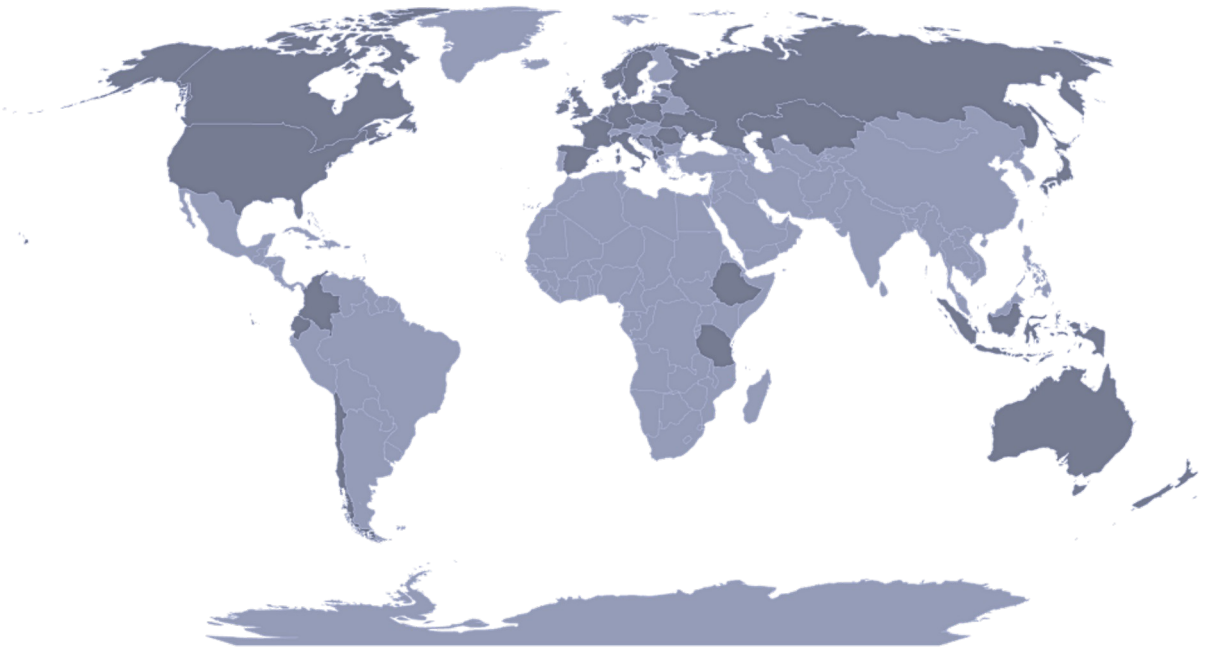
GENDER GAP IN PARENTAL LEAVE INTENTIONS: EVIDENCE FROM 37 COUNTRIES



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GENDER GAP IN ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION AND OPPORTUNITY ESTIMATED TO CLOSE IN 257 YEARS

- WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM, 2020

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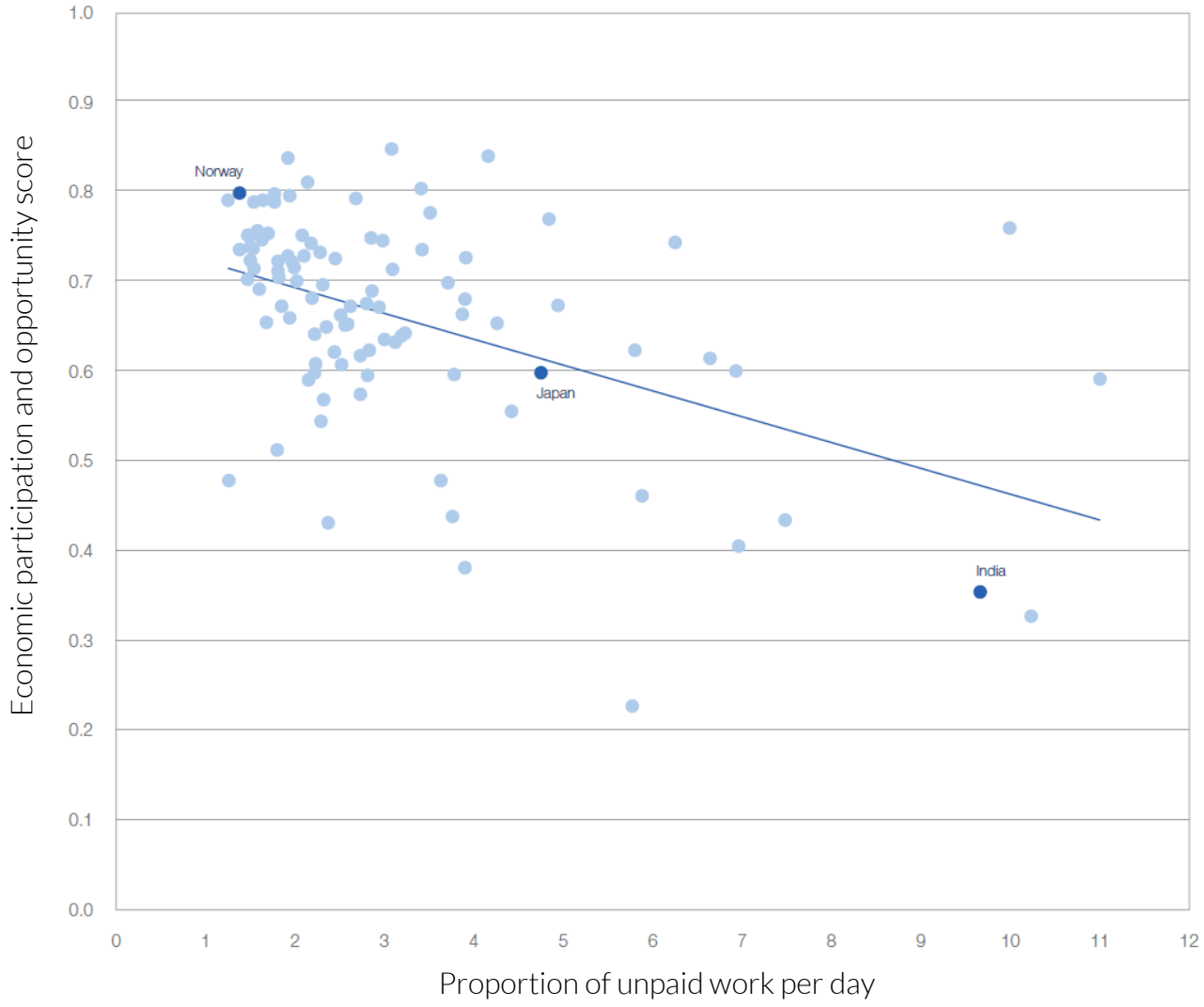
Economic participation and opportunity is estimated based on women's relative:

- labor force participation
- income
- representation in management, legislation, professional, and technical work

