected only women who are living in couples (married or cohabiting) and aged between 18 and 45, for whom we also have their partners' interview data. Then analysis is conducted on a subsample of about 3,058 observations across waves.

4.1 Dependent Variable

Our dependant variable is the intention to have a child (or another child) in the 24 months following the interview (reference period). Fertility intentions are measured using a three- point scale: (1) women who intend to have a child; (2) women who do not know if they want a child; (3) women who do not intend to have a child. A descriptive analysis shows that at each wave of the SHP, the majority of childless women declare plans to have a child within this period, while the majority of women with already one child do not plan to have another child (Table 1). In both subsamples, women who do not know if they want a child are rare. For this reason, we computed a dichotomous independent variable in which these answers are regrouped with positive intentions to have a child.

4.2 Partners' Workload Variables

Gender gap index. The SHP presents rich information on couples' domestic and work balance: the numbers of hours weekly devoted by men and women to domestic work and to professional work respectively.¹ The average time dedicated to domestic work is around 18 hours a week for women's observations, but with strong differences between mothers and non-mothers. Not surprisingly, the number of hours dedicated by childless women to domestic work is smaller (almost 9 hours), compared to the number of hours dedicated to domestic work by women with at least one child (21 hours). By contrast, there is no difference between men of corresponding types, for all of whom implication in domestic work reaches a little more than 5 hours. The amount of time spent by childless women on paid work is larger than that spent by mothers. The number of hours of paid work these women work approaches the number of those of their partners. In the case of men, there are no differences according to whether they are fathers or not (see Table 1).

To go beyond a first descriptive approach and in order to take stock of the workload rate and household rate for men and women within couples, we computed two relative indexes. First, we divided women's number of domestic hours per week by their partner's number of domestic hours per week. When this indicator is higher than 1, it indicates that women do more housework compared to men. Second, we divided men's number of paid labor hours per week by their partner's number of paid labor hours per week. A value higher than 1 here means that men do more paid work than their partners.

Satisfaction with domestic tasks.

In order to measure women's satisfaction with the organization of housework within the couple, we have a three-point scale from 0 ("*not at all satisfied*") to 2 ("*very satisfied*")². Descriptive results show that childless women are more satisfied than women with at least one child (see Table 1).

Gender attitude. We computed a three-point indicator, which measures gender attitude toward equality between men and women. This indicator is composed of three items: (1) whether women think that they are in general penalized compared to men; (2) whether women think that they are personally penalized; and (3) whether women are in favor of measures to promote equality between men and women. This scale, which is a sum of these three items, starts from 0 ("*not at all penalized*") and goes to 10 ("*strongly penalized*"). The internal consistency of this scale is satisfactory: the Cronbach's alpha rises from 0.65 to 0.72 among waves,³ which corresponds to the widely accepted social science satisfactory cut-off for the internal consistency of a scale.

Familistic attitude. Two items are taken into account:

The first one considers, on a three-point scale—from 0 ("*completely disagree*") to 2 ("*completely agree*")—whether women think that having a job preserves independence. The second one measures, on a three-point scale—from 0 ("*completely disagree*") to 2 ("*completely agree*")—whether women think that a child suffers if it has a working mother.

4.3 Control and Intermediate Variables:

We also control for socio-demographic variables like women's education (high, middle, or low), occupation (full time, part time, in training, looking for a job, and being a housewife), and age. The control for age deserves a comment: There exist normative beliefs about the appropriate age for a woman to bear a child, in particular pertaining to upper age limits. As a consequence, we expect a nonlinear effect for age (intentions increasing and then decreasing with age). We therefore add a quadratic effect for the age.

Social support. Finally, we control for social support. With two indicators we measure the amount of social support received by women. One item measures whether women receive practical support from relatives on a three-point scale from 0 ("not at all") to 2 ("a great deal"). Moreover, we also have one item in order to know whether women receive emotional support from relatives on a three-point scale from 0 ("not at all") to 2 ("a great deal").⁴

