

## Traditional or egalitarian?

Parenthood, gender attitudes, and part-time work among Dutch men

Joëlle Schut (541334)

Erasmus University Rotterdam

MSc Sociology: Social Inequalities

Supervisor: dr. Gabriele Mari

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## **Abstract**

The Netherlands has been described as a part-time economy, but there are few men who choose to work part-time. A male breadwinner-model prevails, yet part-time work among men has become more common the past few decades. Previous research on part-time work has mainly focused on the implications it has for women and the legal status and quality of part-time jobs in the Netherlands. I used data from the 10<sup>th</sup> wave of the Longitudinal Internet Studies for the Social sciences (LISS) panel to investigate the difference in propensity to work part-time between fathers and childless men, and to examine whether gender attitudes affect working hours. Fathers were found to be more likely to work full-time than childless men. Also, results suggest that men's gender attitudes play no role in accounting for differences in working-time arrangements between men with and without children. Rather than gender attitudes, traditional gender specialization seemed to account for the longer working hours of fathers compared with childless men.

**Keywords:** part-time work, fathers, childless men, gender attitudes, traditional gender specialization

## 1. Introduction

The Netherlands entered the 21<sup>st</sup> century as a part-time economy, as Visser (2002) has phrased it. The Dutch, and especially Dutch women, have many times been called “champions of part-time work” in the media (Siermann, 2009; Trouw, 2019). While the Netherlands is characterized by a relatively high rate of labor market participation, it also has a low number of annual work hours, because of the high number of part-time workers (Wielers & Raven, 2013, p. 105). Part-time working has some major consequences. These are in general mainly discussed for women. Part-time work has increased women’s labor market participation, and in general, Dutch women are satisfied with their part-time jobs (Booth & Van Ours, 2013; Russo & Hassink, 2008). However, working part-time can lead to work and family conflicts, especially for women. Part-time work for women makes a combination of paid work and care possible, but it often leads to letting go of career ambitions (Wielers & Raven, 2013). Moreover, those who work part-time often receive lower wages than full-time workers, which results in a wage penalty for both men and women (Román, Fouarge & Luijkx, 2004).

While women still outnumber men among part-timers in the Netherlands, the share of men working part-time has been on the rise for many years. In 2003, 20.1% of all employed men in the Netherlands were employed part-time, a share that has risen to 27.7% as of 2019 (CBS, 2020). Little is known about this development, nor about the reasons behind the choice of men to reduce their working hours. In this thesis, I will therefore examine men’s decision to work part-time, focusing on if part-time work is more common when men have children and, if so, why. In particular, I am interested in examining the associations between fatherhood, part-time work, and men’s gender attitudes. This thesis will thus revolve around the following research questions:

1. Is there a difference in propensity to work part-time between men with children on the one hand, and men without children on the other hand?
2. To what extent is this difference due to gender attitudes and how do they differ between fathers and childless men?

My overarching interest is thus to examine whether fathers work part-time more often than men without children or not, focusing on the dimensions of parental status and gender ideology.

The Dutch government intends to improve gender equality in the Netherlands, and shifts away from the traditional part-time working model for women, aiming to make it easier to combine work and care for both men and women, as a means of improving women's position on the labour market and making them more financially independent (Rijksoverheid, n.d.). Apart from that, it is argued that part-time jobs for women maintain the unequal distribution between men and women, which is something the government wants to break through (Rijksoverheid, n.d.).

Studying men's working hours might provide us with explanations why the Dutch part-time model stays the way it is. Part-time work among men might have the potential to redress both gender inequalities on the labour market and at home. However, its development has to be approached carefully. The perspective of gender ideology will be taken into account as it can provide us with reasons that could shape men's decisions about their working hours. So far, research has shown that men often increase their working hours after transitioning to parenthood (Knoester & Eggebeen, 2006). A study by Kaufman and Uhlenberg (2000) showed that traditional fathers work almost 11 hours more per week than childless men with traditional attitudes, and that fathers with egalitarian attitudes work less than their traditional counterparts. For men with traditional attitudes, this association between work and gender attitudes is stronger than for men with egalitarian attitudes (Kaufman & Uhlenberg, 2000). It is important to address differences between men with traditional and egalitarian attitudes, as a new gap might emerge in the future, where the egalitarian men might hoard the more well-paid part-time jobs in the market, sharing chores equally at home, and where the traditional men might not have this option, maintaining gender disparities both at home and on the labour market.

## **2. Theoretical framework**

### *2.1 The perspective of the female part-time worker: a brief history of the Dutch part-time work context*

As mentioned in the introduction section, the Netherlands is a world leader in part-time work. This is an ongoing process in Dutch society. For a long time, female labour market participation was low and there was a conservative climate with regard to women's roles, leading to adopting the male breadwinner/female homemaker model. The labor market participation rates rose quickly from the 1980s onwards, driven by collective bargaining

agreements which led to the creation of part-time jobs to foster employment (Begall & Grunow, 2015). To this day, Dutch women tend to opt to work part-time in order to balance work and family life (Wielers & Raven, 2013). The share of part-time jobs is the highest in the world, and the quality of these jobs is generally good compared to other countries (Wielers & Raven, 2013). Part-time work is mostly voluntary in the Netherlands, which gives the country a special position within the European Union (Visser, Wilthagen, Beltzer & Koot-Van der Putte, 2004). Part-time workers in the Netherlands legally have the same status as full-time workers, and all workers have the right to adjust their working hours once every 2 years (Booth & Van Ours, 2013; Begall & Grunow, 2015).

