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Expansion of Childcare Services and Changing Attitudes of Parents in East and West Germany

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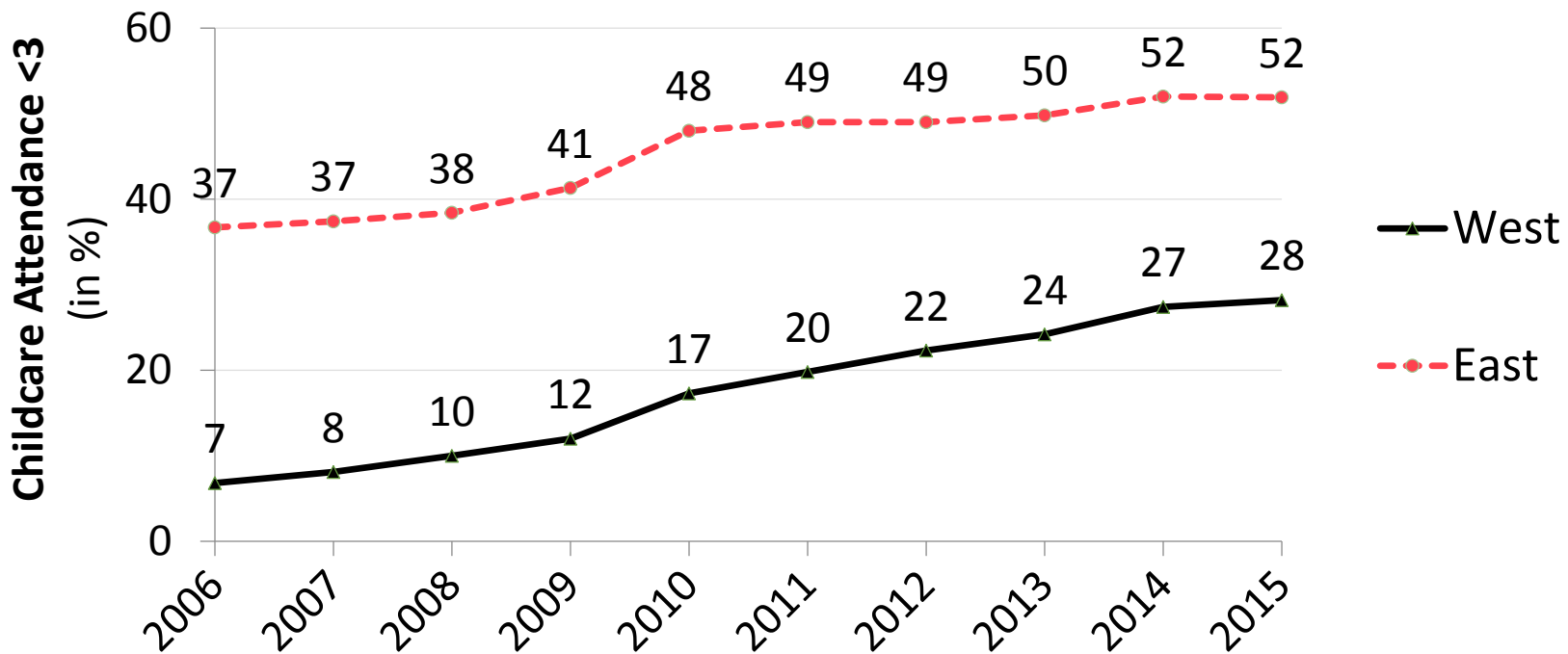
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Paradigm shift in German family policy: Support of adult worker model

- 2007: **parental leave reform** (shortened, income related)
- since 2005: **expansion of state subsidized childcare** facilities for <3 years

