

Unveiling the gendered challenges of balancing reproductive and paid labour during the COVID-19 pandemic in academia

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List of Abbreviations

Male Full Professor 1	MFP1
Male Full Professor 2	MFP2
Male Full Professor 3	MFP3
Female Full Professor 1	FFP1
Male Associate Professor 1	MAscP1
Female Associate Professor 1	FAscP1
Male Assistant Professor 1	MAP1
Male Assistant Professor 2	MAP2
Female Assistant Professor 1	FAP1
Female Assistant Professor 2	FAP2
Female Assistant Professor 3	FAP3
Female Assistant Professor 4	FAP4
Female Assistant Professor 5	FAP5
Female Assistant Professor 6	FAP6
Female Assistant Professor 7	FAP7

Abstract

This thesis investigates the role of the COVID-19 pandemic on the gendered balance of paid and reproductive labour in academia. For this reason, data was collected through semi-structured interviews with female and male academics from the Erasmus School of Social and Behavioural Sciences (ESSB) from the Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Due to the gendered nature of this research, the focus of the interviews was set on the distinctive experiences of men and women working in academia during the pandemic. However, this question cannot solely be answered on the basis of gender. Moreover, factors emerging from the academic work infrastructure and arrangements within households have been observed to impact the possibility of balancing reproductive and paid work throughout the pandemic. As a result, a combination of the flexible academic work environment as well as the division of reproductive labour among the couple, have been found to collectively determine the balance of paid and reproductive labour during the COVID-19 pandemic. This advantage allowed male academics, as well as academics compared to their non-academic partners with more rigid work conditions to participate in reproductive labour duties. Consequently, the flexible academic setting countered the generally prevalent gender inequality in the division of reproductive labour. Nevertheless, gender still plays a crucial role as it impacts these variables emerging from the academic work infrastructure and arrangements within households, and thus the reconciliation of reproductive and paid labour during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: balance of reproductive and paid labour, COVID-19 pandemic, division of reproductive labour, gender inequality in academia

Introduction

Even though gender disparities in reproductive labour have decreased in the past decades, they still prevail to a significant extent, with women bearing a greater burden of these tasks (Alonso et al., 2019). This can be attributed to changes in time allocation within couples, accompanied by an increased female labour force participation and men taking over a greater share of this work (Alonso et al., 2019). However, gendered differences exist within the division of reproductive labour, meaning that women and men are responsible for different duties. Women carry out traditionally female tasks (Bianchi et al., 2000), such as daily routine chores and child-related decision-making (Forste & Fox, 2012). Conversely, men are involved in irregular household maintenance (Hochschild, 1989) or 'playful tasks' regarding childcare (Forste & Fox, 2012). A variety of theories explain the gender imbalance of reproductive labour. In the theoretical framework, time availability, relative resources, and gender perspectives, which dominate literature in the field of household labour (Bianchi et al., 2000), will be outlined. These perspectives are utilised as an application of the general theories discussed for this research. Nevertheless, several scholars have demonstrated that housework needs to be observed within the specific context (Batalova & Cohen, 2002; Baxter, 1997; Bittman et al., 2003). Fundamental cross-country differences regarding the division of reproductive labour between men and women are prevalent (Alonso et al., 2019; OECD, 2017).

In addition to the already existing challenges, women are one of the societal groups that are most subjected to the economic and social impacts that emerged through regulations during the COVID-19 pandemic (Mascherini & Nivakoski, 2021). The counteractive measures of the pandemic impacted women to greater extent than men from an employment standpoint, for instance through a reduction of working hours and 'home-office' arrangements (Brodeur et al., 2020; Coibion et al., 2020). But also from a childcare perspective: 'home-schooling', additional childcare, and social distancing hit fathers and mothers unequally (United Nations, 2020). In order to accept the further childcare responsibilities due to closures of care facilities, women reduce paid work hours or resign from their jobs (Blaskó et al., 2020; EIGE, 2020). As a consequence, the pandemic might contribute to an enhancement of gender inequalities in reproductive labour (Blaskó et al., 2020), a reinforcement of traditional gender roles, and disruption of the thus far accomplished moderate advancement (EIGE, 2020).

However, not only is the COVID-19 pandemic gendered, but also are certain working environments. Despite an increasing proportion of women in academia in the last few years, gender inequality is still predominant in academia, with women constituting a smaller share compared to male academics (European Commission, 2012).

A great variety of factors explain the gender segregation in science (European Commission, 2012), which originates from the same grounds as gender segregation in the labour market. These factors include gender stereotypes, choice of study field, gender division of labour and time constraints, as well as hidden barriers and biases in organisational practices (Verashchagina & Bettio, 2009). However, due to the thesis' focus on reproductive labour, the aspect of children and family and its relation to academia will be more relevant for this research.

Gender differences in academic career paths are closely connected to the different timing of events, prioritization of roles, and social relations across life courses among men and women (European Commission, 2012). One important aspect are characteristics of the 'ideal academic', who is considered "highly productive, career-oriented, mobile, and free from primary hands-on care responsibilities" (Ivancheva et al., 2019, p. 6). Additionally, "the classic profile of an academic career is cut to the profile of the traditional man with his traditional wife" (Hochschild, 1994, p. 126), emphasizing that the academic career is based on the traditional life path of men. Therefore, care work clashes with the academic ideal of unrestrained dedication to science complicating the reconciliation of professional and personal realms for academics. However, since women are primarily responsible for reproductive labour this conflict impacts women to a greater degree than men (European Commission, 2012).

In this context, tensions between family and career at the beginning of the career path determine the low proportion of women in academia (European Commission, 2012). These tensions are based on high workloads and expectations, which enhance difficulties in combining work and private life (Bozzon et al., 2019). These circumstances often occur simultaneously as family planning (Nikunen, 2012; Ward & Wolf, 2004), and thus negatively influence women, leading to barriers in career advancement (Blackwell & Glover, 2008a; Bozzon et al., 2019), such as access to full-time positions, higher ranks, specific scientific fields as well as salaries (Goastellec & Pekari, 2013). Moreover, a gender gap in scientific publications exists, since women generally publish less than their male counterparts (Bozzon et al., 2019). Additional care responsibilities for female academics might lead to a reduction of time allocated to research and therewith cause further restraints on their publication productivity (Hunter & Leahey, 2010; Jolly et al., 2014). In this context, research productivity of academics with children is considerably influenced by the number and age of children (Kasymova et al., 2021). For this reason, children are still considered an impediment for women in attaining a certain stable academic status (Bozzon et al., 2019), which will be discussed in greater detail in the theoretical framework.

Considering the aforementioned factors, this thesis focuses on the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic and its relationship to the reconciliation of reproductive and paid labour for female and male academics. Thus, the following research question guides the research: “*What role did the COVID-19 pandemic play in the gendered balance of reproductive and paid labour in academia?*” This question consists of two sub-questions dealing with two crucial aspects of the pandemic: the gendered academic field at universities as well as the gendered division of household labour and childcare during the pandemic. The balance of these two conditions will be discussed as they meaningfully impact each other.