What is mainly interesting about the Dutch part-time economy is that it is often framed as a trade-off between work and family for women. Working part-time as a woman is embedded in the Dutch culture, which is also reflected in job satisfaction. Booth and Van Ours' studied the relationship between part-time work and life satisfaction and showed that for women, life satisfaction is actually reduced if they work 40 or more hours and that the equilibrium number of weekly working hours is 21 for them (Booth & Van Ours, 2013, p. 279-280). To the best of my knowledge, it is not known what kind of effects working part-time has on Dutch men's well-being (cf. Booth & Van Ours, 2009).

It can therefore be concluded that the gendered division of working hours is deeply embedded in the Dutch culture. Part-time employment among men is less common and less well studied, though. Figure 1 shows the division of full-time and part-time work of the workforce in the Netherlands as of the fourth quarter of 2019. It can be seen that the share of men working part-time is much smaller than that of women. Men are in fact more likely to combine a part-time job with education, according to Plantenga (2002). This is in contrast to part-time working women, who often do this to combine work and family life. Seen from a family perspective, a study by Cousins and Tang (2004) showed that fathers were more likely than mothers to report conflicting pressures between work and family life. Overall, the lack of public support for care work forces parents to create a fitting solution to reconcile work and family (Cousins & Tang, 2004, p. 542). It results in part-time hours for mothers and full-time for fathers, which suggests a strong gender compromise (Cousins & Tang, 2004). Given this discussion of the Dutch context, in which mothers take on the role of the part-time worker, part-time carer, the first expectation of this thesis is that men with children will take on the role of the male-breadwinner and work full-time rather than part-time. Therefore, fathers in the Netherlands will be less likely to work part-time than men without children.

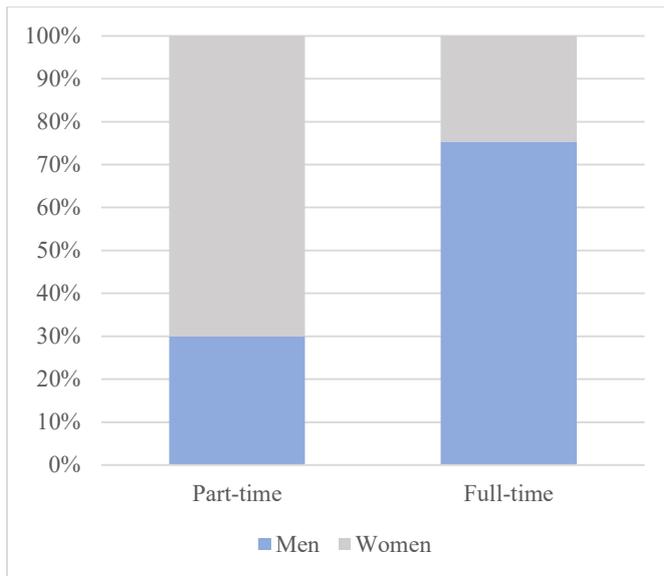


Figure 1. Men’s and women’s working hours in the Netherlands. Adapted from “Werkzame beroepsbevolking; arbeidsduur [active working force; working hours]” by Statistics Netherlands (CBS), 2020 (<https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/nl/dataset/82647NED/table?fromstatweb>).

So far, this section of the theoretical framework has focused on the macro-level country context of the Netherlands, which provides us with a first expectation about fathers working part-time or not. The next three sections will deal with the micro-level context, and will examine several individual- and couple-level dynamics that can provide further expectations for the working hours of men.

## 2.2 Gender specialization

The theory of gender specialization is about partners specializing in different tasks. It can provide an explanation for the question why men often select into work outside the home as breadwinners and women perform household tasks and take care of the children at home. Becker (1998) laid a foundation of the gender specialization theory with his book ‘A treatise on the family’. Becker (1998) posited that, in a multiperson household, the skills of the different household members will shape a structure of incentives informing optimal decisions for the family. Becker (1998, p. 33) came up with the following theorem on couples dividing their time spent on the market and household sectors:

If all members of an efficient household have different comparative advantages, no more than one member would allocate time to both the market and household sectors. Everyone with a greater comparative advantage in the market than this member's

would specialize completely in the market, and everyone with a greater comparative advantage in the household would specialize completely there.

Becker's theory deals with the perspective of opportunity costs. The basic idea of how gender specialization arises is that men and women are equally adept at learning to perform different tasks that are gendered in our modern society (Hadfield, 1999). However, all skills that complement each other require substantial human capital investments before an individual knows with whom they can combine these skills to come to an end product. Hadfield gives the example of baking bread: in that case, men will farm - to grow wheat - and women will use the wheat to do the baking. If one of them steps out of this gendered division, there is a risk of not finding the right partner to bake bread together. By specifying the gender division of labor, the likelihood that men and women fail to coordinate on their different tasks decreases (Baker and Jacobsen, 2007, p. 764). The male breadwinner model, whose persistence might be ascribed to traditional social policies in place in many countries, serves as a good example of gender specialization (Morgan, 2008). Considering men's advantages on the labour market, such as their higher earning potential relative to women, gender specialization predicts a traditional male breadwinner arrangement, and no other type of specialization such as a female breadwinner model. Further, becoming a parent is a major event in the life course of individuals that has an impact on the division of labor within couples and thus on gender specialization. Research has shown that once children are present, traditional gender specialization heightens within a couple regardless of partners' gender attitudes (Yavorsky, Kamp-Dush & Schoppe-Sullivan, 2015).