Scale range: 0-1

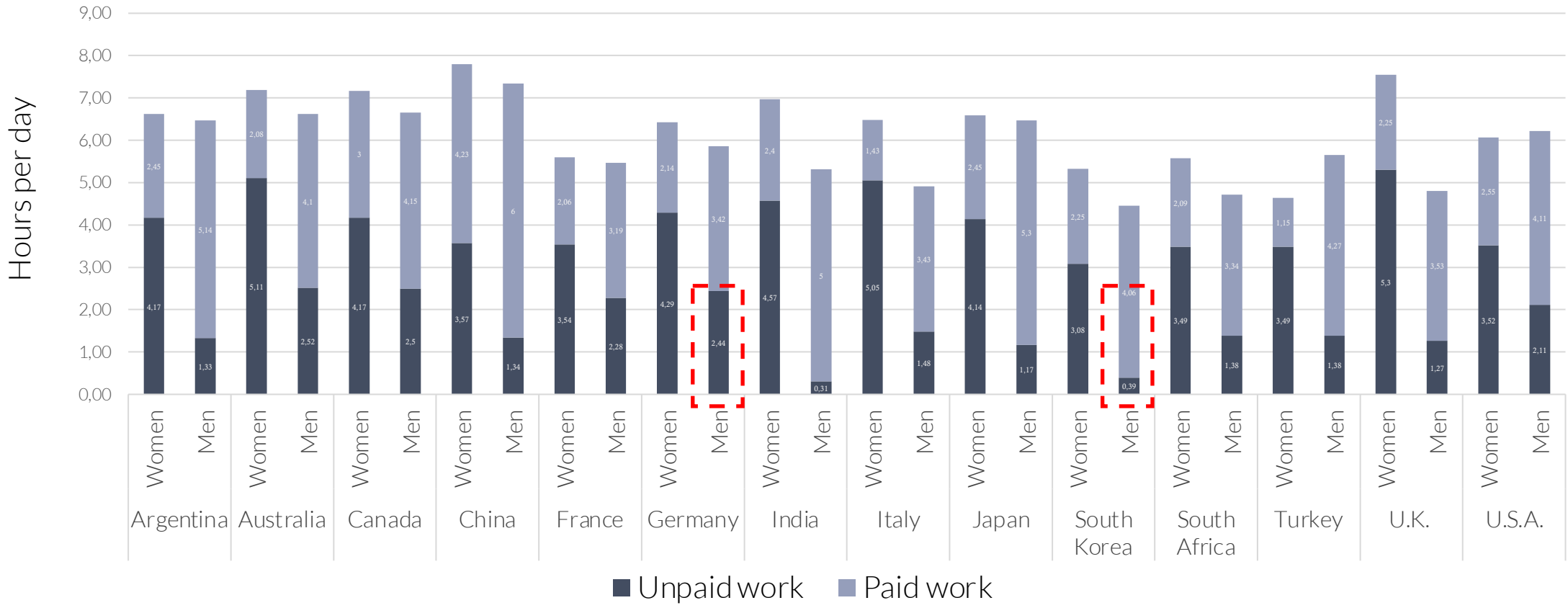


WOMEN'S INEQUALITY: MEN'S UNDERREPRESENTATION IN UNPAID WORK

- Women family vs. career priorities correspond with expected family priorities of future partner[1, 2]
- Women do not pursue STEM careers because of concerns about balancing career and family[3]
- Women leave STEM careers for parenting responsibilities[4, 5]

[1]Croft et al., 2019; [2]Meeussen et al., 2016; [3]Blakemore et al., 2005; [4]Eagly, 2020; [5] Huang et al., 2020

DIVISION OF ROLES ACROSS COUNTRIES



OECD, 2020

Research question

Does the policy and sociocultural context promote expected future care-giving intentions in men?

Sample

Country-level N = 37
Site-level N = 99
Participant-level N = 13,942
(n = 8880 women; M_{age} = 20.26)