This thesis aims to contribute to research on reproductive labour in academia in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to that, this study is of relevance in terms of the learning effects that can be extracted from the crisis in the context of gender inequality in academia. Furthermore, insights into the university playing a crucial role in mitigating the negative impact of the pandemic on female academics can be acquired. Additionally, this research would emphasize the necessity of valuing female reproductive labour. Lastly, it would be important to find out if the pandemic has led to a reinforcement of traditional gender norms and roles.

Theoretical Framework

In order to answer the research question, feminist and reproductive labour theories as well as research on gender inequality in academia are of help. Firstly, feminist perspectives on gender are useful to understand different gender roles and their societal ramifications. Subsequently, theories on reproductive labour provide explanations for an unequal division of household labour and childcare. Finally, research on gender inequality in academia puts this study into context. These aspects lay the theoretical foundation for understanding gendered difficulties in balancing paid and reproductive work in academia during the pandemic.

Feminist theories

As not all individuals self-identify themselves with their sex assigned at birth, this thesis focuses on those academics that define themselves as male or female. For this reason, feminist theories introduce the notion of 'gender', one of the research's fundamental concepts. A discussion of 'gender' and the attributed gender roles guides the further analysis of men's and women's positions in the household and in the labour market.

Among feminist theorists, gender is analysed within social and gender relations (Flax, 1987). It is considered a relational social process, which forms two types of people, men and

women. Additionally, gender relations are relations of domination, dominated by men. Through them, different characteristics and capacities are ascribed to human beings. The meanings of these features differ depending on the specific culture, age, class, race, and time (Flax, 1987). Moreover, gender defines social relations between men and women, neglecting biological explanations for disparities between them. In fact, it indicates socially created ideas about appropriate roles for men and women highlighting the social roots of female and male identities (Scott, 1986). Following this definition, gender is a “social category imposed on a sexed body” (Scott, 1986, p. 1056). Furthermore, to emphasize gender as a social relation, Judith Butler’s (1988) notion of ‘doing gender’ and gender performativity, meaning that the body will become its gender as a result of acts, will be applied in this research. Consequently, gender is not a fixed identity but rather is established through a continuous repetition of acts.

Nonetheless, it is important to note that this gender-binary conception of female and male identities is culturally specific as it is a western view (Vincent & Manzano, 2017). A variety of non-Western social systems contain articulations of gender that go beyond this binary notion of female and male. As a result, these fixed definitions of gender cannot be applied to every cultural context (Vincent & Manzano, 2017). Therefore, in the gender discourse, theoretical approaches analysing gendered identities that fall outside these rigid binary gender systems need to be taken into account (Vincent & Manzano, 2017). Since this research focuses on gendered experiences of female and male academics, which are likely to differ based on gender roles attributed to men and women, a binary understanding of ‘gender’ will be used. As already stated, the concept of gender influences the field of household labour, which can be studied through gender perspectives.

Gender perspective

The gender perspective combined with feminist theories is expected to explain women’s responsibility for reproductive labour during the crisis. In line with specific gender roles for men and women, this perspective supports the assumption that housework was formerly constructed as ‘women’s work’ (Coltrane, 2000). This means that through socialization men and women learn to adhere to socially constructed gender roles. For this reason, household labour is divided in compliance with these gender roles (Coverman, 1985; Fuwa, 2004). Another aspect of this view emphasizes the symbolic enactment of gender relations through reproductive labour. Therefore, gender relations within the household can be defined and expressed through the performance of household labour by women and men (Robinson & Milkie, 1998; South & Spitze, 1994; West & Zimmermann, 1987). The fact that care work is gendered has crucial implications on the time women dedicate to reproductive labour, which

affects their labour force participation (OECD, 2014). The relational nature of gender demonstrates that gender needs to be studied within the context of its social setting. This offers explanations for the relation between the social environment, academia, and the specific meaning of gender. All these variables are assumed to collectively have an impact on the distribution of paid and reproductive work in academia, and hence the balance of these two types of labour during the pandemic.

Reproductive labour theories

Following feminist perspectives on gender roles and their meaning for reproductive labour, reproductive labour and its relation to the capitalist system is elaborated. These theories are not a distinct body of literature from Feminist theories, but rather a specification of a particular focus within feminist research.

Federici (2014) understands reproductive work as “the complex of activities, relations, and institutions that in capitalism produce and reproduce labour-power that is people's capacity to work” (Carlin & Federici, 2014, p. 4). These activities contain domestic work and child-rearing. Reproductive work has a double character. It can be seen as reproduction of the individual as well as reproduction of labour-power, meaning the production of workers (Carlin & Federici, 2014). Hence, domestic/family/sexual relations are ‘relations of production’, that are created by the capitalist production (Carlin & Federici, 2014).

Based on Arruzza, Bhattacharya and Fraser (2018), gender oppression and sexism are deeply embedded into the social structures of capitalist societies. In the capitalist system, the making of people is separated from the making of profit, where women are responsible for the first task, which is claimed to be inferior to the second one. Even though the reproduction of the working class is crucial for sustaining capitalist production, capitalist societies neglect the importance of social reproduction as it is simply considered a mean of making profit. Since this type of work remains unwaged and therefore devalued, the people carrying it out are put into a subordinate position compared to the capital owners and waged workers. As social reproduction is primarily performed by women, it is in contemporary societies gendered and ascribed to women. Therefore, the capitalist organization relies on gender roles and engrains gender oppression (Arruzza et al., 2018).

According to Federici (1975), housework constitutes one of the biggest forms of manipulation and violence against any working class through capitalism. Household labour was imposed on women and therewith attributed to the female character. Hence, it is seen as a natural feature of the female physique and personality, as well as an internal need and

aspiration. Consequently, housework was regarded as a natural female characteristic rather than employment, as it was destined to be unwaged. This results in the burdensome and invisible character of this work.

These theories provide an understanding of the possible unequal distribution of reproductive labour between female and male academics by taking into account the backgrounds of the gendered division of reproductive labour within a capitalist society. As stated above, women's labour force participation and their labour market outcomes are closely intertwined to the time devoted to reproductive labour (OECD, 2014). Therefore, theoretical perspectives illustrating the relationship between the division of reproductive labour and the labour market are of importance for this research.

Time availability perspective

Considering theories on reproductive work, it becomes clear that men and women dedicate their time to different tasks and activities. According to the time availability perspective, the division of household labour is determined by a rational time allocation. As a result, the amount of time used for reproductive labour is strongly interlinked with the available time for housework (Coverman, 1985; Fuwa, 2004; Presser, 1994).

Since women are more severely affected by the pandemic in terms of employment, it is predicted that they have more time available, which is why they are more responsible for reproductive labour during this time. In the context of academia, academics have a high degree of flexibility and autonomy (Rafnsdóttir & Heijstra, 2013). Based on research in this field, flexibility at work enhances the balance of work and family spheres of employees (Blair-Loy, 2009). The flexibility in academia and the related time availability of academics are of relevance for analyzing the balance of work and family during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Relative resources perspective

The relative resource perspective posits that personal resources, such as educational attainment, occupational status, and income are powerful tools in interpersonal relationships, that determine the allocation of reproductive labour within a couple (Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Brines, 1994; Ross, 1987). Consequently, the partner with a higher share of these individual resources is the one less responsible for housework (Bianchi et al., 2000; Horne et al., 2018). Furthermore, the division of household labour is determined by maximizing efficiency and output through specialization in either nonmarket or market labour (Becker, 1991). As a consequence, due to women's comparative advantage in the household based on their role as a mother, they are more

involved in work outside the labour market. In contrast, men's comparative advantage lies in earning salaries resulting in their concentration on market labour (Becker, 1991).