Gender specialization, at least in the Beckerian model, holds regardless of the gender attitudes that partners hold. It mostly tells us about the opportunity costs and the earning potentials of each partner, which lead to a certain division of work and care. Keeping the male-breadwinner model in mind, when having children, fathers will work full-time, not part-time, and mothers are more likely to stay at home to take care of the children or be employed, at best, part-time. Based on the insight from Yavorsky et al. (2015), that is, that specialization heightens when a couple makes the transition to parenthood - making it more likely for men to work longer hours once they have become fathers - it can then be expected that fathers are less likely to work part-time than childless men.

### *2.3 Doing gender: Traditionalism in the aftermath of the transition to parenthood*

As written in the previous section, gender specialization leads to men and women differentiating their tasks, which is expected to influence the working hours of fathers. However, this is seen from an opportunity cost perspective. It does not deal with the gender attitudes that partners hold and the influence this might have on their decision to work part-time or not. Therefore, in this section the perspective of “doing gender” is taken into account, which according to West and Zimmerman (1987, p. 137) “means creating differences between girls and boys and women and men, differences that are not natural, essential, or biological.” Couples may be “doing gender” by shifting towards more traditional views on gender roles and the gendered division of labour. In the case of parents, it may spur them to adopt behaviours coherent with such attitudes, leading, for example, men to invest (even more) in paid work.

Research has indeed shown that the transition to parenthood is associated with changes in individuals’ gender attitudes (Baxter, Buchler, Perales & Western, 2015; Perales, Jarallah & Baxter, 2018). This section will therefore examine gender-role attitudes, how these change in the transition to parenthood, and what implications this has for the working hours of fathers and childless men.

One general development of the past few decades is that gender-role attitudes for both men and women have become less traditional and more egalitarian (Katz-Wise, Priess & Hyde, 2010). However, the transition to parenthood is one major life course event that can bring changes to these attitudes. Corrigall and Konrad (2007) report that having a first child influences married couples’ attitudes: they embrace a traditional division of unpaid labor in the home more often than. Gender-role attitudes may affect the amount of time spent in paid and unpaid labour (Corrigall & Konrad, 2007). These gender attitudes affect how household labor and childcare responsibilities are organized within families, which then can influence ambitions and career pathways (Perales et al., 2018). Baxter et al. (2015) studied how parenthood changes attitudes to mothering and gender division of labour, and found that new parents start to show stronger support for a traditional division of labour in relation to the care of children. Also, they found that the attitude changes were more clear-cut for men than women, meaning that men become more traditional in the aftermath of the transition to parenthood than women (Baxter et al., 2015). According to Knoester and Eggebeen (2006),

fathers are more attached to the workforce than men without children, meaning that fathers are likely to have longer working hours than childless men.

To conclude this section: since there is an association between the transition to parenthood and showing more traditional attitudes, fathers are more likely to adopt the male-breadwinner role than childless men. Therefore, fathers will be less likely to work part-time than childless men, in part due to a shift in their attitudes towards heightened traditionalism and not just because of opportunity costs as predicted by gender specialization theory.

#### *2.4 The egalitarian father*

While the previous section focused on parents in general and fathers in particular becoming more traditional in the aftermath of the transition to parenthood, there is other literature that deals with the opposite expectation, namely that men who become fathers are actually more egalitarian than men without children to begin with. As Kaufman and Uhlenberg (2000) summarize it, there is a literature that discusses the “good-provider”, male-breadwinner role of men in families, and one literature that deals with the “new fatherhood”. The latter suggests that the transition to fatherhood is associated with a reduction in working hours (Kaufman & Uhlenberg, 2000). This section will focus on the latter perspective, linking more egalitarian gender attitudes of men to the reduction in their working hours.

Differently from studies reviewed in the previous section (e.g. Baxter et al., 2015; Corrigan & Konrad, 2007; Perales et al., 2018) that showed that men and women adopt more traditional attitudes in the aftermath of the transition to parenthood, there are some studies that show that there is no change or that show the opposite. Grinza, Devicienti, Rossi and Vannoni (2017) showed that men’s attitudes are left unaffected after the entry into parenthood, indicating that fathers do not adopt more traditional attitudes than before. Buchler, Perales, and Baxter (2017) demonstrated that attitudes to fatherhood change across the transition to parenthood, the shift being associated with more egalitarian attitudes. Kaufman and Bernhardt (2015) found that men with egalitarian attitudes are more likely to adjust their working hours after having children than their traditional counterparts, in order to be more involved at home. Koslowski (2011) examined the relationship between spending paternal time and the reduction of working hours, and found that a slight reduction of working hours was the case for those fathers who spend the highest level of paternal time, indicating that egalitarian attitudes are turned into egalitarian behaviour.