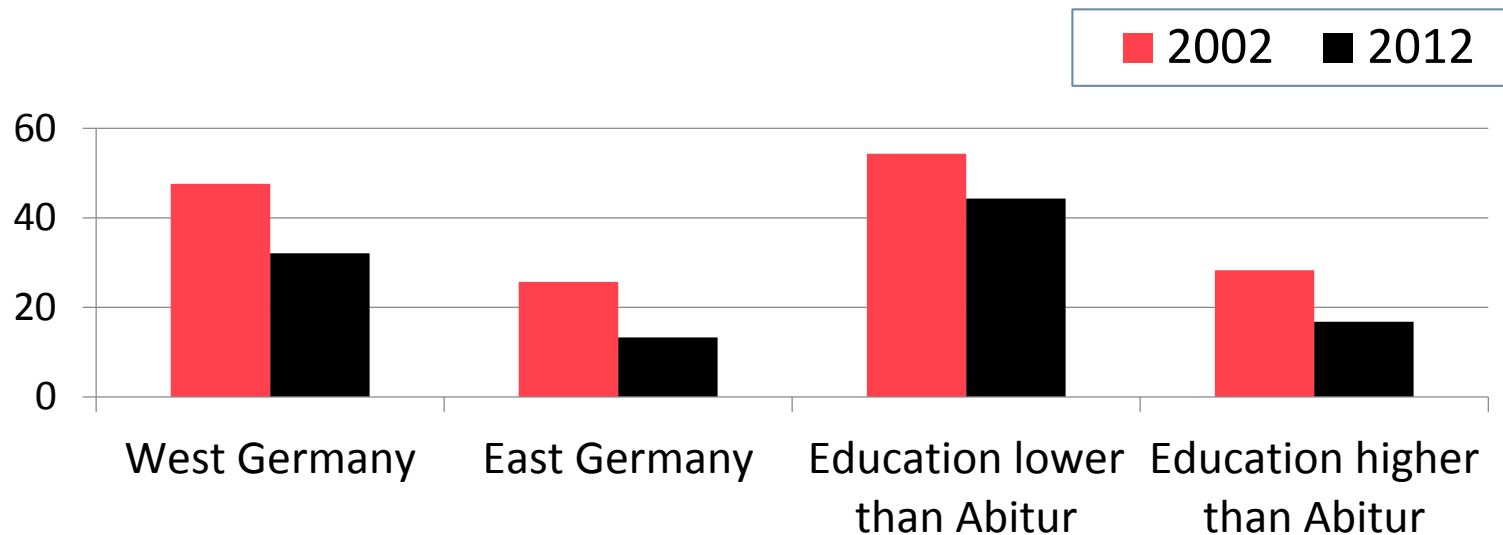




Change in Gender ideologies

Respondents agree (in %):

“A pre-school child is likely to suffer from his mother going to work.”



Source: ISSP 2002/2012; calculation by Schober & Stahl 2014



Family policy reforms associated with attitudinal change?



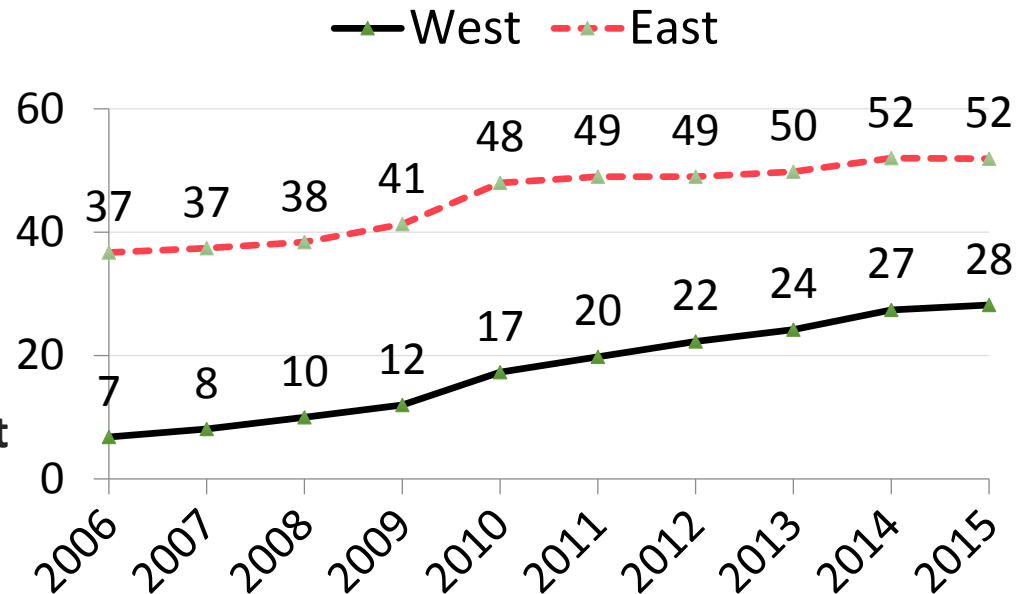
How is the recent expansion of state-subsidized childcare places for under-three-year-olds associated with a change in gender ideologies?