As the labour force status has deteriorated for many women during the pandemic, this perspective describes the reasons for which men with possibly greater individual resources would continue to pursue their careers. Whereas women without these resources would carry out the increasing household tasks.

Gender inequality in academia

So far, no theories exist that deal with gender inequality in academia relating to reproductive labour during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the following research on gender inequality in academia will support analyzing the research findings. As previously stated, gender inequality in academia arising from motherhood, will be relevant for this research. Therefore, aspects from academia affecting the balance of paid and reproductive labour between female and male academics will be explored.

In relation to the discussed theories and the gendered academic field, inequality in the division of reproductive labour between men and women is prevalent in this sector. Consequently, female academics are responsible for the majority of childcare and household labour compared to their male counterparts (King & Frederickson, 2020).

One factor that contributes to the reproductive work imbalance between genders are characteristics of the departments and universities as they influence work-family conflicts among academics (Fox et al., 2011). In this regard, organizational practices are of importance since they impact reactions to work-family challenges through normalizing expectations about allocating time to family obligations (Creamer & Amelink, 2007). Additionally, problems with work-life reconciliation are closely connected to academic rank, which is considered a positional resource. This means junior rank is related to a smaller possibility of autonomy as well as job security compared to senior rank. This aspect will be of relevance for comparing the experiences of full, associate, and assistant female and male professors, as the potential for work-family conflicts is expected to be higher for assistant professors (Fox et al., 2011).

Another crucial aspect for the balance of reproductive and paid labour is the relationship between academic productivity and motherhood. These studies provide an understanding of the interaction of having children and its effect on employment during the pandemic. In this context, research has demonstrated a negative effect of raising small children on women's research productivity. Therefore, female academics with small children are less productive

compared to men and other colleagues without young children (Kyvik & Teigen, 1996). Based on a study by Misra et al. (2012), men and women in academia dedicate the same overall amount of time to their paid work each week. However, women with small children devote a smaller amount of time to their research tasks, which negatively affects their career advancement. This could also be explained by the fact that, in order to reconcile family and work life, mothers in academia reduce their research time rather than their additional teaching, mentoring, and service obligations compared to men in academia (Misra et al., 2012). Added to that, female academics are generally employed in academic positions with higher teaching commitments and devote more time to mentoring and service tasks in comparison with men (Misra et al., 2011). This plays an important role in this research since different work obligations among academic ranks might influence the possibilities of balancing work and care tasks.

As childcare and household responsibilities have increased for women as a result of the regulations of the COVID-19 pandemic, efforts to balance work and family might have exacerbated and caused conflicts for academics. Therefore, the factors discussed in these studies place the experiences of academics with the reconciliation of paid and reproductive labour during the pandemic into context.

Methodology

In this section, the reasons for the data chosen, the method of data collection, and the method used to analyse them will be outlined.

Methods

For the purpose of this research, this thesis follows a qualitative research approach as this enables to attain a deeper understanding (Patton, 2002). Therefore, the data was conducted through qualitative interviews. The flexibility and conversational style of interviews allow viewing issues through the perspectives of the interviewees (Kendall, 2014).

For this research, semi-structured interviews were carried out, until the sufficient level of saturation was achieved for this topic. This type of interview facilitated a structured interview to some extent. However, it was still possible to add further questions and therefore specific themes of interest for the research could be covered (Bryman, 2012). All the interviews lasted between 30 minutes and one hour, were held in English, and took place online via Zoom or in-person. An interview guide was created based on the main themes of the theoretical framework. These questions addressed the work and family domains and potential complications in balancing these two spheres during the pandemic. Another focal point was the division of reproductive labour between the couple and the role of the university throughout this time frame. In general, these aspects were discussed in all interviews. If a respondent elaborated on some aspects more thoroughly, through the features of semi-structured interviews a specific focus could be set. Consequently, interviewees could freely share their experiences, which enabled an extensive comprehension of the relation between the pandemic and the balance of paid and reproductive work in academia.

Data collection

For this research, a purposive sampling technique was applied, which entails gathering cases that are rich in information (Patton, 2002). Hence, prior to contacting the prospective interviewees, three selection criteria have been established (Bryman, 2012). All research participants were required to be a professor from the ESSB, live in a multi-person household, and have at least one child as I assumed that these factors were crucial for the balance of paid and reproductive labour. However, two of the participants did not have children, which is why their interviews constitute only a small part of the analysis. As this is a non-probability sampling strategy and a relatively small sample size, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to a

wider setting. Hence, the results of the interviews only apply to the particular examined population (Higginbottom, 2004).

This research draws from data derived from the Erasmus School of Social and Behavioural Sciences (ESSB) at the Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). This faculty is chosen since it is characterized by a more 'equal' representation of female and male academics among the EUR's faculties (Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2020). Therefore, it was ideally suited to investigate the gendered balance of paid and reproductive labour during the pandemic. Regarding this, the study included female and male full, associate, and assistant professors. As mentioned before, academic rank is of relevance with respect to the reconciliation of work and family (Fox et al., 2011). Consequently, due to considering professors from distinctive academic positions, differences regarding difficulties in combining family and work during the pandemic were expected. The sample consisted of 4 full, 2 associate, and 9 assistant professors. In total, 15 interviews were conducted, including 9 women and 6 men among which one was living in a same-sex household. However, only the academics were interviewed and not their partners. The research participants were approached individually via E-mail. Even though a great amount of academics was willing to take part in the research, almost the whole ESSB had to be contacted. In this context, it must be noted that some of them could not participate due to time constraints. This could lead to a selection effect, namely that those faced with even greater challenges in reconciling work and family are not included in the sample.

After the interviews have been carried out, they were transcribed with the transcription program "Otter.ai". During the transcription of the interviews, initial thoughts and themes among the data were gathered. Based on recommendations from Ryan and Bernard (2003), I searched for repeating topics, similarities, and differences within the data. These ideas served as a basis for the creation of codes to explore the data. Following this first step, to attain an in-depth understanding of the explored social world the data was systematically analysed (Basit, 2003).

Data analysis

For the analysis of the qualitative data one of the most frequently used analysis methods, "thematic analysis" (Bryman, 2012), as an 'essentialist/realist method' was applied. Through this, experiences, meanings, and the reality of the research candidates were described (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This approach was chosen as it focuses not only on explicit words and phrases, but also on implicit ideas within the themes (Guest et al., 2012). Therefore, this approach enabled to gain deeper insights into the individual experiences of the pandemic, that go beyond

explicit statements of the interviewees. Through thematic analysis themes among the data, are identified and analysed (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In addition to this, due to its independence of theory and epistemology thematic analysis allows for a great degree of freedom. Hence, through the utilisation of this approach a detailed report of the qualitative data could be provided (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In order to analyse the interviews the data was coded, using the qualitative data analysis software “Atlas.ti”. Through this, the data was organized and relationships between these codes were examined. Additionally, essential phenomena, similarities, differences, and patterns among the codes were identified (Basit, 2003). This enabled a detailed analysis of the data as with these findings a framework of different themes and subthemes could be established with which the interviews were analysed.