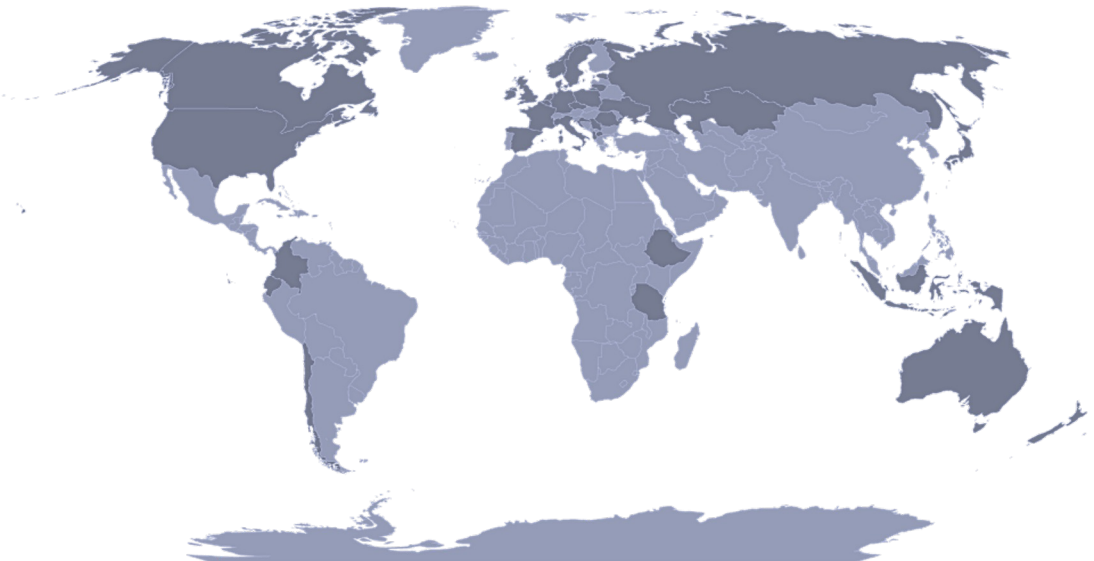
Parental leave intentions

If you had a child in the future, how much voluntary (non-medical) leave (paid or unpaid) would you like to take in the first 2 years of your child's life? Please indicate in weeks. For reference, 1 month ~ 4 weeks, 6 months ~ 26 weeks, 1 year ~ 52 weeks

Career ambitions

Sample item: I have ambitious career goals

1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree)

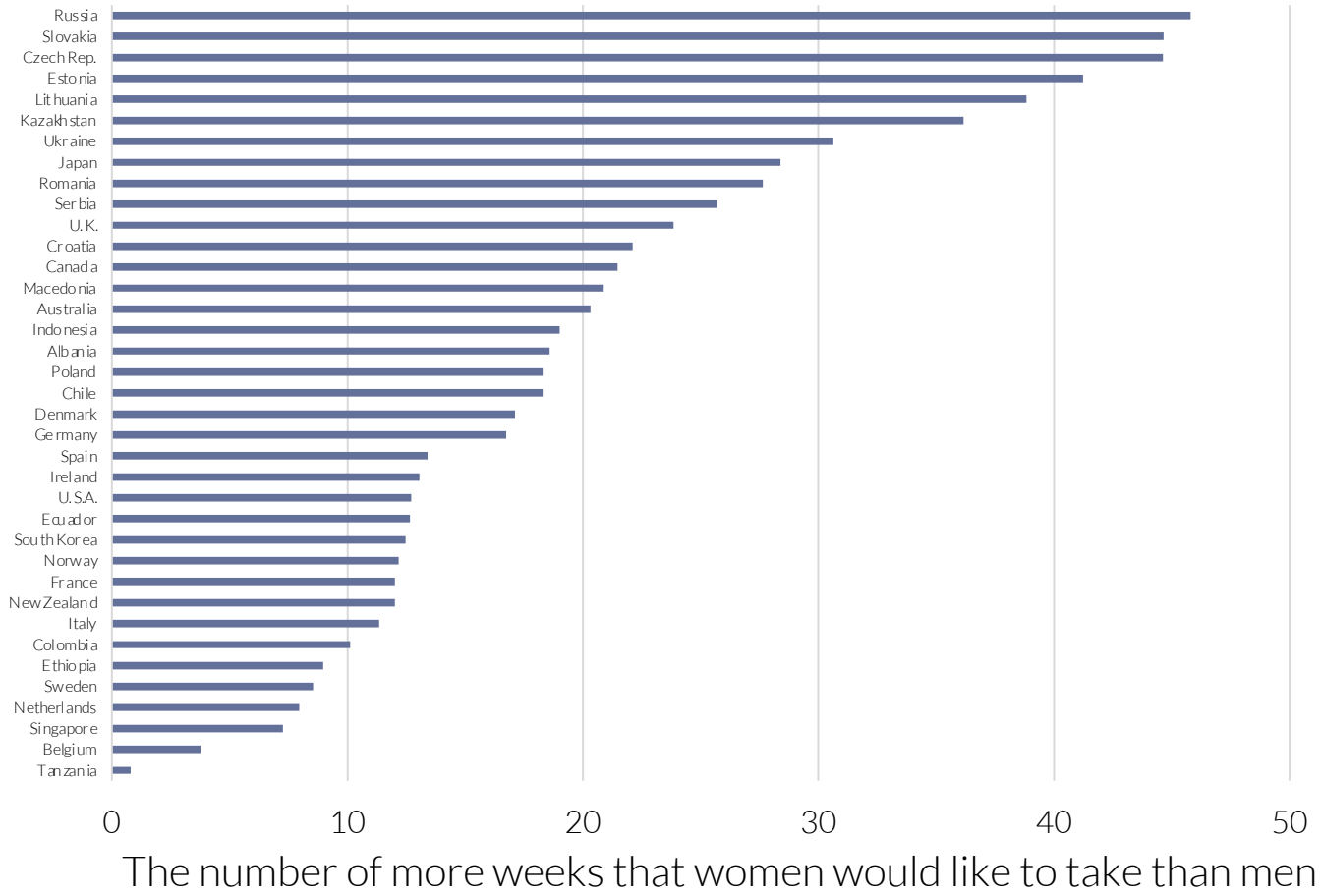


Descriptive results

Intentions to take parental leave were associated with lower career ambitions in women ($r = -.14$, $p < .001$) and men ($r = -.08$, $p < .001$)

ICC = .24 (women)
ICC = .06 (men)

The gender gap in parental leave intentions across countries



How does country-level factors correspond with the gender gap in parental leave intentions?

Model 1: Equality in labor market (GGGI, 2017)

- Women's relative representation in politics
- Women's relative income

Model 2: Parental leave policies (ILOSTAT, 2014)

- Length of 100% compensated leave
- Length of total parental leave
- Length of leave reserved to mothers over fathers

Model 1

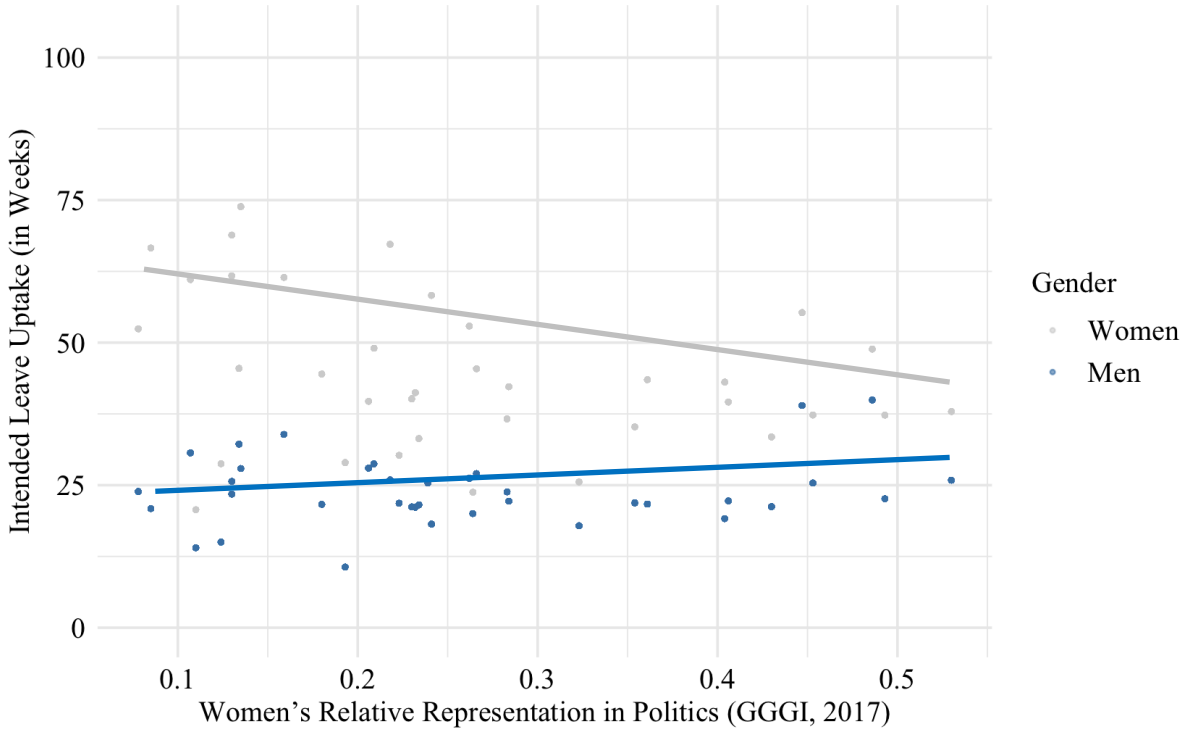
Gender equality in the labor market

- Relative income (*ns*)
- **Relative representation in politics**

Gender gap at +/- 1 SD
+1SD: b = -14.90, *SE* = 2.18, *p* < .001, 95% CI [-19.16, -10.63]
-1SD: b = -27.17, *SE* = 2.60, *p* < .001, 95% CI [-32.27, -22.07]