Even the stage prior to parenthood can play a role and tell us that fathers might hold more egalitarian attitudes than men without children. Selection is an important factor that might account for the differences in working hours and income between fathers and childless men. This means that the (economic) benefits that come with fatherhood are not directly associated with fatherhood itself, but with the favorable characteristics that give some men higher chances to become fathers than others (Dykstra & Keizer, 2009). It is possible that the factors that are associated with fathers' higher earnings are the same as those associated with the chances of becoming a father (Hodges & Budig, 2010). One finding of Hodges and Budig's (2010) study was that there is a somewhat higher chance for men to become fathers when they have higher human capital. According to Dykstra and Keizer (2009), having poor socio-economic prospects can be an indicator of not selecting into both romantic relationships and into fatherhood. Research has shown that men with high wages are more likely to get married, but apart from wages, other unobservable traits of these men might be at play as well (Ludwig & Brüderl, 2018). Ludwig and Brüderl (2018) termed the promising men hypothesis, which says that the wage growth potential of men can play a role in selection into marriage.

Trimarchi and Van Bavel (2017) found that educational attainment also has a positive effect on men's union formation. Highly educated men are more likely to hold egalitarian gender role attitudes, as mentioned before. Trimarchi and Van Bavel (2017) found that these highly educated men with more egalitarian attitudes are more likely to enter parenthood, as well as that they may be more prone to share the unpaid labour tasks with their partners. According to this line of reasoning, since fathers are believed to hold more gender egalitarian attitudes because of this selection effect prior to parenthood, they might continue to hold these egalitarian attitudes upon entering parenthood, and will then be more likely to reduce their working hours compared to men without children.

To conclude, contrary to previous expectations, there are reasons to believe either that the transition to parenthood makes men more egalitarian or that more egalitarian men are more likely to sort into fatherhood. Either way, fathers might be expected to reduce their working hours and work part-time more often than men without children, due to their heightened egalitarianism.

## 2.5 Hypotheses

Following the theoretical framework, the following hypotheses have been derived.

1. Given the peculiarities of the Dutch context, the general expectation is that fathers are less likely to work part-time than their childless counterpart
2. Because of gender specialization, fathers are less likely to work part-time than men without children and this holds regardless of gender attitudes
3. From a “doing gender” perspective, fathers will be less likely to work part-time than childless men, because of their heightened level of gender traditionalism
4. Alternatively, it could be that fathers are in fact *more* likely to work part-time than childless men. This will be in part due to the higher gender egalitarianism of fathers vis-à-vis childless men.

### **3. Methods and data**

#### 3.1 Data collection

This study is of quantitative nature. Data from the LISS panel was used to test the hypotheses. This online panel consists of around 4500 households, comprising roughly 7000 individuals. It is based on a true probability sample of households drawn from the population register by Statistics Netherlands (LISS, n.d.). The participants fill out questionnaires every month and are paid for every completed questionnaire. Panel members are all age 16 and over. Items from the following core studies were used: 5. Family and Household, 6. Work and Schooling, 8. Politics and Values. Data from wave 10 will be used for all core studies included. This is the most recent wave that includes all three core studies that will be considered for this thesis. Data for these core studies was collected between 01-05-2017 and 27-03-2018.

The analytical sample was determined based on several conditions. First, this thesis focuses on men and their working hours, so women were excluded. The 3516 female respondents and 840 missing values were dropped from the sample, with 2934 male respondents being left. For working hours, Statistics Netherlands used to handle both an international and a national definition of unemployment. The former only counted those who worked 0 hours per week as unemployed, whereas the latter defined unemployment as working less than 12 hours per week (CBS, 2015). From 2015 onward, only the international definition is used. However, for this thesis, the national definition of counting as a part-time worker when working between 12 and 35 hours per week is used, since workers are more likely to define working as their primary activity when they work 12 hours per week or more. This criterion was based on the variable that measures contract working hours. First of all, this variable contained 500 missing values. Additionally, only 1388 out of 2934 men reported to have paid work. 215 additional cases were lost applying the criterion for minimum working hours, ending up with 1173 cases in the analytical sample.

Furthermore, the thesis aims to examine the difference in propensity to work part-time. A distinction was made between students with a part-time job and those not studying. One item in the core study Work and Schooling asked about whether the individual is a student. Since there are reasons to believe that students work part-time to combine work with education, and since it is not the aim of this thesis to examine the incentives to combine work and education, students were excluded from the sample. After removing working students, 1168 respondents

were left in the sample. In terms of working hours, outliers were inspected, and one particular outlier which was a respondent reporting to work 84 hours per week was removed. The last criterion for the sample was age. If individuals continue to work after retirement, there is a chance that they simultaneously cut their working hours. Therefore, only those individuals aged 16-65 were considered. Applying this criterion to the analytical sample led to dropping 30 cases, the sample consisting of 1138 men.

Finally, listwise deletion was performed on all the variables that are included in this study, leading to a total of 1,005 observations.

### 3.2 Measures

#### *Dependent variable*

Since this thesis aims to examine the difference in propensity to work part-time between fathers and childless men, the dependent variable focuses on working hours. Item cw126 from the core study Work and Schooling was used. *How many hours per week are (were) you employed in your (last) job, according to your employment contract?* As has been discussed previously in the data collection section, the definition of working part-time is handled according to the former definition of CBS, namely working 12-35 hours per week. All cases working less than 12 hours per week were excluded, as well as some outliers in the top. In the analyses, both a continuous and a binary dependent variable was used. The continuous outcome counts men's working hours in their current job. For the binary variable, all men working 12 to 35 hours a week were coded 0 (part-time), and all other men working 36 hours or more were coded 1 (full-time).