U3-Childcare in Germany

- 1996: legal **right to part-time childcare slot** from age 3
- since 2005: **expansion of state subsidized childcare provision**
- since 2005: **priority access** for children under age 3 **when parents working or in education**
- 08/2013: **legal right to childcare slot** from age 2
- **childcare fees are income dependent** and **below OECD average**

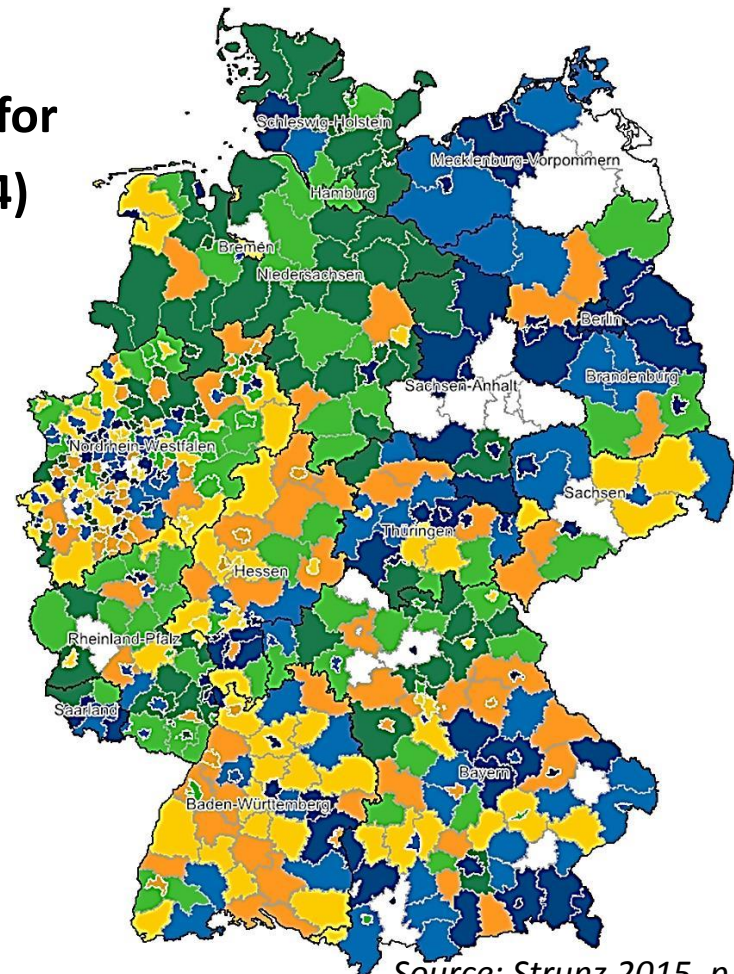
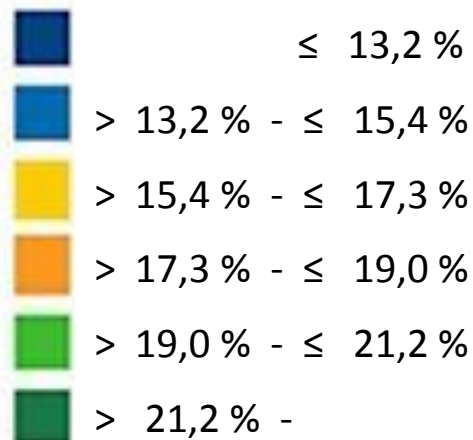
state subsidized childcare provision <3 (in %)





Increase Childcare Availability for Children < 3 Years

Increase for use in formal childcare for children <3 years in % (2006 – 2014)



- great variation in expansion among districts within East and West

Source: Strunz 2015, p. 5



Differences in gender ideologies associated with ...

- different **individual characteristics** (sex, age, marital status, ...)
(e.g., Bolzendahl/Myers 2004, Khoudja/Fleischmann 2015)
- **welfare-state differences**
(e.g., Bauernschuster/Rainer 2012; Sjöberg 2004; Steiber/Haas 2009)

Change in attitudes and norms associated with ...