Analysis

In the following section, the interviews will be analysed in light of the theories discussed in the theoretical framework. According to them, different societal roles are ascribed to men and women (Flax, 1987; Scott, 1986), which is why they are responsible for different spheres in society (Arruzza et al., 2018; Coltrane, 2000; Federici, 1975). These theoretical aspects combined with research on gender inequality in academia will be examined regarding the balance of paid and reproductive labour during the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, academia is shaped by socially created roles for men and women that determine the distribution of duties between them. This implies that patriarchal structures embedded in capitalist societies which allocate men and women to two distinctive spheres (Arruzza et al., 2018; Federici, 1975) are prevalent in academia. In line with this reasoning, this research was based on the assumption that gender is one of the main factors that explains the responsibility of reproductive labour, which affects how reproductive and paid labour could be reconciled during the pandemic. Whether this was the case and the possibility of other variables influencing this balance will be analysed. Due to the gendered focus of the research, a particular emphasis lies on the different experiences of female and male academics.

The following topics that impact the reconciliation of work and reproductive labour came up repeatedly in the interviews: *Flexibility*, *Division of reproductive labour* and *Separation of work and family*. These themes derive from theories stressing the relationship between the labour market (academia) and reproductive labour. In this context, flexibility and the available time relate to the time-availability perspective. The second theme is based upon individual and external factors that influence the distribution of reproductive labour, which are dealt with in gender, time-availability, and relative resource perspectives. The last theme addresses potential conflicts between work and family sectors. The balance of paid and reproductive labour includes two spheres, namely in this particular research, academia and household, respectively. Due to the close connection of the two spheres during the pandemic, the first section, *Separation of work and family*, discusses factors affecting how well these sectors could be divided. During the pandemic, this has influenced the balance of reproductive and paid labour. Then, both of the two spheres that impact this issue will be analysed. To begin with, the section on *Work infrastructure*, will deal with factors coming from academia. Lastly, *Arrangements within the household*, subsumes aspects derived from the household.

1 Separation of work and family

Since work and family life takes place in the same location as a consequence of home-office arrangements because of the pandemic, these two spheres are closely intertwined. Due to the constant interference of these two spheres, academics were confronted with the challenge to separate them during this time. This impacted the performance of family or work obligations, and subsequently the ability to balance paid and reproductive labour during the pandemic. In this context, different experiences depending on responsibilities in both areas could be discovered.

1.1 Office

Regarding the question of how interviewees could manage to separate the two spheres, the importance of having an own office was emphasized. FAP4 explained the meaning of a separate workspace, “*now we have an extra office and that made it much easier to combine all the tasks [...] at some point it was clear either we work in a different room and really focus on work or take care of our daughter and not work at all in that time*”. Thus, she stressed the difficulties of combining work and family responsibilities at the same time. This implies the significance of an office for the balance of paid and reproductive labour. However, it is of utmost relevance which partner has access to this office. Based on the relative resource perspective (Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Brines, 1994; Ross, 1987), the person with more individual resources, such as a higher job position and income would be the one using the workspace. In this regard, Female Assistant Professor 1 (FAP1), had a great advantage compared to her husband since she had her own workplace, while her husband did not. This professor’s full-time employment is possibly related to a higher income in comparison to her husband’s part-time work. Hence, he has fewer individual resources which could determine his status within the relationship. Subsequently, this might suggest that FAP1 occupies a more powerful position among the couple. Consequently, she had the possibility to continue working without family interruptions. In contrast to this, despite FAscP1 working more hours in paid and unpaid labour, her husband was the one who took up office space. The allocation of office space among this couple contradicts the relative resources perspective. In this context, feminist theories could explain the division of space among FAscP1 and her husband. According to Flax (1987), gender relations are relations of domination, dominated by men. Since this pair is characterized by a traditional division of reproductive labour, it could be assumed that the husband might have a more powerful status (Flax, 1987), which determines the assignment of resources among the couple. Therefore, this advantageous status might have influenced his ability to separate the

intertwined work and family realms during the pandemic. Conversely, due to the gendered division of space, FAscP1 faced greater child and work interferences, which is why it was more difficult for her to separate these two realms.

However, despite the benefits of having an own workspace separated from the children, academics still mentioned challenges occurring when working from home. For this reason, this could indicate that the two realms are so overlapped during the pandemic that it was impossible to turn off one sphere's responsibilities while being immersed in the other.

1.2 Interference between work and family

The majority of the academics divided childcare responsibilities during the pandemic, following a schedule negotiated with their partners. In this regard, MAP1 experienced this as a challenge since *“each day you go from working to being a parent to working to be a parent, you switch, and it drives you absolutely, at least, it drove me absolutely crazy.”* Similarly, FAP5 faced issues with separating work and care domains, *“I think this is really also a problem especially when you work at home, and you are doing some of your practical household related tasks, you already feel a bit guilty that you're doing these tasks in between your working day. And now you have this laptop on your desk all the time. And I think you are in a way trying to compensate for these unproductive breaks that you're taking from your work.”* This professor's belief that household activities are unproductive tasks, highlights internalized traditional values, which could be shaped by the view on what type of work is seen as meaningful in society. Consequently, this could imply that housework is not regarded as work due to its unwaged character (Federici, 1975). Additionally, since housework does not relate to profit, it is possible that it is not deemed 'productive', as the common view is that only paid work is connected to added value and thus relevant to society. Furthermore, this statement might demonstrate the subordinate position of social reproduction compared to the importance of profit-making in capitalist societies (Arruzza et al., 2018; Federici, 1975).

However, differences in the ability to separate the two spheres could be observed. For example, MFP1 said that *“I simply stopped working.* Similarly, MFP 3 quoted *“But I have a clear thing, after seven or eight, I don't work anymore.”* In contrast to this, FAP3 experienced the interference of work and family life as *“a part of that is gendered. So, there are expectations about if I'll be available, or if you write an email at midnight, that I would respond by 8am the next morning [...] But the assumption that I would do it and others won't.”* as well as *“So it's kind of a bummer. Because sometimes I would say, well, I'm not going to worry about tenure, I'm just going to teach and take care of my son. And even then, you end up it's a trade-off*

sometimes.” These statements elucidate the existing inequalities between different academic ranks as well as gendered expectations towards men and women. It seems that the opportunity to set clear boundaries between family and work realms during the pandemic was connected to their position in academia. On the one hand, for the two male full professors, no disadvantage would have derived, if they had clearly drawn the line between work and family sector. On the other hand, FAP3 might have faced severe consequences, if she had devoted her time to childcare and less to the constant availability demands of academia. This implies that in academia gendered expectations regarding work obligations for men and women are prevalent. Therefore, it is more likely accepted to not receive an immediate response from a full professor. Whereas specific female socially constructed gender roles, such as continuous availability, are conferred to innate expectations towards female academics.