#### *Independent variables*

##### *Background variables*

First, item cf17j454 from the core study Family and Household was used, which asks about whether the respondent has ever had any children at the time of filling out the survey. This item was recoded as a dummy variable, where 0 is the reference category indicating that a man has no children and 1 indicating that a man has children. There is a possibility that there is some heterogeneity within this variable. Therefore, item cw17j439 was used, asking whether the respondent has children younger than 8. Together with the previously mentioned

variable asking about parental status, a new categorical variable was constructed with the following three categories: 1. Men with children under 8 years, 2. Men with children age 8 or older, 3. Childless man.

Furthermore, item cf17j003, measuring the respondent's gender, was used to exclude all women from the sample.

#### *Gender ideology: egalitarian attitudes*

Since there is the expectation that attitudes shape men's decisions about working hours, items from the core study 8. Politics and Values will be used to measure men's gender attitudes. Questions cv151-cv154 ask respondents about their gender attitudes. The question is as follows: *The following statements are on marriage, the duties of husbands and wives, and about rearing boys and girls. Please read each statement and indicate to what extent you agree or disagree.*

The statements are:

- A woman is more suited to rearing young children than a man
- It is actually less important for a girl than for a boy to get a good education
- Generally speaking, boys can be reared more liberally than girls
- It is unnatural for women in firms to have control over men

All four statements had the same answer options: 1. Fully disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neither agree nor disagree, 4. Agree, 5. Fully agree. Those who disagree with the statements can be considered more egalitarian, those who agree therefore hold more traditional attitudes. Higher values thus signify higher traditionalism.

A Cronbach's alpha test was performed to check the internal reliability of the scale. The Cronbach's alpha turned out to be 0.69. The four variables were then recoded as a single scale variable. The scale was constructed by calculating the mean score of these four variables. The scale was recoded to be operationalized as a scale of egalitarianism, where a score of 1 stands for a man with the most traditional attitudes and a score of 5 for a men with the most egalitarian attitudes. Also, I explored an alternative coding for this egalitarianism measure. This was done with reference to the median value of the scale, creating a dummy variable where all men with egalitarian attitudes (higher than the median) were coded 1 and all other men (lower than the median) coded 0.

### *Control variables*

The control variables are education and age.

Relating to the theoretical framework, it seemed that educational attainment can play a role in shaping the egalitarian attitudes of men. Therefore, I will adjust for level of educational attainment. Item cw17j005 was used, measuring the respondents' highest level of education with diploma. Since there were many possible answer options, this variable was recoded for the sake of interpretation. The variable was recoded containing the following categories: 1. Primary school level, 2. Lower secondary, 3. Higher secondary, 4. Lower tertiary, 5. Higher tertiary.

**Table 1**

### *Descriptive statistics*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Operationalisation</b>	<b>Mean/Proportion</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>
Working hours (binary)	{1 = $\geq$ 36 hours, 0 = 12-35 hours}	0.818	
Working hours (continuous)	continuous (range = 12-60)	37.0	5.220
Parental status	{1 = father, 0 = childless man}	0.683	
Parental status by age of child	{0 = childless, 1 = father with children < 8, 2 = father with children $\geq$ 8}	1.022	
Egalitarianism (scale)	continuous (range = 1-5)	4.023	0.688
Egalitarianism (binary)	{1 = egalitarian, 0 = not egalitarian}	0.457	
Primary	{1 = primary school education or less, 0 = other}	0.017	
Lower secondary	{1 = lower secondary education, 0 = other}	0.198	
Lower tertiary	{1 = lower tertiary education, 0 = other}	0.312	
Higher tertiary	{1 = higher tertiary education, 0 = other}	0.152	
Age	continuous (range = 16-65)	46.9	11.452

Age of the respondent can play a role also. As men with children get older, it is less likely that their children are young and in need of intensive daily care. It could be possible that having adult children decreases the need for a male-breadwinner in the family, and that men

therefore can reduce their working hours as they get older themselves. Therefore, the age range was limited to 16-65 years, using item cf17j004, which measures the respondents' age.

Descriptive statistics for all variables used in this study are shown in table 1. What is worth to point out about the analytical sample, is that around 82% of the men work full-time, and the average working hours is at 37 hours per week. Also, 68% of the men have a child.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the men included in the sample score relatively high on egalitarianism on average, with an average score of 4.023.

### 3.3 Analysis methods

To analyze the data, I used linear regression models. Multiple linear regression was used to test the relationship between working hours as a continuous variable and the independent variables. The procedure for the multiple linear regression was as follows. Working hours as a continuous variable was entered as a dependent variable. The first step was to enter the independent variable parental status, while adjusting for education and age. Then, the scale of egalitarianism was included, to check whether it had a direct effect on the working hours of men, and to check for any influences of gender attitudes on the coefficient of parental status. Thereafter, the parental status variable was removed from the model and replaced by the dummy variables for parental status by age of child, to investigate any heterogeneity in the parental status variable. It could be, namely, that having a younger child that needs more care has a different effect on working hours than having an older child that is more independent. In this model, the variables of education and age were added also. Finally, the scale of egalitarianism was entered again. The steps described above were repeated, but then using the binary variable for egalitarianism. By making use of the continuous egalitarianism variable, I assumed that there is a linear relationship between working hours and the score on the scale of egalitarianism, i.e. the working hours increase by a constant factor as egalitarianism increases. However, especially in the case of the models where working hours as a binary variable is used, it could be that for certain values of egalitarianism the propensity to work part-time is pretty stable, but that it jumps out at some point.

Besides the multiple regression analysis, I made use of a linear probability model. A linear probability model is a linear regression model for which a dichotomous dependent variable is used rather than a continuous dependent variable. In this model, the working hours variable was entered as a binary dependent variable, to calculate the probability of falling into the

part-time or full-time work category. Again, the same steps were taken as described above: first entering the parental status and adjusting for education and age, then adding the scale of egalitarianism, replacing the parental status variable with the parental status dummy variables by age of child, adding the scale of egalitarianism, and repeating these steps, but then using the binary egalitarianism variable rather than the scale.

In sum, four models were built. One model in which working-time arrangement (part-time/full-time status) as a binary variable was entered and the scale of egalitarianism was used. A second model, in which working hours as a continuous variable was entered and the scale of egalitarianism was used. A third model, in which working-time arrangement (part-time/full-time status) as a binary variable was entered again, this time replacing the scale of egalitarianism with the binary egalitarianism variable. Finally, a fourth model was built, in which the continuous working hours variable was entered again, and the binary egalitarianism variable was used.

### 3.4 Results

Before reporting the results from the regression analyses, I will present descriptive statistics of some of the main variables used in this study.

**Table 2**

*Parental Status by part-time/full-time status (%)*

Parental status	Part-time/full-time status		Total
	Part-time (12-35 hours)	Full-time (36+ hours)	
Childless	67 (21.0)	252 (79.0)	319 (100)
Father	116 (16.9)	570 (83.1)	686 (100)
Total	183 (18.2)	822 (81.8)	1005 (100)

Table 2 reports the results from the crosstabulation parental status by part-time/full-time status. Overall, around 82% of all men in the sample work full-time, versus 18% working part-time. There is a difference in propensity to work part-time by parental status. 21% of the childless men work part-time, versus about 17% of the fathers, giving a 4 percentage points difference.

Table 3 reports the results for working hours by parental status. It seems that fathers, on average, work 0.5 hour more per week compared to childless men. Table 4 shows the mean

scores on the scale of egalitarianism by parental status. Both fathers and childless men score 4.0 on average.

**Table 3**

*Average working hours for childless men and fathers*

Parental status	<i>n</i>	Working hours	
		Mean	Std. deviation
Childless	319	36.7	5.3
Father	686	37.2	5.2
Total	1005	37.0	5.2

**Table 4**

*Fathers' and childless men's average score on the scale of egalitarianism*

Parental status	<i>n</i>	Scale of egalitarianism	
		Mean	Std. deviation
Childless	319	4.0	0.7
Father	686	4.0	0.7
Total	1005	4.0	0.7

### **Investigating the propensity to work full-time/part-time**

This first multiple linear regression analysis was conducted using a binary dependent variable for men's full-time/part-time status. Table 5 summarizes the results of this first multiple regression analysis.

In the first model, besides the first independent variable - parental status -, level of educational attainment and age were included. The beta coefficient of parental status was found to be 0.072, indicating that fathers are 7.2 percentage points more likely to work full-time than childless men, controlling for education and age. This finding was statistically significant at the .01 level. In the second model, the scale of egalitarianism was added to see if egalitarian attitudes explain part of the association between parental status and full-

time/part-time status. The beta for parental status remained the same in model 2, indicating that egalitarian attitudes have no effect on this. The coefficient of egalitarianism has a small magnitude, indicating that it does not have a considerable effect on the propensity to work full-time (at least net of differences by parental status, education, and age), and also, it was not statistically significant at conventional levels, with a p-value of 0.293.

**Table 5**

*Multiple regression results for the propensity to work full-time v. part-time. Linear probability models (N = 1005)*

Variable	Model 1 Beta (SE)	Model 2 Beta (SE)	Model 3 Beta (SE)	Model 4 Beta (SE)	Model 5 Beta (SE)	Model 6 Beta (SE)
Parental status	0.072** (0.028)	0.072* (0.028)	0.072* (0.028)			
Parental status by age of children (ref. childless men)						
Father with children younger than 8				0.051 (0.035)	0.050 (0.035)	0.049 (0.035)
Father with children aged 8 or older				0.116*** (0.030)	0.116*** (0.030)	0.116*** (0.030)
Educational level (ref. higher secondary)						
Primary	-0.154 (0.096)	-0.165 (0.096)	-0.163 (0.096)	-0.153 (0.095)	-0.164 (0.035)	-0.162 (0.096)
Lower secondary	0.000 (0.035)	-0.003 (0.035)	-0.004 (0.035)	-0.010 (0.030)	0.000 (0.035)	-0.001 (0.035)
Lower tertiary	-0.010 (0.030)	-0.007 (0.031)	-0.063 (0.038)	-0.063 (0.038)	-0.006 (0.030)	-0.007 (0.030)
Higher tertiary	-0.068 (0.038)	-0.063 (0.038)	-0.063 (0.038)	-0.063 (0.038)	-0.058 (0.038)	-0.058 (0.038)
Age	-0.004*** (0.001)	-0.004*** (0.001)	-0.004*** (0.001)	-0.006*** (0.001)	-0.005*** (0.001)	-0.005*** (0.001)
Scale of egalitarianism		-0.019 (0.018)			-0.021 (0.018)	
Egalitarianism dummy			-0.025 (0.025)			-0.028 (0.025)

\* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01 \*\*\* p<0.001

In model 3, the scale of egalitarianism variable was replaced by the egalitarianism dummy, which again made no difference for the coefficient of parental status. Including the dummy did not lead to significant results either. In models 4, 5 and 6, the parental status variable was replaced by dummy variables that indicate whether a man has children younger than 8, or aged 8 and older. The reference category was childless men. This was done to check for any

heterogeneity within the group of men with children, because the age of the children might have some additional effect on fathers' working hours. No significant difference between the working hours of fathers to children under 8 and childless men was found. Fathers of children aged 8 and older, however, were found to be 11.6 percentage points more likely to work full-time than childless men. In the fifth model, the scale of egalitarianism was included again. This led to no significant changes in the coefficients of the parental status dummies. The scale of egalitarianism was again replaced with the egalitarianism dummy in model 6, which did not seem to have any different effects on the coefficients.

### Investigating working hours

**Table 6**

*Multiple regression results for working hours as a continuous variable (N = 1005)*

Variable	Model 1 Beta (SE)	Model 2 Beta (SE)	Model 3 Beta (SE)	Model 4 Beta (SE)	Model 5 Beta (SE)	Model 6 Beta (SE)
Parental status	1.080** (0.371)	1.074** (0.371)	1.073** (0.371)			
Parental status by age of children						
Father with children younger than 8				0.667 (0.469)	0.655 (0.469)	0.649 (0.469)
Father with children aged 8 or older				1.543*** (0.402)	1.548*** (0.403)	1.549*** (0.403)
Educational level						
Primary	-3.148* (1.284)	-3.240* (1.291)	-3.242* (1.289)	-3.159* (1.278)	-3.263** (1.285)	-3.261* (1.283)
Lower secondary	-0.330 (0.469)	-0.361 (0.472)	-0.372 (0.472)	-0.292 (0.469)	-0.328 (0.471)	-0.339 (0.471)
Lower tertiary	-0.631 (0.408)	-0.603 (0.410)	-0.604 (0.409)	-0.616 (0.407)	-0.583 (0.409)	-0.585 (0.408)
Higher tertiary	-1.212* (0.506)	-1.170* (0.510)	-0.063* (0.038)	-1.157* (0.506)	-1.108* (0.509)	-1.101* (0.509)
Age	-0.079*** (0.015)	-0.078*** (0.016)	-0.078*** (0.015)	-0.092*** (0.017)	-0.091*** (0.017)	-0.091*** (0.017)
Scale of egalitarianism		-0.166 (0.243)			-0.193 (0.242)	
Dummy of egalitarianism			-0.277 (0.334)			-0.314 (0.333)

\* p<.05, \*\* p<.01 \*\*\* p<.001

Table 6 summarizes the results from the second multiple regression analysis, where, rather than using the binary variable for part-time/full-time, the continuous working hours variable was entered as a dependent variable. Starting with Model 1, the coefficient for parental status, controlling for age and education, was 1.080. This indicates that men with children on average work about 1 hour more per week than their childless counterparts.

In the second model, the scale of egalitarianism was added, which barely had any effect on the coefficient of parental status. The parental status coefficient remained statistically significant and similar in size. In the third model, the scale of egalitarianism was replaced by the egalitarianism dummy, leading to similar results on the coefficients as did the scale variable. In models 4, 5 and 6, the parental status variable was replaced again by the dummies, considering heterogeneity by age of the youngest child. Just like in the first model using working hours as a binary variable, the coefficient for fathers with children younger than 8 was not significant, with a p-value of 0.155. However, the coefficient for fathers with children aged 8 or older was, with a beta of 1.543, indicating that, compared to childless men, these fathers work about 1.5 hours more than childless men. In the fifth model, the scale of egalitarianism was added again. Just like in the second model, its coefficient is negative, indicating that the stronger the egalitarian attitudes of men are, the more they decrease their working hours. This finding is not statistically significant with a p-value of 0.426. For fathers to children younger than 8, it seemed that egalitarian attitudes slightly decreased their working hours, but this was not significant with a p-value of 0.163. Adding the scale of egalitarianism hardly led to any changes in the parental status coefficient. This was the same case for the egalitarianism dummy, which replaced the scale of egalitarianism in model 6. Again, the measures of egalitarianism had no significant effect on working hours.

## **Discussion and conclusion**

Against the background of the Dutch “part-time model”, this study firstly aimed at investigating whether there is a difference in propensity to work part-time between men with children on the one hand, and men without children on the other hand. Secondly, the study aimed to investigate to what extent this difference is due to gender attitudes and how these differ between fathers and childless men. To answer these questions, four hypotheses were set up, which were tested by using a linear probability model and multiple linear regression

models on the 10<sup>th</sup> wave of the LISS panel. It was theorized that men with children would be more likely to work full-time than childless men. The results show indeed that this is the case. Fathers work significantly more often full-time than childless men. Therefore, hypothesis 1, *Given the peculiarities of the Dutch context, the general expectation is that fathers are less likely to work part-time than their childless counterpart*, cannot be rejected.

In the theoretical section, it was theorized that gender specialization is one of the mechanisms behind men's working-time arrangements. The results point towards the direction of traditional gender specialization. Fathers were found to be more likely to work full-time than childless men. This connects to the rationale that gender specialization within couples heightens once children are present (Yavorsky et al., 2015). Gender attitudes did not seem to have an effect on the working hours. Fathers - just like childless men - had rather high scores on the scale of gender egalitarianism as table 4 shows, yet gender egalitarianism was not found to be a significant predictor in any of the models. This confirms that egalitarian attitudes are not at play and do not have an effect on working hours, but traditional gender specialization does. Therefore, hypothesis 2, *Because of gender specialization, fathers are less likely to work part-time than men without children and this holds regardless of gender attitudes* cannot be rejected.

Hypothesis 3, *From a "doing gender" perspective, fathers will be less likely to work part-time than childless men, because of their heightened level of gender traditionalism*, brought together the concepts of gender specialization and (traditional) gender attitudes. The direct link of transition to parenthood and changes in gender attitudes was not examined in this study, which is a limitation of this study. However, something can be said about the gender attitudes of the men in the sample. As mentioned before in the results section, table 4 shows that all men in the sample had a relatively high score on the scale of egalitarianism. The fathers in the analytical sample do not differ in their gender attitudes from childless men. The regression analyses showed that fathers were indeed less likely to work part-time than childless men, although gender attitudes did not seem to fuel the mechanism behind this finding. Therefore, hypothesis 3 can be rejected.

Finally, hypothesis 4, *Alternatively, it could be that fathers are in fact more likely to work part-time than childless men. This will be in part due to higher gender egalitarianism of fathers vis-à-vis childless men*, pointed towards the heightened level of gender egalitarianism of fathers. Again, a difference in egalitarian attitudes was not found between fathers and

childless men. However, the control variable education revealed some patterns. In two of the models, it was found that men with higher tertiary education work less hours compared to the men in the reference group, which was higher secondary education. It is known that there is a link between higher education and more egalitarian attitudes (e.g. Chatard & Selimbegovic, 2007). Comparing means for each category of the education variable showed that men with higher tertiary level of education have the highest score on the scale of egalitarianism, with a mean score of 4.208 (N=153). However, breaking this down to differences by parental status, it is actually the childless men with higher tertiary education in the sample who have a higher score on the scale of egalitarianism than fathers. First of all, fathers are not more likely to work part-time than childless men, and their levels of gender egalitarianism do not point towards the direction of reducing working hours compared to childless men either. Therefore, hypothesis 4 has to be rejected.

This study aimed to examine the associations between fatherhood, part-time work, and men's gender attitudes. The main proposed contributions of the study were on the one hand to provide answers to the question whether it is men with or without children who work part-time more often or not, and whether gender attitudes are an underlying mechanism for this. The results showed that men without children were found to be more likely to work part-time than fathers. Also, it seemed that gender attitudes did not account for the propensity to work part-time. Rather, traditional gender specialization was found to be the mechanism that accounts for differences in working hours by parental status. Furthermore, the finding that fathers of children aged 8 or older are more likely to work full-time than childless men might also tell us something about the transition to parenthood and its influence on the working hours of men. No evidence was found of differences in working hours between fathers with children younger than 8 and fathers with children aged 8 or older. In future research, this could be assessed using a longitudinal study design. Also, it would be desirable to study fathers and the age of their children in a more defined way than what has been examined in this study, especially in proximity to the transition to parenthood.

Keeping in mind that childless men and fathers had the same, rather high, scores on the scale of egalitarianism, showing egalitarian attitudes does seem to lead to a more egalitarian society. However, one limitation of this study might be the measurement of gender attitudes. Including the scale of egalitarianism did not lead to significant findings in this study. It is possible that the value of the Cronbach's alpha is perhaps less than satisfactory. The consequence could be that, using this measurement, one cannot tap the right dimensions with

the items used to construct the scale of egalitarianism. Making use of variables from the European Values Study could provide an alternative measurement of gender attitudes. For instance, variable 74 from Survey 2017 could be used, *All in all, family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job*, or variable 75, *A man's job is to earn money; a woman's job is to look after the home and children*. Such variables could be used to construct an alternative scale of egalitarianism in a future study.

What can be concluded is that, despite efforts from the Dutch government to improve gender equality, a male breadwinner model still prevails in the Netherlands. Especially for fathers, the traditional gender specialization was found, considering their longer working hours compared to childless men. This indicates that, if the Dutch government really wants to bring change within the field of gender equality, it is important to focus on work-family policies. While longer and paid parental leaves can lead to the creation of a dual earner/dual carer model in which work and care is shared equally between partners as is the case in the Nordic countries, other work-family policies such as subsidized childcare and in-work benefits are more effective in reducing gender disparities (Eydal & Rostgaard, 2011; Olivetti & Petrongolo, 2017). These policies have a chance of altering the incentives to divide the labor more equally in the Netherlands.

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