

# **Gendered Division of Housework and Childcare, Satisfaction with that Division and One-child Mothers' Fertility Intentions in Spain**

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The decision to have a child depends, to a large extent, on the previous experiences that individuals had (Presser, 2001) as well as the “narratives” of the future (Vignoli, Guetto, Bazzani, Pirani, & Minello, 2020). For one-child mothers, the experience of childbearing the first child will influence their desires to increase their families. Favourable experiences will increase their fertility desires, while unfavourable experiences will decrease them. In those situations where women experience a double shift in the household and workplace, and do not receive the appropriate support from fathers (Cheng & Hsu, 2020), women may feel that a new additional child would increase their unfavoured situation and thus, prefer not to expand their families. This desire not to have more children will reflect on fertility intentions, since they represent a sign that a certain behaviour will be adopted to reach a target (Miller, 2011). Previous research analysing the relationship between gender equity and fertility intentions have not been conclusive, displaying differences by the context, the questionnaire and variables, and the period analysed, among other factors (Raybould & Sear, 2020).

Spain constitutes a very particular case of study since fertility trends are below the level of lowest-low fertility. Moreover, in general, the heaviest bulk of the caring and household chores falls on the shoulders of women despite pervasive egalitarian attitudes (Abril et al., 2015), and the public policies supporting families are scarce (Esping-Andersen, 2009). Notwithstanding this unfavourable background for mothers, little progress was made on the relationship between gender equity and fertility in Spain due to the unavailability of recent quantitative data. The launch of the 2018 Spanish Fertility Survey (2018 SFS) provided a gateway into this field by covering information concerning sharing of tasks and satisfaction with it, along with fertility intentions.

This research aims to analyse the relationship between gender equity within the couple and one-child mothers intention to have a second child in the following three years in

Spain, differentiating between childcare and housework chores and between distribution of chores and satisfaction with that distribution (Neyer, Lappegård, & Vignoli, 2013). I anticipate that the relationship between the distribution of childcare and household work is moderated by the satisfaction with that distribution.

Preliminary results show that being in a relationship with a very unequal distribution of childcare chores has no effect on the intention to have a second child within the following three years. However, the satisfaction with that distribution produces a sizeable and statistically significant negative effect on childbearing intentions. The situation is quite different for housework, where a highly unequal distribution of chores is negatively related with the intention to have a second child in comparison with moderately unequal distributions. However, once the satisfaction with the distribution is included in the models, that effect slightly decreases and loses statistical significance. Furthermore, the effect of low satisfaction with the distribution is negative and non-neglectable, but much lower than before and far away from statistical significance.

Finally, to assess whether the satisfaction with the distribution of chores moderates the effect of the distribution on fertility intentions, I include the interaction between the two. For both childcare and housework, I observe a similar pattern. First, I observe a negative effect of being in a very unequal distribution exclusively when women are unsatisfied with that distribution. On the one hand, unsatisfied women in equal childcare distributions have a probability of intending to have a second child of 0.48. In turn, if those unsatisfied women were in an unequal distribution, that probability decreases to 0.44. On the other hand, unsatisfied women are predicted a probability to intend to have a second child of 0.47 when they are in equal housework distributions, and a probability of 0.39 when they are in unequal housework distributions. Ultimately, even though I observe such a negative effect both for childcare and housework, the latter effect is larger while the former does not reach statistical significance.

To conclude, I observe that the relationship between the gendered distribution of childcare and household work is moderated by the effect of the satisfaction with that division (Riederer, Buber-Ennsner, & Brzozowska, 2019): only women with highly unequal distributions will reduce their intentions. But they will only do so if they are highly unsatisfied with that distribution. Therefore, the outcomes show that, despite the egalitarian attitudes widespread among the Spanish population, women are still very

tolerant of unequal distributions and only decide not to increase their families when they experience a very unsatisfying or highly unequal distribution of chores.

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### Appendix

**Table 1. Average Marginal Effects. Childcare models.**

Model 1 A

Model 2 A

	dy/dx	Std. Err.	P> z	dy/dx	Std. Err.	P> z
<i>Childcare distribution and satisfaction</i>						
Distribution of childcare chores						
Equal	-0.006	0.028	0.832	-0.004	0.029	0.899
Unequal						
Very unequal	0.004	0.035	0.909	0.035	0.037	0.351
Satisfaction with childcare distribution						
Low satisfaction				-0.120	0.042	0.004
Medium satisfaction						
High satisfaction				-0.034	0.029	0.244
<i>Controls</i>						
<i>N</i>		1164			1164	

**Table 2. Average marginal Effects. Housework models.**

	Model 1 B			Model 2 B		
	dy/dx	Std. Err.	P> z	dy/dx	Std. Err.	P> z
<i>Housework distribution and satisfaction</i>						
Distribution of housework chores						
Equal	-0.021	0.028	0.447	-0.045	0.032	0.154
Unequal						
Very unequal	-0.072	0.037	0.051	-0.052	0.040	0.188
Satisfaction with housework distribution						
Low satisfaction				-0.044	0.035	0.215
Medium satisfaction						
High satisfaction				0.029	0.031	0.352
<i>Controls</i>						
<i>N</i>		1164			1164	

**Table 3. Interaction effects between division of labour and satisfaction with that division.**

	Childcare chores			Housework chores		
	Model 4A			Model 4B		
	Estimate	Std. Error	p-value	Estimate	Std. Error	p-value
Predicted probabilities						
(1) Unsatisfied & Equal	0.478	0.021	0.00	0.467	0.018	0.00
(2) Unsatisfied & Unequal	0.443	0.032	0.00	0.392	0.032	0.00
(3) Satisfied & Equal	0.446	0.018	0.00	0.477	0.218	0.00
(4) Satisfied & Unequal	0.560	0.065	0.00	0.605	0.105	0.00
Marginal effects						
Marginal effect of unequal for satisfied women	0.114	0.068	0.09	0.128	0.107	0.23
Marginal effect of unequal for unsatisfied women	-0.035	0.039	0.37	-0.075	0.037	0.04
Second difference						
	0.149	0.078	0.06	0.203	0.113	0.07