Women's slope
b = -38.38, *SE* = 17.32, *p* = .034, 95% CI [-72.32, -4.42]

Men's slope
b = 11.00, *SE* = 8.34, *p* = .197, 95% CI [-5.34, 27.34]



Model 2

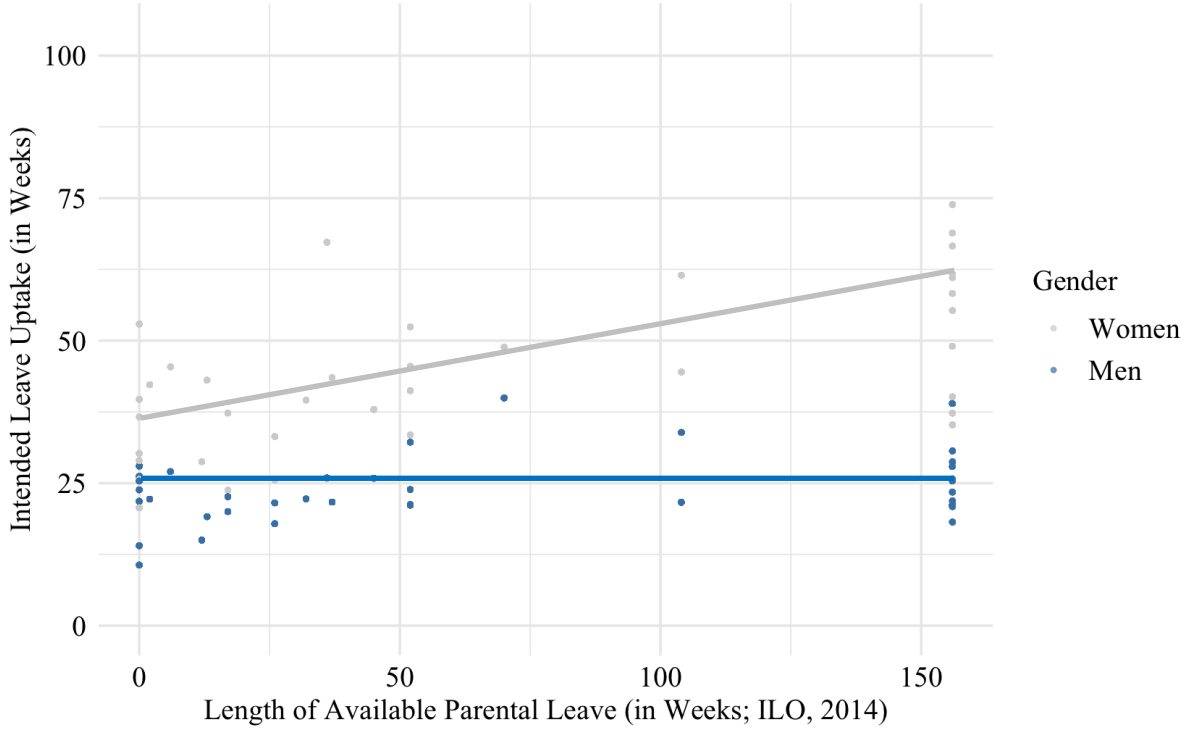
Parental leave policies

- Financially compensated leave (*ns*)
- Father-exclusive leave (*ns*)
- **Available parental leave**

Gender gap at +/- 1 SD
+1SD: b = -22.59, *SE* = 1.87, *p* < .001, 95% CI [-26.25, 18.92]
-1SD: b = -13.50, *SE* = 2.17, *p*< .001, 95% CI [-17.75, -9.26]

Women's slope
b = 0.09, *SE* = 0.03, *p* = .002, 95% CI [0.04, 0.14]

Men's slope
b = 0.01, *SE* = 0.02, *p* = .491, 95% CI [-0.02, 0.05]



Summary

Country-level factors moderate the gender gap in intentions:

- Women's relative representation in politics
- Available leave length

…controlling for individual gender attitudes

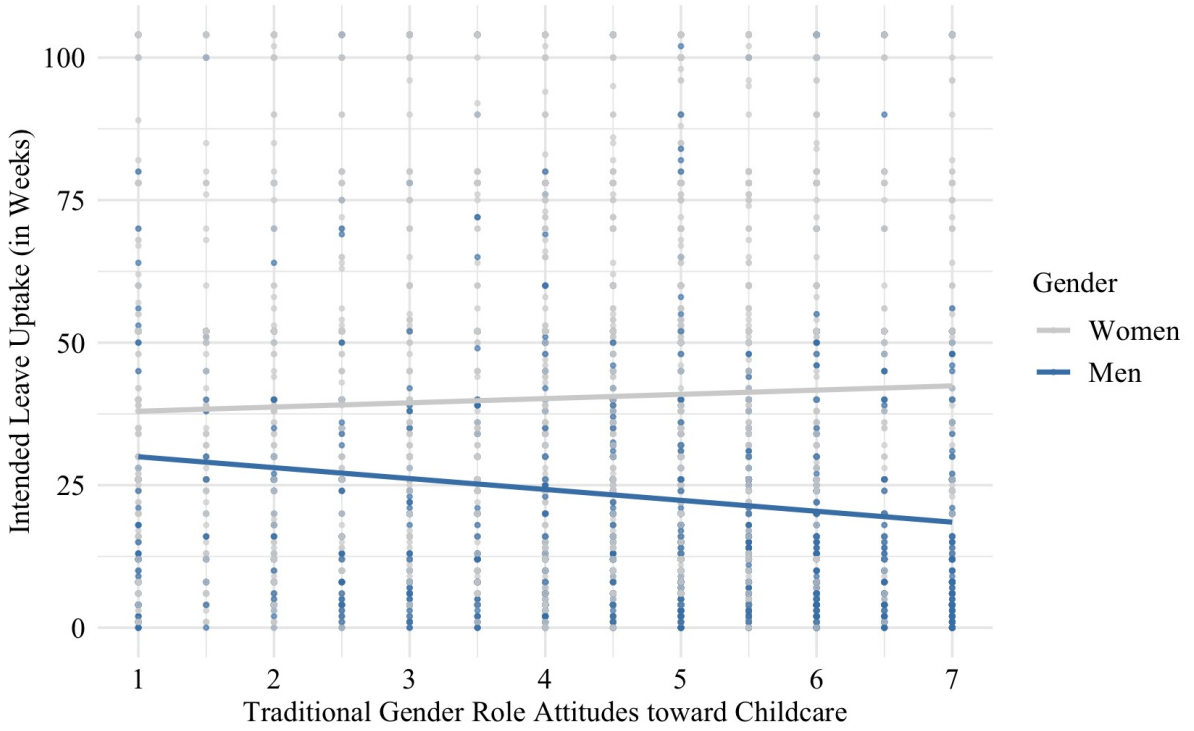
Individual gender attitudes

e.g., “mothers are instinctively better caretakers than men”

Gender gap at +/- 1 SD
+1SD: b = -22.59, *SE* = 1.87, *p* < .001, 95% CI [-26.25, 18.92]
-1SD: b = -13.50, *SE* = 2.17, *p*< .001, 95% CI [-17.75, -9.26]

Women’s slope
b = 0.61, SE = 0.17, p < .001, 95% CI [0.27, 0.95]

Men’s slope
b = -1.32, SE = 0.24, p < .001, 95% CI [-1.79, -0.85]



U.C.O.M.

osf.io/bgc3n

https://osf.io/rv4wf

https://www.researchgate.net/project/UCOM-Understanding-Communal-Orientation-in-Men

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Gender Gap in Parental Leave Intentions: Evidence from 37 Countries

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The present article focuses on traditional gender roles and thus primary analyses focus on cisgender participants who may expect to be in a straight relationship in the future (and thus more likely to anticipate a gender-traditional division of roles). Including data from lesbian and gay participants does not change the main findings.