- **inter-cohort attitude change** due to cohort replacement
socialisation in different institutional settings *(e.g., Bauernschuster/Rainer 2012)*
- **intra-cohort attitude change** due to life-time transitions
(e.g., Bolzendahl/Myers 2004, Kraaykamp 2012)



- attitudinal change due to **life-course transitions** (childbirth, employment)
(e.g., Baxter et. al. 2014; Berrington et al. 2008; Schober/Scott 2012)

- **short-term impact of family policy changes:**

US: **supportive work-family policies** impact choice of egalitarian relationship arrangements *(Pedulla/Thébaud 2015; Experiment)*

Norway: **parental leave quota** associated with more gender equal division of labour *(Kotsadam/Finseraas 2011)*

Germany: **extension of parental leave 90s/2000s** lead to decline in maternal work commitment *(Gangl/Ziefle 2015; DnD)*

Germany: **introduction of daddy-leave** associated with less traditional gender roles among grandparents *(Unterhofer & Wrohlich 2017)*



- **short-term impact of childcare reforms:**

Germany: **higher childcare availability** associated with decrease in marriage rate and increase in divorce rate (*Bauernschuster/Borck 2016*)

Norway: increase in **formal childcare** associated with higher acceptance of non-parental care due to policy feedback effects (*Ellingsaeter et. al 2017,)*



yet, **no evidence** on influence of **childcare provision** on **gender ideologies over life course**



How is the recent expansion of state-subsidized childcare places for under-three-year-olds associated with a change in gender ideologies?

- investigate **short-term policy effects** on **gender ideologies over life course**
- combine **longitudinal individual level information** with **annual childcare records** on district level
 - ➔ exploit **regional as well as temporal variation** in childcare expansion
- separate analysis of **East and West Germany**
 - ➔ examine **moderating role of different work-care norms** prior to reform



Hypotheses

Increase in state-subsidized childcare places is overall positively associated with changes towards less traditional gender ideologies **(H 1)**.

Maternal labour market returns will partly mediate associations of childcare expansion with less traditional gender ideologies **(H 2)**.

The lower the pre-reform childcare provision, the more likely are (West German) mothers and fathers to show a more pronounced change in gender ideologies **(H 3)**.


Exposure-based approaches:

- **identity theory/social identity theory** (*e.g., Stets and Burke 2000*)
 - change in roles/ social category or group associated with change in self-concept
e.g. childbirth, mother returns to work/becomes homemaker
- ➔ Childcare expansion **increases maternal labour supply** and ...
 1. identification with **role as working mother**,
 2. **alters self-concept** and **facilitates attitudinal change** towards less traditional gender ideologies.
- **cognitive dissonance** (*Festinger 1957*)
 - Attitudinal change whenever (constrained) circumstances are not in line with beliefs, *e.g. liberal work-care norms prior birth but no maternal employment possible*
- ➔ Childcare reduces work-family conflicts – **less adaption to traditional attitudes** due to cognitive dissonance



Information-based approach:

- **Policy feedback effects presumed to be stronger** when
 - high **policy visibility** (“degree to which a policy is salient to mass publics”)
 - high **policy proximity** (“extent to which it will affect people’s lives”)

(Ellingsæter et al., 2017, p. 152)
 - **Elaboration Likelihood Model** (*Petty and Cacioppo 1986*)
 - change due to new information by media or significant others
e.g. information on early education and care benefits, childcare use
-  Childcare expansion accompanied by **increase in information** about use and benefits of formal childcare
- policy reforms accompanied by **media strategy**
 - information provided by **social networks**



Data

- **pairfam** (wave1|3|5|7) + demodiff samples
- **annual childcare attendance** rates + further **controls** on **county level**

Sample

- **mothers and fathers (20-45)** with at least one child of any age
- **Wave 1** (08/09) + **wave 3** (10/11) + **wave 5** (12/13) + **wave 7** (14/15)
- excluded: singles, those in full-time education, military service, movers
- unbalanced Sample, t: ~4,2:
 - West Germany: 2147 mothers / 1489 fathers
 - East Germany : 1251 mothers / 1248 fathers
 - 290 counties of 402

Fixed Effects Models

$$y_{it} = \beta_{1t} + \beta_2 c_{ct} + \beta_3 x_{it} + \beta_4 z_{ct} + \beta_5 p_t + u_i + \varepsilon_{it}$$

- estimation of **within-county association of childcare on gender ideologies**
- **separate stepwise models for fathers and mothers in East and West**
- including **time-varying controls** at:
 - **individual level (x)**
#children in HH, age mother, age youngest child (0-3, 4-6, 7- ...), relationship status (LAT, cohabiting, married), net equivalence income in €, partner working (d), maternal employment status (no work, part-time, full-time)
 - **county level (z)**
unemployment rate, GDP per capita, public servants rate, index for rusticity
- period dummies (p), clustered SE on county level



Measuring Gender Ideologies

Variable	Mothers		Fathers			
	W 1	W 7	W 1	W 7		
West Germany						
Women should be more concerned about family than career	3.0	<i>-0.13***</i>	2.8	2.9	<i>-0.22***</i>	2.7
A child under age 6 will suffer from having a working mother	2.7	<i>-0.32***</i>	2.4	3.1	<i>-0.30***</i>	2.8
Marriage is a lifelong union that should not be broken	3.2	<i>-0.16***</i>	3.1	3.7	<i>-0.02</i>	3.7
East Germany						
Women should be more concerned about family than career	2.6	<i>-0.08</i>	2.5	2.5	<i>-0.02</i>	2.5
A child under age 6 will suffer from having a working mother	2.0	<i>-0.17***</i>	1.9	2.1	<i>-0.08</i>	2.0
Marriage is a lifelong union that should not be broken	2.8	<i>0.09</i>	3.0	3.2	<i>-0.09</i>	3.3

Note: Higher values indicate stronger agreement with the statements, i.e. more traditional attitudes.

Numbers shown in italics represent mean differences in attitudes among waves with t-Test.

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$



Results: Mothers

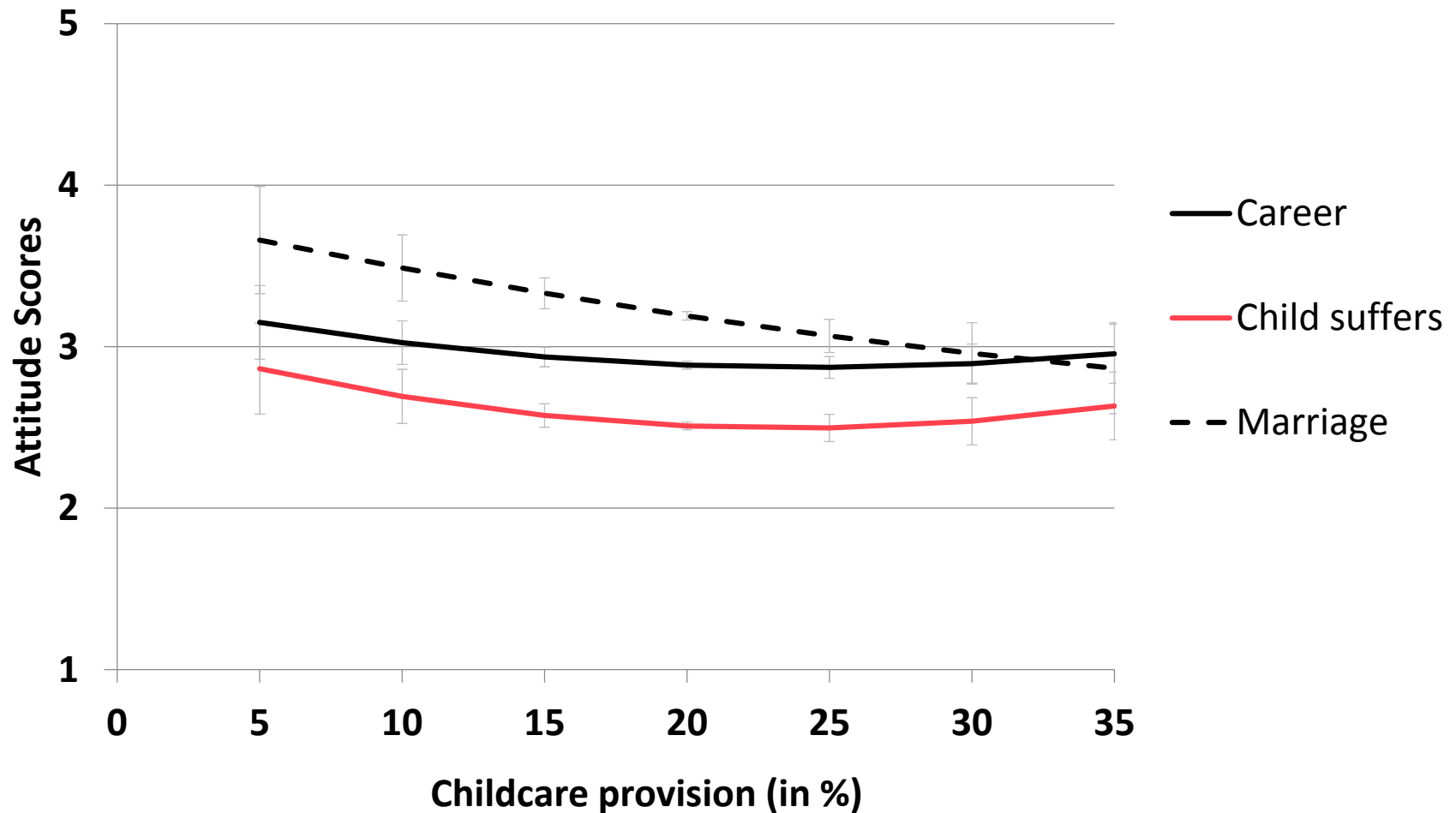
Predictor	Career		Child		Marriage	
	M1		M2		M3	
	<i>b</i>	RSE	<i>b</i>	RSE	<i>b</i>	RSE
West German Mothers						
Childcare rate %	-0.032*	0.014	-0.038**	0.013	-0.029*	0.014
Childcare rate 2 %	0.001*	0.000	0.001**	0.000	0.000	0.000
Father working	0.041	0.080	0.046	0.065	0.010	0.076
Mother PT employment	-0.072+	0.040	-0.099*	0.038	-0.007	0.032
Mother FT employment	-0.149*	0.066	-0.107+	0.055	-0.015	0.054
Constant	1.011	1.063	-0.909	0.709	-0.516	0.935
Observations	5130		5115		5124	
p	0.002		0.000		0.000	
East German Mothers						
Childcare rate %	0.004	0.052	0.059	0.047	-0.050	0.040
Childcare rate 2 %	-0.000	0.001	-0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000
Father working	-0.006	0.053	-0.187**	0.067	-0.028	0.040
Mother PT employment	-0.045	0.067	-0.082	0.067	-0.030	0.044
Mother FT employment	-0.001	0.004	-0.002	0.003	-0.008**	0.003
Constant	1.167	1.789	-1.738	1.840	2.914+	1.553
Observations	3025		3021		3010	
p	0.000		0.039		0.000	

All models include controls on individual, household and regional controls as well as period dummies.

+ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$



Predictive Margins for West German Mothers





Results: Fathers

Predictor	Career		Child		Marriage	
	M1		M2		M3	
	<i>b</i>	RSE	<i>b</i>	RSE	<i>b</i>	RSE
West German Fathers						
Childcare rate %	-0.007	0.016	0.011	0.016	0.012	0.016
Childcare rate 2 %	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.000	0.000
Father working	-0.074	0.095	0.057	0.105	-0.109	0.100
Mother PT employment	-0.041	0.039	-0.143**	0.046	-0.101*	0.041
Mother FT employment	-0.089	0.072	-0.123	0.077	-0.089	0.069
Constant	0.456	0.977	-0.503	0.936	0.820	0.822
Observations	3694		3684		3683	
p	0.001		0.002		0.000	
East German Fathers						
Childcare rate %	0.072	0.047	0.097	0.066	-0.020	0.040
Childcare rate 2 %	-0.001	0.001	-0.001	0.001	0.000	0.000
Father working	-0.057	0.108	-0.220*	0.095	0.026	0.097
Mother PT employment	-0.029	0.063	-0.053	0.061	-0.024	0.042
Mother FT employment	-0.080	0.057	-0.034	0.072	0.001	0.053
Constant	-3.203	2.095	-2.177	2.074	-0.694	1.539
Observations	2397		2389		2390	
p	0.000		0.000		0.000	

All models include controls on individual, household and regional level as well as period dummies.

+ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$



Summary

Increase in state-subsidized childcare places is overall positively associated with changes towards less traditional gender ideologies **(H 1)**.



Maternal labour market returns will partly mediate associations of childcare expansion with less traditional gender ideologies **(H 2)**.



The lower the pre-reform childcare provision, the more likely are (West German) mothers and fathers to show a more pronounced change in gender ideologies **(H 3)**.





- **Expansion of childcare is associated with change in parents' attitudes.**
 - West German mothers change to less traditional gender ideologies
 - all others: heterogeneous but statistically insignificant results
 - no moderating or mediating effect of maternal employment
- **Results point to the ...**
 - importance of **attitudinal change over life-course**
 - **relevance of information on family policy (use)**
 - (moderate) **relevance of institutional change, in particular childcare provision**, for short-term attitude change



Reverse causality

- Association between institutional change and attitudinal change difficult to disentangle

Measures

- Gender role attitudes
 - few traditionally slanted gender role attitude items instead of response-time based approaches or vignettes
 - measured only every other wave
- Childcare measure
 - Measure policy visibility: Information about policy change / norm setting effects
 - Childcare quality

Other

- Paradigm change includes parental leave reform as strong new “anchor”



Questions / Discussion

Thank You!



Contact

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