As a result, the assumption follows that, for a professor to be able to fulfill their expectations from one sphere, they might have to cut back on their role obligations in the other one. This is more easily facilitated for male academics occupying higher-ranking positions and having permanent tenure. These advantages allow them to reduce their responsibilities in academia more easily to take over additional childcare. Since women in academia are employed in relatively lower-ranking job positions, compared to male academics (Blackwell & Glover, 2008b), the possibility of decreasing academic obligations without any negative implications is gendered. This highlights the relationship between academic positions and gender, which impacts the ability to balance reproductive and paid labour during the pandemic. This interconnectedness will be elaborated on in the subsequent section.

2. Work infrastructure

2.1 Flexibility

The closing of childcare facilities and schools put an additional burden on parents during the pandemic, which required additional time from parents to care for their children. The flexible academic work environment was a crucial factor mentioned by almost all female and male academics, that enabled them to cope with the rise in childcare and home-schooling. Based on Female Assistant Professor 2 (FAP2) having a flexible working schedule meant that she *“took over more of the childcare responsibilities, because if there was a deadline or something else, then I took the extra day off.”* Similarly, Male Full Professor 1 (MFP1) explained that his primary childcare responsibility *“can to a large extent, be explained or understood by means of flexibility of our work”* and *“because my work is more flexible, I can do more things during daytime”*. These respondents emphasized the importance and benefits of having a flexible work

schedule for the division of childcare during the pandemic. In this context, the time-availability perspective is relevant. Since FAP2 and MFP1 had more time available due to the characteristics of academic work, both were more responsible for reproductive labour duties compared to their partners (Coverman, 1985; Fuwa, 2004; Presser, 1994). Consequently, flexibility was associated with having more available time for taking over the additional childcare and household responsibilities during the pandemic.

However, the degree to which the interviewees could access this advantage varied significantly. Firstly, the level of flexibility seems to be connected to the position in academia, which entails different work obligations. Most of the interviewed male full professors had little to no teaching obligations and only research and management duties, which implies a larger level of flexibility. In accordance with this, MAP1 and Male Full Professor 2 (MFP2) took over the bulk of reproductive labour tasks compared to their female partners. As discussed before, gender inequality still prevails to a great extent regarding the division of reproductive labour. However, in the case of the pandemic, the flexibility of academic labour could serve as a counterweight to gender inequality relating to the division of reproductive labour, as this also enabled men to care for their children. Therefore, the generally gendered academic setting during the pandemic contrasts feminist and reproductive theories' viewpoints on the division of reproductive labour among different-sex couples. This could be demonstrated since some of the male respondents did not adhere to socially constructed roles for men meaning that household tasks were not divided in compliance with gender roles. Consequently, the view that housework is traditionally ascribed to women (Arruzza et al., 2018; Coltrane, 2000; Federici, 1975) could not be reflected among these individuals. Hence, this suggests that reproductive labour obligations are not imposed on women and are thus not considered a natural attribute that is assigned to the female gender within academia (Federici, 1975).

In contrast, interviewed assistant professors experienced greater teaching obligations, which were also enhanced by the switch to online education. This hindered the possibility of a flexible working schedule. In this sense, the crucial importance of hierarchy in academia can be noted, which highlights the relationship between hierarchy and flexibility. Thus, the higher the academic position, the more advantage can be taken from the flexibility. The distinctive possibilities for combining academic work and family responsibilities during the pandemic depending on work tasks, could be accentuated by Female Associate Professor 1 (FAscP1). For her *“the combination with research was easier, and also with guiding and supervising the work the Ph.D. students that I have, and the master and bachelor students. And that's because it's more unplanned work. So, I can also do it in the evenings, on the weekends, or in the*

afternoons.” Closely connected to this, academic rank and its involvement in different work responsibilities also had implications on research productivity during the pandemic.

While male full professors were still able to dedicate the same amount of time to their academic research or as MFP1 even said that *“I could put, a lot more time to my research-related activities. So, I felt rather well in this regime”*, some of the assistant professors experienced a great decline in their research activities. Nonetheless, it needs to be taken into account that this particular respondent received a lot of external support during the pandemic. He mentioned that some of the domestic responsibilities are shared with his wife, but most of them are outsourced. Despite this relatively equal division of reproductive labour tasks, most of the hired reproductive labour is performed by lower-class women (International Labour Organization, 2015). Therefore, the burden of reproductive labour obligations was not shifted to one gender within the couple, but rather to possibly lower-class women. As a result, this seemingly progressive way of allocating household tasks is actually still gendered, not among the couple, but is transferred to women outside the household. This could potentially be a factor that enabled him to increase his academic research under such circumstances. These examples contradict the characteristics of the ideal academic worker, who should not have external obligations, in order to fully dedicate one’s time to academic work (Ivancheva et al., 2019). However, it could be shown that despite the increase of childcare, all the interviewed male full professors could still be highly productive with respect to their work obligations during the crisis. This could be interpreted as contrary to prior assumptions based on beliefs about the ideal academic, depending on the hierarchical position academic work is reconcilable with caring obligations. In this sense, MFP1 and MFP2 were confronted with a double advantage obtained from the nature of academia.

Opposed to this, for two female assistant professors research collapsed during this time as it was incompatible with their teaching and childcare responsibilities. This coincides with a potentially negative relationship between childrearing and female academics research productivity postulated in research by Kyvik & Teigen (1996). In addition to the decrease in research, Female Assistant Professor 3 (FAP3) experienced an increase of other work obligations, such as emotional/social labour and administrative tasks. However, this could have serious implications for her because *“then I’m punished for not having done the research. And I could lose my job and because we’re foreign if I lose my job, they could kick me out of the country.”* The consequences of the pandemic on female’s research productivity, comply with research by Misra et al. (2012), indicating that to reconcile work and family duties, female

academics rather reduce the time dedicated to research than their academic obligations compared to men in academia.

In addition to differences in flexibility among female and male academics, the uneven distribution of men and women among three hierarchical levels was apparent. The majority of full professors was male, whereas most of the assistant professors were female. This gendered distribution among academic ranks has implications for the level of flexibility that relates to the specific position. This influences the possibility to adjust to additional duties during the pandemic. Within academia, women are occupied in relatively lower-ranking job positions, while men are found in relatively higher ranks. Female academics are confronted with barriers in career advancement (Blackwell & Glover, 2008). This could possibly be explained by the generally traditional academic environment, that complicates combining family with academia. As a consequence, women have fewer opportunities to fully dedicate time to academic work, which is why they are faced with barriers in career advancement. These aspects could potentially affect the distribution of men and women among the sampled interviewees.

Based on these aspects, the close relationship between hierarchy in academia, different work obligations and its influence on a flexible work schedule could be remarked. In this context, flexibility can be regarded as academic autonomy, as lower teaching responsibilities in higher-ranking positions are connected to more freedom in time management. Since women generally hold lower-ranking positions, which contain greater teaching obligations, they have less academic autonomy over arrangements of working time. This emphasizes the impact of gender on academic positions and therefore on a highly gendered hierarchy. This relationship is linked to flexibility, which affects the ability to respond to the new circumstances, and as a result, the balance reproductive and paid labour during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.2 University support

In addition to flexibility, similarly to research conducted by Fox et al. (2011), support from the university, the supervisor as well as the team played a crucial role for some academics, as it partly determines how well academic work and family obligations could be reconciled during the pandemic.

