

Combining Family & Work Life

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Emmy-Noether Meeting 2025



General outlines

- I am not an expert on this topic; my only qualification is having a 3-year-old child (and expecting a second in October)
- I assume most of the audience has or is planning to have a long-term partnership, children, or other forms of care work (!)
- This is supposed to be a forum to exchange experiences and useful information
- Experiences are always personal and idiosyncratic
- I checked some literature on family + academic careers specifically to provide a bit more context



General outlines: Literature review

- Disclaimer: Most studies not from Germany (mostly US)
- Specific cultural factors („national pressures in the US for emphasizing work over other interests“, cf. Fox et al., 2011)
- Differences in the social security systems and working laws may reduce generalizability to Germany
- Also note: All of this data is observational and correlational ´, not experimental
 - There may always be third variables that affect family status and the other outcome measures (social skills, life values, socio-economic status, ...).



Family and career
perspectives in academia

Review of Educational Research
February 2017, Vol. 87, No. 1, pp. 204–239
DOI: 10.3102/0034654316631626
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Family or Future in the Academy?

Seher Ahmad
University of Pennsylvania

Pipeline with „ideal worker norms“:
rigid, tightly-coupled, sequential,
time-bound requirements

Women with PhDs and young
children drop out of the pipeline
disproportionally often

Among main reasons: Lack of
family friendliness

Careers Versus Children:

How Childcare Affects the Academic Tenure-Track Gender Gap

Stephanie D. Cheng*

Harvard University

(Job Market Paper)

November 7, 2020

([Click here for most recent version](#))

More women than men with
PhDs in biological science

Women with children less
likely than their male peers to
obtain tenure-track position

No gender gap for individuals
before they have children, or
those who never have children

Mothers tend more to leave
labor force or reduce working
hours (compared to fathers)

-> competitive disadvantage

Parenthood and Academic Career Trajectories[†]

By ANNE SOPHIE LASSEN AND RIA IVANDIĆ*

After graduation, as soon as women give birth and become mothers, they fall behind and don't end up in leadership positions.

—Katalin Kariko,
2023 Nobel Prize Winner in Medicine[‡]

All individuals in Danish PhD programs for which family information is available

Most have children, no difference inside academia and outside

Persistent gender gap in attrition from research following parenthood

New fathers more likely to go into broader research sector (outside academia) than non-fathers; new mothers more likely to leave research altogether

Motherhood decreases likelihood of senior position and delays time to tenure

Onto, Up, Off the Academic Faculty Ladder: The Gendered Effects of Family on Career Transitions for a Cohort of Social Science Ph.D.s

Emory Morrison, Elizabeth Rudd, and Maresi Nerad

Negative effects of motherhood and marriage on women's careers have been diminishing over time

For fathers, fatherhood and marriage are beneficial

Marriage to a less-educated spouse is associated to significant career advancements for men; women do not realize similar benefits from this type of marriage

scientific reports

OPEN The relationship between parenting engagement and academic performance

Gemma E. Derrick^{1✉}, Pei-Ying Chen², Thed van Leeuwen³, Vincent Larivière^{4,5} & Cassidy R. Sugimoto⁶



Gender differences in research productivity often attributed to disproportionate childcare responsibilities for women

But fathers are becoming increasingly engaged

Global survey: 1.5 million active scientists asked, > 10,000 responses, productivity: number of papers

Men in (childcare) lead roles suffer similar penalties for parenting engagement, but women are more likely to be engaged in that lead role

A short parental leave (< 12 months) associated with increased productivity

Parental engagement better explanatory variable than gender

SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY

The unequal impact of parenthood in academia

Allison C. Morgan^{1*}, Samuel F. Way¹, Michael J. D. Hoefer¹, Daniel B. Larremore^{1,2},
Mirta Galesic³, Aaron Clauset^{1,2,3*}

Impact of parenthood in longitudinal study

About 3,500 institutions in the US and Canada (computer science, history, business)

„Parenthood explains most of the gender productivity gap by lowering the average short-term productivity of mothers“

(got a bit better over time)

Parents slightly more productive on average than non-parents

Women report that parental leave and childcare are important factors in their recruitment and retention



Work-life interactions
in academia

Balancing Parenthood and Academia:

**Work/Family Stress as Influenced by
Gender and Tenure Status**

ELIZABETH M. O'LAUGHLIN
LISA G. BISCHOFF
Indiana State University

(published 2005)

85 men and 179 women working full-time in tenure-track positions; at least 1 child < 16 years

Women report greater academic and family stress, and perceive less institutional support for balancing work and life



Available online at www.sciencedirect.com



Journal of Vocational Behavior 67 (2005) 169–198

Journal of
**Vocational
Behavior**
www.elsevier.com/locate/jvb

A meta-analytic review of work–family conflict and its antecedents ☆

Kristin Byron *

*College of Business, Rochester Institute of Technology, 103 Lomb Memorial Drive,
Rochester, NY 14623, USA*

Meta-analysis of 60 studies

Two directions of interference:

- WIF: Work interference with family
- FIW: Family interference with work

Work factors tend to be related with WIF

- Hours at work, schedule flexibility, job stress, ...

Family factors tend to be related with FIW

- Family stress, family conflict, number of children, age of youngest child, ...

Demographic factors (sex and marital status)
weakly related to both

Vicious cycles?

Work and family conflict in academic science: Patterns and predictors among women and men in research universities

Mary Frank Fox

School of Public Policy, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA, USA

Carolyn Fonseca

Peanut Collaborative Research Support Program USAID, University of Georgia, Atlanta, GA, USA

Jinghui Bao

Risk Management and Control, Bank of Communications, Shanghai, People's Republic of China

For men and women: influence of work conflict on family higher than other way around

Both at medium levels, and a bit lower for men

Comparisons by rank: senior (full/associate professor) versus junior (assistant professor)

- Rank predicts work-to-family conflict for women, but not men
- Senior rank *decreases* likelihood of work-to-family conflict for women, but *increases* the likelihood of family-to-work conflict

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Summary

- Parenthood is a central driver of gender gaps, more than gender alone
- Degree of parental engagement and institutional support seem to matter more than gender alone
- Fatherhood and marriage tend to benefit men, but not women (third variables at play?)
- „Ideal Worker Norms“ clash with family needs (maybe stronger in the US)
- Work-family conflicts are bidirectional but asymmetric (WIF stronger)



Time for exchange

- **What are your experiences?**
 - Family and career advancements
 - Work-family interference and family-work interference
- **What are your strategies?**
 - Where has family helped with your professional activity
 - Where has your professional activity helped with family
- **What options do you know for institutional support?**
- **Keep in mind that we all have access to different resources**
 - Single parents
 - Partner's work or private situation
 - Living or working at the same place or different locations?
 - Access to personal and institutional support networks (grandparents, friends, childcare, ...)
 - Other care work besides children!