about here Tab. 1

5. Results

We have at least one declared fertility intention for each woman in our six-year yearly panel, from 2002 to 2007. In most cases, the information on intentions covers multiple points in time. We perform a variety of nested hierarchical 2-level models in which the lower level represents the survey wave and the higher level the individual woman. The estimated models allow us to disentangle interindividual measures (level of women) and intraindividual measures (level of waves) (Hox, 2002; Singer and Willett, 2003). We estimate fixed effects for the intercept and the different covariates as well as a random effect for the intercept. The hypothesis is that the intercept varies for each woman, according to unknown characteristics, while there are no variations in the effect between different covariates. This hypothesis of a sole random effect on the intercept is often made in the case of multilevel logistic regressions. Models were estimated using HLM software, version 6 (Bryk and Raudenbush, 1992). The chosen method of estimation is full maximum likelihood. Note, however, that we will distinguish in our analyses two subsamples: childless women (739 observations), and women with at least one child (2319 observations). This distinction is guided by the fact that, in Switzerland, the transition to parenthood often corresponds to a moment in which couples become non-egalitarian in their practice and norms after a period of being egalitarian until this transition (Le Goff et al., 2009; Levy et al., 1997).

5.1 Descriptive Results

Before showing the results of the HLM model, we propose a role-sets typology presented below (Table 2), inspired by the typology proposed by Rizzi et al. (2008). Our descriptive analysis reveals the difference between men and women with respect to involvement in housework. Yet, fertility intentions may be affected not only by the amount of housework, but also by the amount of paid labor a woman does. Consequently, by comparing work organization both inside and outside the home (and following Rizzi et al., 2008), we distinguish different role-sets according to the amount of work done in each domain. This alternative of combining information from the amount of paid work and the amount of domestic work for each partner in the couple leads us to nine different categories. These categories range from a traditional role-set to an egalitarian role-set with a wide range of combinations. The *traditional role-set* describes a situation in which women do more domestic work in comparison to their partner. At the same time, they do less paid labor compared to their partners. The *super woman* cluster is characterized by women who do more domestic work in comparison to their partner, whereas these women have the same amount of paid labor work compared to their partners. The *ultra woman* cluster comprises women who put in extra hours in both paid and domestic work. By contrast, the *egalitarian role-set* pertains to couples where both partners have the same amount of domestic and paid work. The *super man* cluster is defined by men who experiment with extra hours in paid labor but have the same amount of domestic work

compared to their partner. The *ultra man* cluster is composed of men with extra hours in both domestic and paid labor, whereas, *post modern super men* do extra hours in domestic work only. The *reversed traditional role-set* describes women who do more paid and do less domestic hours compared to their partner. Finally, the *post modern super women* do extra hours in paid labor but not in domestic work.

5.2 Typologies of Role-Sets in the SHP Data

Not very surprisingly, the most frequent role-set for people living in Switzerland is the traditional one in which the man carries a heavier burden in paid labor and the woman in domestic work. The prevalence of this traditional role-set increases with the number of children. Couples adopt a traditional role-set after the transition to parenthood, and more so when they have more than one child.

The second most important division of tasks cluster is the *ultra women role-set*, in which women are expected to participate in the labor market and in domestic work as well. The women in the *ultra women* set do more hours in both domestic and paid labor compared to their partners. The third most important cluster is, as presented by the authors, the *ultra man* set. The *egalitarian role-set* is quite marginally represented. Moreover, a majority of women in this group do not have any children and work full time. Finally our descriptive statistics show that several role-sets, such as the *reversed* and *postmodern* role-sets, which are in fact extremely marginally represented, go beyond equality and represent new tendencies and, maybe, future challenges in the division of tasks within couples.

about here Tab. 2

6. Multilevel Analysis

We estimated different models for each of the two subsamples: (1) childless women and (2) women with at least one child. In the first model, we introduced indicators related to familistic attitudes. In models 2, 3, 4, and 5, we progressively introduce the variables measuring the partners' workload, as well as other control and intermediate variables.

Table 3 presents results for childless women. The first model shows us that women who agree with the idea that jobs preserve independence are less likely to develop the intention to have a child within the period ($\beta = -0.129$; $p < .01$). However, being in favor of gender equality has a positive impact on the intention to have a child within 24 months.

The second model shows that being satisfied with the way household work is shared is positively related with the intention to have a child, as is the case with the situation where women do more housework compared to their partner. For each covariate, estimated coefficient is only weakly significant (10% level) and becomes non-significant in other models in which are added supplementary covariates. As expected, the third model shows a quadratic effect of age. Intention to have a child first increases with age but flattens down at higher age. The fourth model shows that there are no differences between women working full time or part time in their intention. Such an absence of differences could mean that intention to have a child is not related to the economic level of women. Being in training or receiving an education is strongly negatively related to the intention to have a child. This result is consistent with the classic result of life course studies showing that women rarely give birth to a first child while undergoing education (Blossfeld and Huinink, 1991). Looking for a job has, however, a positive effect on the intention to have a child. The fifth model demonstrated that familistic attitude, socio-demographic variables, and social support do not have any influence on the intention to have a child. Moreover, the two variables measuring emotional and practical support do not improve the model fit (the introduction of the two social support variables does not decrease the maximum of the log likelihood).

about here Tab. 3

In the case of women who already have at least one child, Table 4 shows that familistic attitudes, gender opinion and division of tasks within a couple have an influence on the intention to have an extra child. The first model indicates that women who agree that a child suffers because his mother is working are less likely to have another child. But the significance disappears when all covariates are introduced in the model. Being in favor of gender equality has a positive impact on the intention to have a child within 24 months, this effect being more and more significant as other covariates are added. Satisfaction with household task has a positive impact on the intention to have a child within 24 months.

The second model presents the fact that women who do more household work than their partners are less likely to have another child. The third model presents that intention to have a child within the period depends on the age of the individual. As with childless women, the intention to have a child first increases and then decreases with age. The fourth model underlines that working full time is negatively related to the intention to have another child; as well, that a low level of education is associated to no intentions to have a child. By contrast, women with a high level of education develop intentions to have a child within 24 months more often than women with a middle level. The last model indicates that practical support is negatively related—but only at the level of 10%—to the intention to have a child, whereas benefiting from emotional support is positively related to this intention.

about here Tab. 4

7. Conclusion

The longitudinal approach we have adopted in the analysis of the household panel produced a number of interesting results. As expected, intentions to have children are strongly related to age, which shall yet be interpreted as an indicator for a given phase of the life course. Both for childless women and for mothers there is a moment in the life course during which the intention to have a child seems to be more likely to appear. Three phases can then be described beginning, first, with a period of their lives during which women do not want (yet) to have a child, especially when they are in education or professional training. In a second phase, intending to have a child becomes much more common; but, once this moment has passed, childbearing intention weakens, independently of whether the woman has or not already given birth. There seems to be a normative window for the appropriate childbearing timing—"not too young" and "not too old"—which is relatively stable in Switzerland. Sauvain-Dugerdil (2005) on the basis of Swiss FFS data collected in the 1990s⁵ found that among those women who did not intend to have a child, the youngest often mentioned reasons related to insufficient housing conditions or to the difficult conciliation between professional and family life, while the eldest, though still in their reproductive years, mentioned reasons related to their age.

The separate analyses for childless women and mothers were useful to show that childbearing intention depends partially on different factors in the two groups. Couples are likely to adopt a more traditional role-set after the transition to parenthood in Switzerland (Le Goff et al., 2009; Levy et al., 1997). This process is even reinforced when they have more than one child. It is then likely that couples in a more traditional role-set do not intend another child because they have already achieved their desired family size.

On the contrary, in the case of childless women, a positive intention to have a child within two years is more influenced by holding egalitarian values than by actual conditions (except for

undergoing education). This is consistent with results in other contexts where an unequal share of domestic tasks especially seems to associate with lower intentions to have a child (Cooke, 2003; Mills et al., 2008). However, women who consider labor market employment as synonymous with independence are less prone to have children. In a context where conciliation of employment and family responsibilities is not easy given the poor child care services, as is the case in Switzerland (Branger et al., 2008), childbearing is probably and understandably experienced as a threat to independence. The insistence on the unique mother role in children's development and education, of the conservative parties and their resistance to the development of alternative systems to mother's care, seems to depress childbearing intentions and contribute to fertility decline and higher ages at the transition to parenthood.

In sum, we are able to show with some confidence that more egalitarian couples are more likely to intend a child, other things being equal, confirming to a certain extent McDonald's hypothesis (2000) at the micro level. When the couple is more gender equal in the private sphere within a context in which gender equity is promoted in the public sphere as well, as in Switzerland, then the effects on fertility intentions are positive. Both having egalitarian roles and satisfaction with the division of household tasks work towards producing a higher likelihood to intend to have a child. Important codeterminants of such intentions are, however, equality in time devoted by partners to paid employment, the possibility to benefit of emotional support. However, other factors play a substantial independent role. In the first place, the aspiration to independence of some women is one important factor, which is not necessarily related to holding egalitarian values or to a more equal workload share. Then, the economic situation of the couple, especially in the presence of one or more children, heavily condition intentions.

Our analysis has been limited to fertility intentions as this is a powerful predictor of fertility behavior (Philipov et al., 2009). Our next step is to investigate the possibility of changes in fertility intentions during the life course. In particular, we are interested in identifying the causes for changes in those cases in which a woman of a given parity switches from intending to bear a child to not intending it any longer, sometimes later, or vice versa. Do they depend on changes in attitudes, on changes in material conditions and activities, or on changes in a couple's role-set? We started exploring our longitudinal data in this direction; however, in order to have sufficient fertility intentions we need to take into account more waves of SHP. Given the existence of a fertility intention-behavior gap, there exists a second promising venue of investigation: We can study the relationship between fertility intentions and their subsequent realization in a longitudinal perspective. The identification of the causes for the fertility gap is currently one of the most debated empirical issues in the demography of the family (Philipov et al., 2009). For our interests, the question becomes whether a couple's role-set is not only relevant for intentions but also plays a role as determinant of the probability that women will bear an intended child.

Notes

1. These questions do not include time devoted to childcare. In order to measure time devoted to housework, the SHP asks people, on average, how many hours they spend on housework, including washing, cooking, or cleaning, in a normal week. But there is an instruction that this question does not count care of the children.
2. The original question—"To what extent are you satisfied with the way the housework is shared out—washing, cooking, cleaning—within your household, if 0 means "not at all satisfied" and 10 "completely satisfied?"—has been recoded in a three point scale.
3. The Cronbach's alpha is a measure of a psychometric scale's internal consistency.

4. In the analyses presented in this paper, we will not take into consideration involvement in religion since this variable does not have any impact on intention to have a child within 24 months.
5. The Fertility and Family Survey was commissioned by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office in the early 1990s. This survey enables Switzerland to take part in the international Fertility and Family Survey (FFS) project launched by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

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Table 1: Sample characteristics (women aged between 18 to 45 years old, in couple)

2,513 WOMEN WERE INTERVIEWED AT LEAST ONCE			
WOMEN AGED BETWEEN 18 TO 45 YEARS OLD <i>IN COUPLE</i>			
	3,058 OBSERVATIONS	739 OBSERVATIONS CHILDLESS WOMEN	2,318 OBSERVATIONS WOMEN WITH AT LEAST ONE CHILD
VARIABLES			
DEPENDENT VARIABLE			
<i>Intentions to have a child in next 24 months</i>			
No	76.4 %	40.6 %	83.3 %
Don't know	2.5 %	4.5 %	1.9 %
Yes	21.1 %	54.9 %	14.8 %
PARTNERS' WORKLOAD VARIABLES			
<i>Satisfaction with organization of domestic work</i>			
No - Little	22.4 %	16.9 %	24.2 %
Somewhat	39.5 %	36.4 5 %	40.6 %
Yes-Very satisfied	38 %	46.6 %	35.2 %
<i>Women domestic hours</i>	17.98 hours / week	8.78 hours / week	20.97 hours / week
<i>Men domestic hours per week</i>	5.71 hours / week	5.12 hours / week	5.90 hours / week
<i>Women labor hours</i>	25.87 hours / week	37.54 hours / week	20.88 hours / week
<i>Men labor hours</i>	44.95 hours / week	44.30 hours / week	45.15 hours / week
CONTROL AND INTERMEDIATE VARIABLES			
<i>Women's age groups</i>			
Less than 30 years old	15.3 %	41.5 %	6.9 %
30-34 years old	24.0 %	28.0 %	22.8 %
35-39 years old	33.4 %	16.4 %	38.9 %
40-44 years old	27.2 %	14.1 %	31.4 %
<i>Women's education</i>			
Low education	7.3 %	4.1 %	8.4 %
Middle education	70.3 %	62.5 %	72.9 %
High education	22.3 %	33.4 %	18.8 %
<i>Women's occupational status</i>			
Occupied full time	19.9 %	60.7 %	7 %
Occupied part time	49.7 %	29.7 %	56 %
Housewife	28 %	2.5 %	36.1 %
Looking for a job	1 %	1.4 %	0.8 %
Training	1.5 %	5.7 %	0.2 %
<i>Practical support</i>			
Not at all	15.3 %	11.5 %	16.5 %
A little	45.4 %	40.9 %	46.9 %
A great deal	39.2 %	47.6 %	36.6 %
<i>Emotional support</i>			
Not at all	8.8 %	6.5 %	9.5 %
A little	44.3 %	39.9 %	45.7 %
A great deal	46.9 %	53.5 %	44.8 %
<i>Number of children younger than 17 living in the household</i>			
0	24.2 %	100 %	
1	18.7 %		24.6 %
2	37.6 %		49.6 %
3	15.9 %		20.9 %
4 and more	3.6 %		29.4 %

Table 2: Sample characteristics in function of the workload and household rate

	Household	Workload	Number of observations	Intention to have a child within 24 months (Valid percent)		Number of kids (Valid percent)		Women Education (Valid percent)		Women Occupation (Valid percent)	
Traditional role-set	W > M	W < M	2047	17.3	yes	13.7	no kids	6.6	low	7.3	full time
				2.3	do not know	19.4	one kid	75.3	middle	55	part time
				80.4	no	43.4	two kids	18	high	36.2	housewife
						23.4	more than three kids			1.6	training / jobless
Egalitarian role-set	W = M	W = M	14	21.4	yes	64.3	no kids	78.6	middle	64.3	full time
				7.1	do not know	7.1	one kid	21.4	high	28.6	part time
				71.4	no	21.4	two kids			7.1	housewife
						7.1	more than three kids				
Ultra women	W > M	W > M	346	31.5	yes	50.9	no kids	8.4	low	56.4	full time
				3.5	do not know	15.9	one kid	63	middle	35.8	part time
				65	no	22.32	two kids	28.6	high	6.1	housewife
						11.0	more than three kids			1.8	training / jobless
						39.4	no kids				
Super women	W > M	W = M	104	30.8	yes	22.1	one kid	18.3	low	43.7	full time
				1.9	do not know	22.1	two kids	58.7	middle	19.4	part time
				67.3	no	17.4	more than three kids	23.1	high	33	housewife
										3.8	training / jobless
Post modern superwomen	W = M	W > M	37	43.2	yes	86.5	no kids	2.7	low	67.6	full time
				2.7	do not know	5.4	one kid	51.4	middle	27	part time
				54.1	no	8.1	two kids	45.9	high	5.4	training
						55.3	no kids				
Reversed traditional role-set	W < M	W > M	161	23.6	yes	16.1	one kid	5.6	low	60.9	full time
				4.3	do not know	17.4	two kids	59	middle	32.9	part time
				72	no	11.2	more than three kids	35.4	high	0.6	housewife
						52.9	no kids			5.6	training
Post modern super men	W < M	W = M	34	29.4	yes	20.6	one kid	17.6	low	58.8	full time
				70.6	no	17.6	two kids	38.2	middle	23.5	part time
						8.8	more than three kids	44.1	high	2.9	housewife
										14.7	training / jobless
						29.9	no kids				
Super men	W = M	W < M	77	37.7	yes	19.5	one kid	3.9	low	18.7	full time
				1.3	do not know	32.5	two kids	58.4	middle	54.7	part time
				61	no	18.2	more than three kids	37.7	high	20	housewife
										6.7	training / jobless
						29.9	no kids				
Ultra man	W < M	W < M	234	23.1	yes	18.8	one kid	9	low	22.1	full time
				2.6	do not know	39.7	two kids	61.5	middle	55.8	part time
				74.4	no	11.5	more than three kids	29.5	high	17.3	housewife
										4.8	training / jobless

Note. W=women; M=men

Table 3: Childless Women: Results of logit models; unit-specific model; coefficient and odds ratio (round bracket).

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	-0.370 (0.691)	-0.540 (0.582)	-1.022 0.359	-0.981 (0.375)	-2.333* (0.097)
Job preserve independence	-0.129** (0.878)	-0.125* (0.882)	-0.114* (0.892)	-0.109* (0.897)	-0.119* (0.887)
Child suffers with working mother	-0.030 (0.970)	-0.037 (0.963)	-0.012 (0.988)	-0.021 (0.979)	-0.018 (0.982)
Gender opinion	0.138** (1.150)	0.141* (1.151)	0.135* (1.145)	0.150** (1.161)	0.153** (1.165)
Satisfaction with household tasks	0.090 (1.095)	0.106+ (1.111)	0.119+ (1.126)	0.120+ (1.127)	0.103 (1.108)
Household rate		0.150+ (1.162)	0.188+ (1.206)	0.157 (1.170)	0.153 (1.165)
Workload rate		-0.029 (0.971)	0.019 (1.018)	0.031 (1.032)	0.039 (1.039)
Age			1.918*** (6.810)	1.879*** (6.544)	1.851*** (6.368)
Age square			-0.030*** (0.970)	-0.030*** (0.974)	-0.029*** (0.971)
Occupation full time / ref. part time				0.005 (1.005)	-0.019 (0.981)
Occupation housewife / ref. part time				0.767 (2.154)	0.700 (2.014)
Occupation training / ref. part time				-3.365** (0.034)	-3.562** (0.028)
Occupation looking for a job / ref. part time				1.889** (6.610)	1.829 (6.230)
Education low / ref. middle				0.032 (0.968)	0.167 (1.181)
Education high / ref. middle				-0.145 (0.865)	-0.122 (0.885)
Practical support					0.057 (1.059)
Emotional support					0.126 (1.134)
Random effect					
Standard deviation	1.504***	1.515***	1.425***	1.416***	1.992***
Variance component	2.262	2.295	2.032	2.005	1.411
Chi-square	651.599	652.050	550.628	528.381	524.442
Log-Likelihood	-963.027	-962.425	-956.264	-940.669	-941.696

Note. + p < .01 ; * p < .05 ; ** p < .01 ; *** p < .001. Mode of estimates: full maximum likelihood. N = 377; observations = 706.

Table 4: Women with at least one child: Results of logit models; unit-specific model; coefficient and odds ratio (round bracket).

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	-2.78*** (0.062)	-2.577*** (0.075)	-3.043*** (0.048)	-3.079*** (0.045)	-3.417*** (0.033)
Job preserve independence	-0.002 (0.997)	-0.009 (0.990)	-0.009 (0.990)	-0.014 (0.986)	-0.016 (0.984)
Child suffers with working mother	-0.049* (0.951)	-0.039+ (0.961)	-0.062* (0.940)	-0.041 (0.959)	-0.041 (0.959)
Gender opinion	0.066+ (1.069)	0.062+ (1.064)	0.098* (1.102)	0.077* (1.080)	0.079* (1.082)
Satisfaction with household task	0.120** (1.127)	0.122** (1.129)	0.103* (1.108)	0.095* (1.100)	0.090* (1.095)
Household rate		-0.057 (0.944)	-0.030 (0.970)	-0.018 (0.982)	-0.020 (0.980)
Workload rate		-0.046+ (0.954)	-0.052+ (0.949)	-0.070* (0.932)	-0.068* (0.933)
Age			0.731** (2.079)	0.642** (1.901)	0.654** (1.924)
Age square			-0.015*** (0.985)	-0.014*** (0.986)	-0.014*** (0.986)
Occupation full time / ref. part time				-0.634+ (0.530)	-0.664+ (0.515)
Occupation housewife / ref. part time				0.110 (1.117)	0.075 (1.077)
Occupation training / ref. part time				1.633 (5.120)	1.606 (4.981)
Occupation looking for a job / ref. part time				-0.497 (0.608)	-0.617 (0.539)
Education low / ref. middle				-0.742+ (0.476)	-0.736+ (0.479)
Education high / ref. middle				0.901*** (2.463)	0.924*** (2.520)
Practical support					-0.075+ (0.927)
Emotional support					0.116* (1.122)
Random effect					
Standard deviation	1.387***	1.405***	1.374***	1.378***	1.383***
Variance component	1.924	1.974	1.887	1.899	1.913
Chi-square	1229.511	1239.992	1011.647	997.184	999.023
Log-Likelihood	-873.054	-870.934	-769.971	-757.194	-755.925

Note. + $p \leq .01$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$. Mode of estimates: full maximum likelihood. $N = 858$; observations = 2197.