Regarding the question of how the university supported academics to facilitate a better balance of family and work life, answers differed. MFP1 didn't have an answer to this question and MAP3 stated that no support was necessary for him. However, both male respondents mentioned that they needed help by means of technical and workspace equipment. These circumstances could be traced back to MFP1's degree of flexibility and MFP3's support from

his wife, which might have allowed an easier combination of work and family during these times. Opposed to this, FAP2's and FAP3's responses rather touched upon the lack of emotional support and the possibility of online counseling during the crisis.

In contrast to the lack of university support, the crucial role of the supervisor was stressed by female and male respondents. However, the way they approached this role varied. Female and male academics with high involvement in reproductive labour explained the importance of supervisors by quoting that they could mitigate these work and family conflicts by pushing back deadlines and renegotiating the research goals for these two years. This corresponds with MFP3 who supervises 12 people, *"I had also talked with my colleagues, my female colleagues, when they asked me, more or less excused themselves not to reach the goals that they have set themselves and I had to reassure them a little bit, okay, it's quite understandable in a given circumstance and also with combining your work with raising young children, especially when schools were closed, then some people had really had to, especially females had to take care of the children. I could only express my understanding and not demanding too much."* The phrase that *'females had to take care'* implies a rather traditional, gendered understanding of this respondent regarding who should bear the additional care responsibilities during the pandemic (Arruzza et al., 2018; Coltrane, 2000; Federici, 1975). His ability to say that he could 'express his understanding', was only possible due to his position as well as his wife taking over home-schooling. Consequently, this segment highlights the relevance of seniority and support from one's partner for the balance of reproductive and paid work.

As a result, individuals without any balancing problems raised concerns about technical assistance, whereas academics that faced challenges with combining work and family mentioned problems regarding their workload, work obligations, and mental health. Additionally, this could mean that men and women placed value on different support systems during the pandemic. Consequently, this might stress the crucial role of gender in determining the amount and the nature of required support throughout this time. Male professors, focused on their work conditions, whereas female professors rather highlighted the relevance of actions related to work and family challenges.

3 Arrangements within the household

In addition to characteristics of the academic work infrastructure, the balance of reproductive and paid labour during the pandemic was strongly interlinked with the arrangements within the household regarding the division of household and childcare tasks. These arrangements are dependent on the employment of academic partners as well as the prevailing gender roles among the couple. These aspects partly determined the extent of support received from the partner with childcare, which affected the balance of reproductive and paid labour.

3.1 Job of partner

In this context, MFP3's experiences highlighted that flexibility was not the only factor that impacted the reconciliation of reproductive and paid work during the pandemic. Despite his involvement in home-schooling, his wife working part-time was the primary caretaker. In accordance with the gender perspective and reproductive labour theories, this supports a traditional division of tasks, with men and women being responsible for different duties and spheres (Arruzza et al., 2018; Coltrane, 2000; Federici, 1975). Consequently, this case represents the traditional allocation of genders in society, with the father being the main breadwinner and the mother bearing the childcare responsibility. Conversely, Female Assistant Professor 6 (FAP6) explained that her husband *"has more childcare tasks, to begin with because I work full time"*. The importance of available time for the division of reproductive labour duties could also be reflected in Female Assistant Professor 4's (FAP4) and MAP2's experience. Both of their partners did not work throughout the pandemic, which is why they were primarily responsible for childcare (Coverman, 1985; Fuwa, 2004; Presser, 1994).

Likewise to FAP6, FAP4's allocation of work and reproductive obligations among the couple, is opposed to a traditional gender division postulated by feminist and reproductive theories (Arruzza et al., 2018; Coltrane, 2000; Federici, 1975). This could be seen as this couple does not behave according to their socially constructed gender roles (Scott, 1986). Additionally, this contradicts the relative resource perspective, since FAP4 and FAP6 are employed in the labour market and specialize in earning a salary, whereas their respective male partners are involved in nonmarket labour (Becker, 1991). This also complies with another facet of this perspective. FAP6 is employed full-time, which is why she probably has a higher income compared to her husband. Therefore, income acts as a powerful resource in determining the division of reproductive labour tasks among this couple (Becker, 1991). In view of the three discussed participants, the partners that had more time available due to their lower involvement in employment carried out the bulk of childcare obligations (Coverman, 1985; Fuwa, 2004;

Presser, 1994). In addition, it could be observed that female and male academics partnered with someone with a more rigid work schedule took over a larger share of reproductive labour tasks compared to their partners. A possible explanation for these arrangements could be that partners employed in non-academic jobs are required to follow a stricter schedule, which prevents them from adjusting to the changing circumstances. Following these experiences, childcare responsibility as mentioned before could partly be enabled by the advantageous flexible academic infrastructure.

However, with regard to this, the position in academia and its implication for work tasks during the pandemic were emphasized by MAP1 and FAP3. Since both were highly involved in educational obligations and their partners faced inflexible work conditions as well, they could not draw on the generally flexible academia. Therefore, they relied on a strict childcare schedule with their partners, which was according to MAP1 due to the constant “*dependency on each other schedule*” perceived as very stressful. Similarly, spouses who were required to work on-site during the pandemic had no available time for childcare. As a consequence, due to their determining job conditions, their partners employed in the flexible academic work environment had a greater responsibility in taking care of the children (Coverman, 1985; Fuwa, 2004; Presser, 1994). The importance of having one’s partner at home during the pandemic was stressed by FAscP1 and FAP6, whose husbands switched from working on-site to being in home-office. FAscP1 said that through this change, “*I had a bit more help in the second year. That’s also because he was physically home*”. Additionally, the arrangement with FAP6’s husband only enabled her to pursue her work in the afternoon which was “*not really ideal, because I usually started at the kind least productive moments of my day, like around two or something. [...] So, I was exhausted by the time my husband came home*”. In this case, she was required to adapt to her husband’s work conditions which might lead to a loss in productivity and possibly could affect her academic career. This aspect emphasizes the significance of household arrangements for how well paid and reproductive work can be balanced during the pandemic.

3.2 Division of reproductive labour

Regardless of the employment characteristics of both partners, it could be observed that the division of reproductive labour within the household was associated with the predominating gender roles among the couple.

In this sense, FAscP1, FAP5, and FAP6 were primarily responsible for childcare and household tasks during but also before the pandemic. Therefore, they behaved in correspondence with the

socially created beliefs about adequate roles for men and women (Flax, 1987; Scott, 1986). These rather traditional views on gender roles, for instance, could be illustrated based on FAP6's reasoning for the distribution "*I think I also felt a bit more responsible.*" Furthermore, FAP5 described one benefit of the pandemic for the division of childcare as, "*now he could help because he was there as well.*" The feeling of 'responsibility' and the phrasing of the father's 'help' could mean that these female interviewees regard reproductive labour as their main obligations, whereas the father only bears a small share of these duties. Therefore, it seems that these responsibilities are regarded as work ascribed to the female character (Arruzza et al., 2018; Coltrane, 2000; Federici, 1975).

