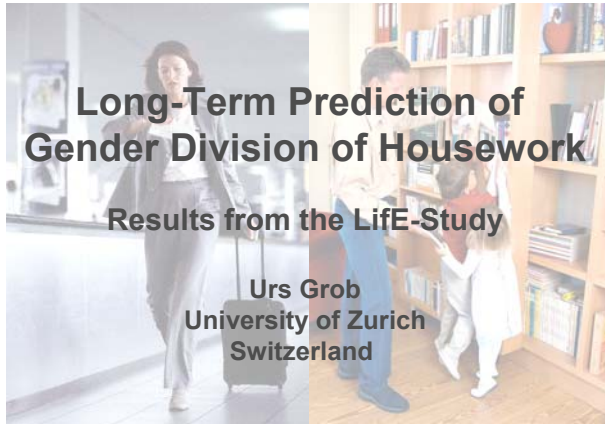


# Long-Term Prediction of Gender Division of Housework

## Results from the LiE-Study

Urs Grob  
University of Zurich  
Switzerland



## Background and Research Interest



- In Switzerland (2000) in only **2.7%** of all partnerships the main responsibility for housework was with the man (Strub & Bauer, 2002)

- When there are children this quota drops down to **1.6%**

- Man's share of time on household tasks in partnerships with  $\geq 1$  child (< 7 years) in the EU (Willemssen & Jacobs, 2001):

- ▶ Cooking meals: 23.7%
- ▶ Cleaning: 20.6%
- ▶ Washing & ironing: 11.7%

## Background and Research Interest

- Despite of ...
  - ▶ a major shift in normative gender role orientations during the past three decades
  - ▶ having brought a wider scope for (gender) role-conform behavior of women and men
  - ▶ actual changes in women's employment and earning
- ... the traditional model of gendered division of labor still prevails.
- Why?

## Background and Research Interest

- Several theories to explain the gender division of paid and unpaid labor of couples:
- Theories focusing on contextual factors, opportunity structures and relative resources in adulthood ...
- vs. theories focusing on socialization in childhood and youth.
- The importance of socialization, compared to time constraints and relative resources in adulthood, is not fully clear.

- ▶ Which amount of variation in gender division of housework can be explained drawing on contextual factors and orientations in adolescence?

Gender Division of Housework

### (Some) Theoretical Approaches and Relevant Factors

- **Time availability; demand/response capacity approach**  
 Division of housework as a consequence of time constraints; rational choice based optimization on the level of partnership/family
  - ➔ - Parenthood
  - Hours of paid work /week
- **Gender studies / feminist approaches**  
 Criticism of "inherent necessities" as socially constructed and constantly reproduced by "doing gender"; dimensions of power and exploitation
  - (No directly testable hypotheses)
- **Resource theory / new home economics approach**  
 Division of housework as a result of negotiation processes of opponents with more or less powerful resources; rational choice based optimization on the level of the individual
  - ➔ - Woman's education
  - Woman's income
- **Socialization / gender-role theory**  
 Social learning theory; model-learning
  - ➔ - Wider social context
  - Family context
  - Orientations in adolescence

Universität Zürich EARA 2006 – ANTALYA

Gender Division of Housework

### Empirical Evidence

The most influential factors in adulthood are (Künzler 2001a/b, Klaus & Steinbach 2002, Strub & Bauer 2002):

- **Parenthood**  
 women: \*\*\*, men: \*\*\*
- **Paid employment**  
 women: \*\*\*, men: ~
- **Formal education**  
 women: \*\*, men: ~/\*

Σ Opportunity structures and time constraint factors are more important for women than for men!

These factors are of course linked to each other:

- Parenthood leads to a reduction of paid work – mostly for women
- Women with higher education: later and less children

Universität Zürich EARA 2006 – ANTALYA

Gender Division of Housework

### Empirical Evidence (continued)

Factors of socialization in childhood and adolescence on division of housework at age 31 (Cunningham, 2001b):

- **Parents' division of housework in early childhood**  
 women: n.s., men: \*\*\*
- **Mother's degree of employment in early childhood**  
 women: \*, men: n.s.
- **Mother's gender-role attitude**  
 women: n.s., men: \*\*
- **Own gender role attitude in early adulthood**  
 women: \*, men: \*\*\*

Σ Early socialization is more important for men than it is for women!

Universität Zürich EARA 2006 – ANTALYA

Gender Division of Housework

### Questions

with regard to the formation of gender division of housework:

- ▶ What is the importance of socialization in childhood and adolescence, compared to opportunity structure factors in adulthood?
- ▶ Are the gender role attitudes in adolescence
  - a) **mediated** and/or
  - b) **moderated** by the most important factor in adulthood, that is parenthood?

Universität Zürich EARA 2006 – ANTALYA

Gender Division of Housework

## Sample

**LifE-Study (Fend, Georg, Berger, Grob, & Lauterbach):**

- Large longitudinal study in Germany; 1979-1983, 2002
- 1979-1983: 5 waves of about 2000 children; mean age 12 (to 16)
- 1980, 1982: questionnaire study with parents (n=988, 590 respect.)
- 2002: Follow-up with 1527 respondents now at age 35

**Analysis sample:**

- 1152 respondents out of 1527 living together with a partner and having answered the questions about the division of housework
- 578 women, 574 men
- mean age= 35.4 years

Universität Zürich

EARA 2006 – ANTALYA

Gender Division of Housework

## Instruments

**Traditional vs. progressive division of housework (at age 35)**

**Question wording**  
How do you and your partner share the housework? Who does the ...  
- cooking (etc.)

**Answer categories**

Item	r <sub>it</sub>
1: always the woman	.47
2: mostly the woman	.52
3: somewhat more often the woman	.50
4: evenly distributed	.59
5: somewhat more often the man	.49
6: mostly the man	
7: always the man	
Alpha = .75	

Universität Zürich

EARA 2006 – ANTALYA

Gender Division of Housework

## Instruments

**Child's concept of prospective division of housework (at age 16)**

**Question wording**  
Please mark the answer which best reflects your views:

**Girls:**

- When I get married I want to stop working and to only look after the children and the household.
- ... to ...
- Even when having children, I want to keep on working. I expect my partner to help with the children and the household so I won't have any disadvantages with my job.
- I'd rather have no children at all than have any disadvantages with my job.

**Boys:**

- When I get married I want my wife to stop working and to only look after the children and the household.
- ... to ...
- When I get married and my wife wants to keep on working, I'm willing to look after the children and the household myself for a certain time.

Universität Zürich

EARA 2006 – ANTALYA

Gender Division of Housework

## Data Analysis

**Predicting (Progressive) Division of Housework at Age 35**

Domain / context	Predictors	Women <sup>a</sup> r <sup>2</sup> (%)	Men <sup>a</sup> r <sup>2</sup> (%)	
Adolescence (12 to 16 years)	Milieu	(+) 0.8 ~	0.9 ~	
		++ 5.3***	7.3***	
	Family context	Mother's degree of employment	+ 0.1	1.2(*)
		Parents' parenting style (democratic)	+ 1.5*	1.1 ~
	Child	Child's attitude towards sexual equality	(+) 0.9 ~	0.0
Child's concept of prospect. division of labor		+ 2.1**	0.1	
Adulthood (35 years)	Own higher education ("Abitur")	+ 1.7**	1.6*	
	Parenthood (living with at least one own child)	-- 9.6***	12.4***	
	> 35 hours worked/week (vs. ≤ 35 h/w)	++ 4.7***	0.0	
	> 15 (≤ 35) hours worked/week (vs. ≤ 15 h/w)	++ 3.4***	0.5	
	Own Income	+ 1.7**	0.0	
		F <sub>adj162</sub>	F <sub>11246</sub> =14.7	F <sub>11288</sub> =8.7
		R <sup>2</sup> total	31.8%	25.0%
		R <sup>2</sup> total adjusted	29.6%	22.2%
		Sig. F	***	***

<sup>a</sup> Sequential orthogonal calculation of explained variance proportions; p values relate to F change  
\*\*\* p<.001 \*\* p<.01 \* p<.05 ~ p<.10

Universität Zürich

EARA 2006 – ANTALYA

Data Analysis

Predicting Parenthood at Age 35 (Logistic Regression)

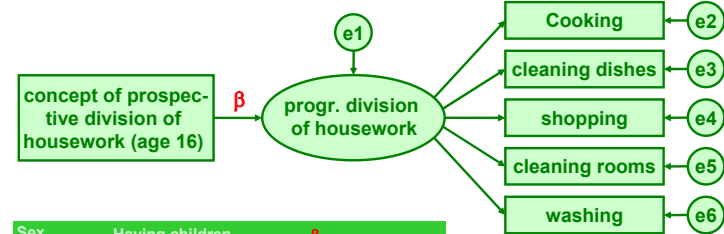
Domain / context	Predictors	Women odds ratio	Men odds ratio
Milieu	Social class of family of origin	-	-
	Social context: degree of urbanity	-	-
Family context	Mother's degree of employment	-	-
	Parents' parenting style (democratic)	-	1.05-
Child	Child's attitude towards sexual equality	.78~	-
	Child's concept of prospect. division of labor	.75*	-
	Own higher education ("Abitur")	.47**	-
Nagelkerke pseudo R <sup>2</sup> total		.13	.07

\*\*\* p<.001 \*\* p<.01 \* p<.05 ~ p<.10

- Parenthood is predicted by gender role relevant believes and concepts of women and thus acts as a mediator variable of those effects.

Data Analysis

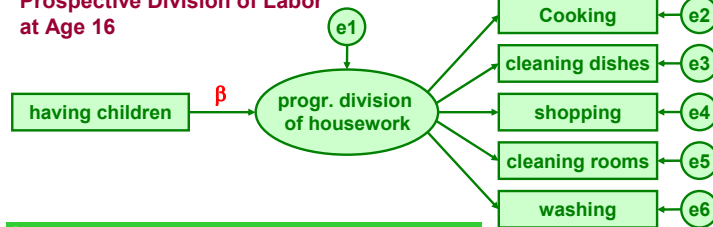
Moderation Effect of Parenthood



Sex	Having children	$\beta$	
Women	no children	-.06	
	at least one child	.26***	p<.05
Men	no children	.10	
	at least one child	.12	n.s.
Chi <sup>2</sup> =75.4, df=48, p=.007			
cfi=.97, RMSEA=.019 pclose=1.000			

Data Analysis

Moderation Effect of the Concept of Prospective Division of Labor at Age 16



Sex	Concept of prospective division of labor (age 16)	$\beta$	
Women	traditional	-.57***	p<.05
	progressive	-.29**	
Men	traditional	-.50***	n.s.
	progressive	-.49***	
Chi <sup>2</sup> =83.9, df=48, p=.001			
cfi=.95, RMSEA=.023 pclose=1.000			

Summary I

- Time constraints and opportunity structures in adulthood have the strongest effects on the gender division of housework.
- Nevertheless, the social context in adolescence and the individual orientations are surprisingly influential summing up to, sequentially calculated, about 10% of explained variance.
- The degree of urbanity of the social context in adolescence, representing milieu-specific norms and values, explains 5 to 7% of the variance in housework allocation in adulthood!
- Only for women, the subjective concept of prospective division of housework is predictive of the actual division of housework.
- It is, for woman, more predictive than the generalized attitudes towards sexual equality.

## Summary II

- For woman but not for men, parenthood mediates and moderates the subjective concept (in adolescence) of the future division of housework.
- Parenthood, for women, "reactivates" the subjective concepts drawn on models and "perceived normality" in childhood and adolescence.
- Changing the perspective of the interaction effect: The girls' concept of future housework allocation is important, because it moderates the traditionalizing effect of parenthood!
- So, for explaining the actual gender division of labor, it's not just all about opportunity structures in adulthood!

Socialization in childhood and adolescence is, in fact, also relevant.

## Thank you for your interest!

### Literature

- Cunningham, M. (2001a). The Influence of Parental Attitudes and Behaviours on Children's Attitudes Toward Gender and Household Labor in Early Adulthood. *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 63 (1), pp.111-122.
- Cunningham, M. (2001b). Parental Influences on the Gendered Division of Housework. *American Sociological Review*, 66 (2), pp.184-203.
- Greenstein, Th. N. (2000). Economic Dependence, Gender, and the Division of Labor in the Home: A Replication and Extension. *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 62 (2), pp. 322-335.
- Lewin-Epstein, N., Stier, H., & Braun, M. (2005). Division of Labor in Germany and Israel: Time Constraints, Resource Dependence, and Gender Ideology. Discussion Paper No. 1-2005. Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, Pinhas Sapir Center for Development.
- Klaus, D. & Steinbach, A. (2002): Determinanten innerfamiliärer Arbeitsteilung. Eine Betrachtung im Längsschnitt. In: *Zeitschrift für Familienforschung*, 14 (1), pp. 21-43.
- Künzler, J. & Walter, W. (2001a): Arbeitsteilung in Partnerschaften. Theoretische Ansätze und empirische Befunde. In: Huinink, J., Strohmeier, K.-P. & Wagner, M. (Hrsg.): *Solidarität in Partnerschaft und Familie. Zum Stand familiensoziologischer Theoriebildung*, pp. 185-218. Würzburg: Ergon.
- Künzler, J., Walter, W., Reichart, E., & Pfister, G. (2001b): *Gender Division of Labour in Unified Germany*. Tilburg: Tilburg University Press. (URL: <http://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/soziologie/publik.html>)
- Röhler, H., Steinbach, A., & Huinink, J. (2000): Hausarbeit in Partnerschaften. Zur Erklärung geschlechtstypischer Arbeitsteilung in nichtehelichen und ehelichen Lebensgemeinschaften. *Zeitschrift für Familienforschung*, 12 (2), pp. 21-53.
- Strub, S. & Bauer, T. (2002). *Wie ist die Arbeit zwischen den Geschlechtern verteilt?* Eine Untersuchung zur Aufteilung von unbezahlter und bezahlter Arbeit in der Schweiz und im internationalen Vergleich. Bern: Eidgenössisches Büro für die Gleichstellung von Mann und Frau.