However, among a few couples, differences regarding the responsibility of specific duties could be recognized. In this sense, FAP6 presents a clear division of tasks with her husband, "*he's a technician, I'm not technical, so if anything's broken, or anything needs to be fixed in the house, he will fix it immediately.*", whereas she takes care of "*the day to day things, like groceries, food, making sure that the children have everything that they have clothes when they need new clothes and, and these small things.*" Comparably, MAP2 claimed that "*my wife was taking more care of home-schooling with my son. And then I also went out maybe to the park and have a walk or play at the playground with him.*" and "*I had kind of two, three hours of work and then a break to do something and to help out.*" Likewise to above, a gendered language when speaking about reproductive labour tasks could be noted. This could be emphasized by MAP's phrasing of 'helping out', which assumes primary female responsibility for care. Therefore, this expression demonstrates that childcare is not a shared responsibility, but rather something that lies within the wife's domain (Arruzza et al., 2018; Coltrane, 2000; Federici, 1975). In this context, Judith Butler's (1988) notion of 'doing gender' is of relevance. Through continuously repeating specific traditionally seen as female or male responsibilities in the household a male or female identity is created. Due to a repetition of internalized norms, academics are in charge of different duties within the household. For instance, FAP6's traditional background taught her specific gender roles, which is why she conforms to her female identity through taking over caregiving, whereas her husband complied with the male identity constructed through his constant involvement in masculine maintenance issues. These cases illustrate that even if both partners take an active part in reproductive labour tasks, gendered differences might still prevail regarding the responsibility for certain duties. Consequently, in both instances women are more concerned with daily routine tasks or decisions regarding children, whereas men rather focus on maintenance tasks or spending active time with their children (Forste & Fox, 2012; Hochschild, 1989).

Limitations & Recommendations

Due to the qualitative character of this research, the findings from this study cannot be generalized to another setting. Especially regarding other faculties, the conclusion might be biased, since data was collected from a social sciences faculty, where the distribution of female and male academics was distributed rather equally. For this reason, they might be expected to be more ‘social’ in the sense that men take also part in reproductive labour tasks. This can also be emphasized by the fact that the sample of this study did not include any male academic that did not engage in any form of childcare. Therefore, it would be interesting for further research to investigate other male-dominated faculties. Moreover, only academics were interviewed to share their experiences of the pandemic, which strongly depend on their partners' involvement and presence in reproductive labour. Consequently, the results of this research might differ were also academics' partners included, since they might have experienced the situation in another way. Furthermore, a potential selection effect needs to be taken into account. A few approached professors mentioned that they could not partake in this study owing to current difficulties with balancing work and family life. Thus, this could mean that academics that are faced with even greater challenges in reconciling these two sectors of their lives are not represented in the sample. Added to that, this study has limitations in terms of the examined household composition. To begin with, the focus was set on mainly multi-person households, excluding single households with children. Following this, since the sample only contained one person from a same-sex relationship no conclusion on differences between different-sex and same-sex households can be drawn. Considering these aspects, in order to attain a more well-rounded understanding of the issue in question, future research should consider both partners within the household as well as a greater variety of household compositions.

Conclusion & Discussion

With this study a focus was set on answering the question: “*What role did the COVID-19 pandemic play in the gendered balance of reproductive and paid labour in academia?*” This question touched upon two closely connected types of labour, namely domestic reproductive labour and paid academic labour. Due to the increase of reproductive labour, in particular regarding childcare, academics were confronted with further responsibilities as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional childcare demands combined with home-office arrangements due to regulations of the pandemic resulted in a blur of family and work spheres. In this context, based on challenges to separate the two realms, the performance in one of the two spheres was observed to be highly dependent on the obligations in the other one. Due to

this strong interdependence of these realms, both sectors were of relevance for the balance of reproductive and paid labour. Therefore, this thesis dealt with an in-depth examination of the academic as well as the household realm.

In this context, prior to conducting the research, I was convinced that the findings would be strongly gendered. However, opposed to prior assumptions based on feminist perspectives on gender and reproductive labour theories, gender alone does not account for the balance of paid and reproductive labour throughout the pandemic. On the contrary, an interaction of factors from the academic work environment with arrangements within the household, jointly influenced how well female and male academics could combine paid and reproductive work. In the context of the academic work infrastructure, the flexible academic work setting was one of the main aspects that enabled academics to adjust to these new circumstances. In addition to this, regarding the arrangements within households, the job of academic partners and prevalent gender norms were of crucial importance as they impacted the support they received with childcare.

This study discovered that the flexibility of academic labour, which is related to the academic position and work obligations, allowed some of the interviewed male academics to take over the prime childcare responsibility. In this sense, academic flexibility improved the balance of these two realms for male academics during the pandemic (Blair-Loy, 2009). Thus, the nature of the flexible academic work setting countered the generally prevalent gender inequality in the division of reproductive labour. Consequently, male academic's participation due to academic flexibility contradicts perspectives on the female character of reproductive labour (Coltrane, 2000; Federici, 1975) and the traditional gendered allocation of labour within a couple, postulating a clear gendered division of responsibilities between men and women (Arruzza et al., 2018; Federici, 1975). Secondly, academics having a flexible work schedule compared to partners with more rigid work conditions carried a greater share of reproductive labour tasks. Nonetheless, it could be noticed that gender plays a role in these two realms, and therefore still had an impact on the balance of reproductive and paid labour during the pandemic. On the one hand, flexibility and its relation to the position in the highly gendered academic hierarchy showed that especially male full professors occupied in relatively higher ranks, as well as academics involved in research, had a greater possibility for a flexible working schedule. On the other hand, despite the support from academic's partners with childcare, in certain more traditional households gender affects the division of reproductive labour as well as the allocation of household duties within the couple. Therefore, among those respondents the female nature of reproductive labour could be emphasized (Coltrane, 2000; Federici, 1975).

This study's findings did not evidently reveal a distinct influence of gender on inequalities in the balance of reproductive and paid labour in academia. Gender, however, must still be seen as a powerful concept inherent in the structure of contemporary societies, albeit sometimes rather coming to display in an indirect and hidden matter.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Checklist Ethical and Privacy Aspects of Research



CHECKLIST ETHICAL AND PRIVACY ASPECTS OF RESEARCH

INSTRUCTION

This checklist should be completed for every research study that is conducted at the Department of Public Administration and Sociology (DPAS). This checklist should be completed *before* commencing with data collection or approaching participants. Students can complete this checklist with help of their supervisor.

This checklist is a mandatory part of the empirical master's thesis and has to be uploaded along with the research proposal.

The guideline for ethical aspects of research of the Dutch Sociological Association (NSV) can be found on their website (http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page_id=17). If you have doubts about ethical or privacy aspects of your research study, discuss and resolve the matter with your EUR supervisor. If needed and if advised to do so by your supervisor, you can also consult Dr. Jennifer A. Holland, coordinator of the Sociology Master's Thesis program.

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Project title: COVID-19 pandemic and careers in academia

Name, email of student: Bernadette Laml, 610854bl@student.eur.nl

Name, email of supervisor: Willem Schinkel, schinkel@essb.eur.nl

Start date and duration: April, 3 months

Is the research study conducted within DPAS **YES** - NO

If 'NO': at or for what institute or organization will the study be conducted?
(e.g. internship organization)

PART II: HUMAN SUBJECTS

1. Does your research involve human participants. **YES** - NO

If 'NO': skip to part V.

If 'YES': does the study involve medical or physical research? **YES** - **NO**

Research that falls under the Medical Research Involving Human Subjects Act ([WMO](#)) must first be submitted to [an accredited medical research ethics committee](#) or the Central Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects ([CCMO](#)).

2. Does your research involve field observations without manipulations that will not involve identification of participants. YES - NO

If 'YES': skip to part IV.

3. Research involving completely anonymous data files (secondary data that has been anonymized by someone else). YES - NO

If 'YES': skip to part IV.

PART III: PARTICIPANTS

1. Will information about the nature of the study and about what participants can expect during the study be withheld from them? YES - NO

2. Will any of the participants not be asked for verbal or written 'informed consent,' whereby they agree to participate in the study? YES - NO

3. Will information about the possibility to discontinue the participation at any time be withheld from participants? YES - NO

4. Will the study involve actively deceiving the participants? YES - NO

Note: almost all research studies involve some kind of deception of participants. Try to think about what types of deception are ethical or non-ethical (e.g. purpose of the study is not told, coercion is exerted on participants, giving participants the feeling that they harm other people by making certain decisions, etc.).

Does the study involve the risk of causing psychological stress or negative emotions beyond those normally encountered by participants? YES - NO

Will information be collected about special categories of data, as defined by the GDPR (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a person, data concerning mental or physical health, data concerning a person's sex life or sexual orientation)? YES - NO

Will the study involve the participation of minors (<18 years old) or other groups that cannot give consent? YES - NO

Is the health and/or safety of participants at risk during the study? YES - NO

Can participants be identified by the study results or can the confidentiality of the participants' identity not be ensured? YES - NO

Are there any other possible ethical issues with regard to this study? YES - NO

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the previous questions, please indicate below why this issue is unavoidable in this study.

/ _____

What safeguards are taken to relieve possible adverse consequences of these issues (e.g., informing participants about the study afterwards, extra safety regulations, etc.).

/ _____

Are there any unintended circumstances in the study that can cause harm or have negative (emotional) consequences to the participants? Indicate what possible circumstances this could be.

No _____

—
Please attach your informed consent form in Appendix I, if applicable.

Continue to part IV.

PART IV: SAMPLE

Where will you collect or obtain your data?

Erasmus School of Social and Behavioural Sciences

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

What is the (anticipated) size of your sample?

10-15

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

What is the size of the population from which you will sample?

150

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

Continue to part V.

Part V: Data storage and backup

Where and when will you store your data in the short term, after acquisition?

On an external hard drive, immediately after acquisition data will be stored, after the research has ended the data will be deleted

Note: indicate for separate data sources, for instance for paper-and pencil test data, and for digital data files.

Who is responsible for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from your research?

myself

How (frequently) will you back-up your research data for short-term data security?

Research data will be backed-up on a weekly basis

In case of collecting personal data how will you anonymize the data?

Through pseudonymization

Note: It is advisable to keep directly identifying personal details separated from the rest of the data. Personal details are then replaced by a key/ code. Only the code is part of the database with data and the list of respondents/research subjects is kept separate.

PART VI: SIGNATURE

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the ethical guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing information to participants about the study and ensuring confidentiality in storage and use of personal data. Treat participants respectfully, be on time at appointments, call participants when they have signed up for your study and fulfil promises made to participants.

Furthermore, it is your responsibility that data are authentic, of high quality and properly stored. The principle is always that the supervisor (or strictly speaking the Erasmus University Rotterdam) remains owner of the data, and that the student should therefore hand over all data to the supervisor.

Hereby I declare that the study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. I have answered the questions truthfully.

Name student: Bernadette Laml

Name (EUR) supervisor: Willem Schinkel

Date: 18.03.2022

Date: 18.03.2022

Appendix 2: Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

Name of Principal Investigator:	Bernadette Laml (610854bl@student.eur.nl)
Erasmus University Rotterdam / specific School:	Erasmus School of Social and Behavioural Sciences
Project Title and Version:	COVID-19 pandemic and careers in academia

Introduction

My name is Bernadette Laml and I'm a student at the Erasmus School of Social and Behavioural Sciences, following a master's program in Sociology: 'Engaging Public Issues'. I'm doing research on the balance of paid and unpaid work of female and male academics during the COVID-19 pandemic at EUR. Therefore, I have invited you to participate in my research. In case of questions regarding the discussed words and concepts, I will take the time to provide explanations and provide answers in case of additional questions that can be asked at any time.

Purpose of the research

The following research question will help guide the research:

"What role did the COVID-19 pandemic play in the gendered balance of care and paid work in academia?"

This question consists of two parts, the gendered academic field and the gendered division of household labour and childcare between fathers and mothers throughout the pandemic. This research seeks at contributing to the research in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and reproductive labour in the academic setting. The research takes place over 2 months in total. The research is conducted through interviews that last approximately one hour.

Participant selection

You are being invited to participate in this research because your profession as an academic at the EUR will provide a deeper understanding and knowledge of the relationship between the division of reproductive labour and the academic setting during the pandemic.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research is voluntary, it is therefore your own choice if you take part in this interview. This choice will have no influence on your job or any work-related evaluations or reports. You can change your mind and stop participating in the research despite having agreed earlier.

Right to Withdraw

You have the right to withdraw your consent to use the personal data that you have provided at any time (unless the data has been anonymized). You do not have to justify your decision to withdraw your consent and there are no consequences for withdrawing your consent.

Procedures

You are invited to participate in this research project. In case you accept, you will be asked to answer open questions posed in a semi-structured interview. If you do not wish to answer any of the questions during the interview, you may say so and we will move on to the next question. The entire interview will be recorded, but the name will not be mentioned throughout the interview. The research does not involve any questions that are sensitive or potentially cause embarrassment.

Privacy & Confidentiality

For this research no personal data will be collected. Only the student and the supervisor will have access to the acquired data through the interviews.

Confidentiality of the data will be guaranteed through pseudonymization of the data.

Retaining and Sharing your data

The collected data will not be open for future research and will not be made available to the public. The data will be stored for the duration of the research and immediately after the research has ended the data will be deleted.

Your Privacy Rights and Contact Information

You have the right to request access to your personal data and to change these if they are not right or to erase your data. If you want to invoke your rights or if you have a question concerning privacy about this study, you can contact Erasmus University's DPO (Data Protection Officer) at privacy@eur.nl. If you would like to lodge a complaint concerning privacy, you can do this with the national supervisory authority in the Netherlands on personal data (Autoriteit Persoonsgegevens).

Certificate of consent

I have read the Informed Consent Form and I understand what the purpose of the research is and that data will be collected from me. The research has been explained to me clearly and I have been able to ask questions. By signing this Form, I consent to participate in this research. understand that participating in this research is completely voluntary; and

Audio/Video

I hereby consent to having audio and/or video recordings made during the research and to have my audio transcribed.

Data

I hereby consent to having my data used for this research

Name of the participant:

Signature of the participant:

Date: