The Association between Women's Financial Resources and Their Self-Reported Satisfaction with Sex Life

A quantitative study of German women in heterosexual relationships

Abstract

Women's sexual satisfaction is related with important outcomes, though, it is a greatly ignored subject in current literature. In this contribution, two competing hypotheses about the association between women's earnings from employment and sexual satisfaction are investigated. Departing from arguments grounded in the social exchange tradition, we can expect that employment and sexual satisfaction are positively correlated. On the other hand, the time poverty and second shift literature propose the opposite effect. Analysing German women in a heterosexual relationship (N = 2,674) from the pairfam survey (2008/9) presented the following results: First, women who were employed, apart from part-time employment, have significantly lower sexual satisfaction than women who are not employed (home makers, women on parental leave and unemployed). When separating the unemployed women from the not employed category, no discrepancies in terms of sexual satisfaction were found compared to employed women, implying that not only time availability but also stress and anxiety predict sexual gratification. Limitations and suggestions for future research are included at the end of this contribution.

Key words: social exchange, time poverty, employment, sexual satisfaction, women

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1. Introduction

Since the sexual revolution starting in the 1960s, women's empowerment and emancipation have received great attention. Multiple scholars have used social exchange theories to explain how wage-earnings abilities for women affect society. A focal point of focus has been the impact of female financial independence on the dynamics within and stability of intimate partnerships. On one hand side, over the years, divorce rates have increased and marriage has become less popular. In Europe, for instance, the number of divorces per 1000 people has more than doubled, from 0.8 in 1965 to 1.9 in 2016 (Eurostat, 2019). Some authors have attributed this to the loosening of the sexual morale and women's wage-earning abilities, the argument being that women do not need a man to secure their future (Regnerus, 2017). On the other hand, a number of authors have postulated that financially independent women will report higher relational stability and satisfaction (e.g., England, 2018). In this study, I contribute to this line of research by exploring the significance of women's financial independence for a somewhat overlooked aspect of relationship dynamics, namely, women's satisfaction with their sex-life.

Concerns about the impact of female labour market participation and financial independence on partnership stability stem from Becker's (1991) early arguments about the benefits of specialization within households, with one partner being gainfully employed and the other taking responsibility for the household and children. A clear example of this line of thought are the writings of Regnerus (2017). Though he recognises that the gender revolution contributed to the improvement of women's labour market integration, he highlights the negative consequences of birth control and women's emanating labour market position, focusing on the deteriorating ability to find a partner willing to commit to a monogamous relationship for the long run.

Whereas most research on the impact of women's resources has focused on partnership stability and relationship satisfaction, it is important to also consider the association with sexual satisfaction. Until recently, researchers have mostly focused on the predictors of sexual problems and dysfunction, rather than on correlates of sexual well-being (Laumann et al., 2006). Adding to this, is the fact that women's sexuality is still a heavily ignored subject, as research on sex is often intertwined with sexism (Rudman, 2014). This is evident in the treatment of women's sexual pleasure as a secondary concern (Rowland, 2020). Women's sexuality is also more heavily policed, with women being judged more harshly with respect to number of sexual partners and extra-relational affairs compared to men (England, 2010). However, understanding sexual satisfaction is important for two key reasons. Foremost, sexual

satisfaction has now been shown to be associated with a range of individual well-being measures such as lower levels of depression, vitality and protection of cardiovascular risk (Davison, Bell, LaChina, Holden, & Davis, 2009; Liu, Waite, Shen, & Wang, 2016). Second, sexual compatibility has in fact been shown to *predict* relationship satisfaction and thus, in turn drive relationship stability (Yeh, Lorenz, Wickrama, Conger, & Elder, 2006). In line with the above discussed reasoning, my research question is as follows: *Do women with earnings from employment report higher sexual satisfaction?*

2. Theory & Hypothesis

Despite the fact that women are encouraged to integrate in the labour market, researchers have not yet agreed upon the outcomes of women's labour market integration. In this theoretical framework, two contradictory perspectives on the impact of women's employment will be explained and elaborated on, in particular, the relationship between employment and sexual satisfaction. In this contribution, I will test competing hypothesis about the association between women's earnings from employment and sexual satisfaction within relationships. Those hypotheses are grounded in arguments postulated by social exchange theory on the one hand and the 'second shift' and time poverty literature on the other.

Exchange and bargaining power

The social exchange tradition (Blau, 1964; Molm & Cook, 1995) and interdependence theory (Thibaut & Kelly, 1959) are fruitful approaches to the study of the relationship between women's employment and their sexual satisfaction. Broadly, the social exchange framework is organised around the exchange of resources (both material and symbolic) amongst people (Sprecher, 1998). Social exchange theories are especially important in respect to sexuality because of the focus on exchange between two individuals in a dyadic relationship. Social exchange theories and concepts have been validated in research investigating mate selection, relationship formation and dissolution, and marital satisfaction (e.g. Molm & Cook 1995, Sayer, England, Allison, & Kangas, 2011; Rusbult 1980). For this study, two commonly defined assumptions of social exchange models are particularly relevant: first of all, social behaviour consists of a series of exchange; second, individuals try to maximise their rewards and minimise their costs (LaGaipa, 1977; Nye, 1979). Individuals evaluate their relationship based on a function consisting of perceived rewards and costs as a result of being involved in the specific union. Rewards are defined as pleasant and gratifying exchanged resources, whilst costs are

characterised as the negative aspect of the relationship (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Subtracting the costs from the rewards equals the outcome, if the outcome of the function is positive, it is also called benefits or profits. The key concepts rewards and costs can be redefined to sexual exchange specifically since sexual rewards and costs are frequently exchanged for other resources present in a relationship, such as money, intimacy and love (Sprecher, 1998).

Similar predictions have been made by economics deploying bargaining theory (Lundberg & Pollak 2000; McElroy, 1990). Central in the bargaining tradition is the allocation of resources in a dyadic relationship. The resources can either refer to material resources, such as income or immaterial resources, like leisure time and household chores (Abraham, Auspurg, & Kinz, 2010). Allocation of the resources is dependent on the relative power of each individual in the relationship. The notion of power is crucial in both social exchange and bargaining perspectives and most researchers agree that the available alternatives determine each actor's bargaining power (England & Farkas, 1986). The partner with more bargaining power obtains more feasible outside options and therefore, is more likely to leave an unsatisfactory relationship. The outside options are referred to as threat points (Abraham, Auspurg, & Kinz, 2010). Available alternatives include a multitude of factors, such as other possible interesting partners (Bergstrom, 1996), but most importantly one's economic situation. Employment and a source of income facilitates the possibility to dissolve an unsatisfactory relationship with minimal cutback in the financial situation (Abraham, Auspurg, & Kinz, 2010).

Social exchange theory has been applied to marriage satisfaction (Bittman, England, Sayer, Folbre, & Matheson, 2003; Molm & Cook 1995) and relational satisfaction (Rusbult, 1980; Bui, Peplau, & Hill, 1996), but exhaustive research on factors determining women's sexual pleasure is lacking in this tradition. By deploying social exchange theory, I predict that women with earnings from employment have more power to exchange or bargain what they want in their sex life and in case of disagreement, have the possibility to leave a relationship. In essence, if a partner has more resources they are better able to exchange or bargain for what they want in terms of setting rules and boundaries in a relationship. An example on the social exchange perspective is *the women's independence effect* which postulates that unhappy women have the ability to leave if they have earnings from employment (Cherlin, 2000; Ruggles, 1997). Research on this effect has investigated the relation between employment and marriage dissolution. Whereas employment in itself is not a significant predictor of divorce, when a marriage is unsatisfactory, employment does encourage women to initiate a divorce due to less or no decrease in economic status (Sayer, England, Allison, & Kangas, 2012).

Since sexual pleasure also implies expressing your desires and wishes, I argue that social exchange theory can also be applied to sexual satisfaction. Thus, by having sufficient financial resources, a woman is empowered to express her sexual desires and this will lead to higher sexual satisfaction. If prolonged periods of bargaining do not lead to the expected results (e.g. sex life is unsatisfactory), then, financial resources offer the possibility to exit the relationship because a woman is able to take care of herself and look for better alternatives. In short, financial resources either facilitate opportunities to express sexual desires or it offers the possibility to break up without too much economic loss and search for a partner who is willing or able to meet her sexual needs.

Hypothesis 1: Women with earnings from employment report higher sexual satisfaction.

The second shift and time poverty

According to Hochschild (1989) the gender revolution has been stalled due to three factors. First of all, even though most women are employed, they are still responsible for most of the 'second shift' – the unpaid work of care and domestic labour. Second, inflexible workplaces are failing to accommodate family caregiving demands. Finally, public sector benefits are insufficient or lacking, such as paid parental leave and affordable day-care. Women's lives have been transformed from the 1960's and onwards but men's lives did not change that much. While women entered the labour market, men did not get involved in domestic labour and childcare as much as women gained working hours (Bittman, England, Sayer, Folbre, & Matheson, 2003). Married women spend far more hours on the 'second shift' than their husbands, making women feel exhausted by the end of the day. Further, both men and women regard working men who work part-time (Vandello, Hettinger, Bosson, & Siddiqi, 2013), take parental leave (Rudman & Mescher, 2013) or have caregiving responsibilities (Berdahl & Moon, 2013) as too feminine and poor workers.

Hochschild (1989) refers to these unequal shares of spare time as the 'leisure gap'. In order to cope with the unfairness of women's 'second shift', couples come up with 'family myths', including beliefs that it is more efficient when women do the housework. Even though men's hours of domestic labour and child care did increase, women spend approximately twice as much time on household chores (Blair, 2013). Further, women are more involved with their children, and family management and planning (Bianchi, Milkie, Sayer, & Robinson, 2000). The failure to offer a proper work-life balance will not only have detrimental effects at the workplace, such as higher absenteeism and lower productivity (Perlow & Kelly, 2014), it also

has profound negative consequences for intimate relationships. Spending less time together and being exhausted can affect sexual satisfaction negatively. In line with this argument, Dundon and Rellini (2010) demonstrate that psychological well-being is an important predictor of sexual satisfaction, with level of exhaustion being a proxy indicator for well-being.

It is often argued that women have lower levels of sexual lust due to differences in their biological autonomy (e.g. Baumeister & Vohs, 2004; Baumeister et al, 2017; Regnerus, 2017). However, this presumed discrepancy in sexual desire is not validated by biological research (Regan & Atkins, 2006; Denney, Field, & Quadagno, 1984). Thus, something different is at play that decreases women's desire for sexual pleasure. The answer might be straight forward; working women are just too tired to engage in sexual activities due to pressing demands of the double burden. The negative consequences of the unequal division of the second shift is evidently visible in fatigue prevalence among women. In a study on gender differences in fatigue, Bensing, Hulsman and Schreurs (1999) conclude that women report more often fatigue than men. The key contribution of their study was to provide evidence that women encounter more difficulties in managing a balance between work and family life. Higher levels of fatigue and exhaustion are known to be correlated with problematic sexual functioning (Burgess, 2004), lower sexual desire (Dengrove, 1968) and decreased levels of sexual satisfaction (Oggins, Leber, & Veroff, 1993). In sum, due to the burden of the second shift and its inherent gendered expectations, employed women who are at the same time responsible for most of the unpaid domestic labour are at the end of the day too tired to engage in sexual activities.

Hypothesis 2: Women with earnings from employment report lower sexual satisfaction.

3. Data & Method

Data

For this study, data will be used from the German Family Panel pairfam wave 1 (2008/9). Pairfam is a multidisciplinary and longitudinal study comprising information about intimate relationships and family dynamics in Germany. Survey data are collected annually and the sample consists of more than 12,000 individuals of three birth cohorts (1971-73, 1981-83, 1991-93) including their partners, parents and children. For more detailed information about the covered subjects, conceptual framework and survey design, see Huinink, Brüderl, Walper, Castiglioni, and Feldhaus (2011).

The analytical sample is comprised of women of working age, excluding students and retired women. The average age of the women included in the sample is 31.3 years and the

majority of the women are married and cohabiting (59.9 percent). Unfortunately, the dependent variable sexual satisfaction was not included in the East German part of the survey (DemoDif), therefore, only West German women are included in the sample (N = 6,373). Additionally, single women and women in a non-heterosexual relationship are excluded (cases eliminated N = 2,303). Descriptive statistics are provided in table 1.

Measurement

Sexual satisfaction. The dependent variable sexual satisfaction is measured with the question: 'All in all, how satisfied are you with your sex life?', answer options ranged from 0 = *very dissatisfied* to 10 = *very satisfied*. The overall sexual satisfaction in the sample is 7.13 with a standard deviation of 2.65.

Employment income. The variable employment status is used to assess women's earnings from employment. Initially, the variable employment status consisted of twelve categories and is recoded to five categories; not working (consisting of parental leave, homemaker and unemployed), full time employed, part time employed, self-employed and other employed (including vocational training, marginal employed and other employed). The answers options 'retired' and 'currently enrolled in education' are excluded from the sample. About one third of the women in the sample belong to the category 'not working' (32.2 percent), followed by fulltime employed women (30.5). The part time employed category incorporated 22.1 percent of the sample, other employed 11 percent and finally, self-employed women accounted for 4.2 percent of the sample.

Control variables. In this work, one important confounder will be controlled for, namely educational attainment. What is crucial to realise, is that education is known to be correlated with higher sexual satisfaction. Higher educated women display more openness to new ideas and are more willing to challenge traditional values (Kane, 1995). Further, education empowers women to be assertive about their rights and act upon them (Cheng & Hsu, 2020). Also, the higher educated work more hours and are better integrated in the labour market, compared to the lower educated (Brown & Sessions, 1998). In terms of measurement, educational attainment is measure with the ISCED variable (International Standard Classification of Education) and recoded to three categories; 1) lower educated (currently enrolled, lower secondary education, lower secondary education), 2) middle educated (upper secondary education vocational, upper secondary education general) and 3) higher educated (post-secondary non-tertiary education general, first stage of tertiary education, and second stage of tertiary education). One important note to make is that the answer category 'currently

enrolled' is not excluded from the sample because vocational training is a combination of both education and employment.

In addition to the above-mentioned confounder, the following variables will be controlled for as well: Age of the respondents at interview, whether the respondent is currently pregnant, infertility of either or both the respondent and the respondent's partner, relationship type (recoded in: married and cohabiting, cohabiting, and other) and the age of the youngest child. In terms of coding; the variables currently pregnant and infertile are both dichotomous variables with 0 = *No* and 1 = *Yes.* Age of the youngest child is recoded into three different categories: no children, below the age of six and above the age of six.

Method.

With respect to the analytical strategy, a hierarchical linear regression analysis will be applied to test the main relationship, including the control variables. First, all the control variables will be added in model 1. Next, the main predictor will be included in model 2 to test whether employment status has a significant and substantial effect on women's sexual satisfaction. Results of the analysis will be provided in the next section.

4. Results

Before discussing the results, some descriptive statistics on employment status and sexual satisfaction will be provided. Independent sample t-test analyses are conducted in order to test for significant mean differences on sexual satisfaction for the different categories of employment status (table 2). Women in the non-working category have significant higher sexual satisfaction compared to fulltime employed women ($M_{\text{not employed}}$=7.31, SD=2.61, M_{fulltime}=7.01, SD=2.64, $t(1735)=2.42$, $p < 0.05$), part-time employed women ($M_{\text{not employed}}$=7.31, SD=2.61, $M_{\text{part-time}}$=7.03, SD=2.64, $t(1490)=2.06$, $p < 0.05$), self-employed women ($M_{\text{not employed}}$=7.31, SD=2.61, $M_{\text{self-employed}}$=6.55, SD=2.54, $t(1002)=2.91$, $p < 0.01$) and women in the other employed category ($M_{\text{not employed}}$=7.31, SD=2.61, $M_{\text{other employed}}$=6.81, SD=2.72, $t(118)=2.54$, $p < 0.05$). However, the gaps between standard deviations do not indicate substantial differences.

Table 3 presents the results of the linear regression analysis, including unstandardized regression coefficients, standard errors and explained variance. Also, attention will be paid to the magnitude of the results by including differences in standard deviation with respect to sexual satisfaction (by dividing the coefficients by the *SD* of sexual satisfaction). Model 1 comprises the control variables: higher educated women report significantly lower sexual

satisfaction than lower educated women. On average, sexual fulfilment of higher educated women is .436 points lower than that of lower educated women, with a magnitude of 0.16 in standard deviation (-.436/2.65). For age, an increase of one year significantly decreases the overall sexual satisfaction by .038 points. Next, relationship duration shows a similar significant effect, for a one year increase in relationship duration, sexual fulfilment drops with .41. Both age and relationship duration shows very limited change in standard deviation, 0.01 (-.038/2.65) and 0.02 (-.041/2.65) respectively. With respect to relationship type, cohabiting women have on average about a tenth of a standard deviation lower sexual enjoyment (-.314/2.65) than their married cohabiting counterparts. Also, women with the youngest child being above the age of six, report significantly higher sexual satisfaction than women who do not have children, the difference is roughly one fifth of a standard deviation (.559/2.65).

In model 2, the main predictor employment status is included. Women who reported to work fulltime, who were self-employed, and women in the category other employed mention significantly less sexual satisfaction compared to non-working women. Gaps between the groups differ in magnitude. Compared to non-working women, fulltime employed women report 0.16 standard deviation lower sexual satisfaction. (-.438/2.65). The discrepancy is larger for self-employed women, with a difference of approximately one fourth in a standard deviation (-.681/2.65) and women in the other employed category report more than one fourth standard deviation lower sexual satisfaction (-.723/2.65). Noteworthy, part-time employed women do *not* significantly differ from the non-working category. On average, part-time employment is correlated with a somewhat lower sexual satisfaction, with a magnitude in standard deviation of .08 (-.228/2.65), however, the difference is nonsignificant. Though adding employment increased significantly the explained variance in model 2, it should be noted that this was only a modest addition in substantive terms (increase in explained variance of 0.7%, to a total explained variance of 3.6 percent in model 2).

In order to check if the groups (parental leave, home maker, and unemployed) comprising the not working category differed in average sexual satisfaction, separate analyses were conducted excluding specific groups from the not working category, concerning women on parental leave, home makers and unemployed women. For instance, the group parental leave is excluded from the not working group and added as a separate category in the regression analysis. Next, the women who reported to be on parental leave are used as the reference category in a second analysis. This method is also applied to the category home makers and unemployed women. Regression tables of these analyses are presented in appendixes one till six. In all the three analyses, the excluded groups did not significantly differ from the reference

category and fulltime, self-employed and other employed women reported significant lower sexual gratification compared to women who are not working. Thus, by excluding one of the groups from the reference category, the results remain largely unchanged.

When changing the reference group, the results of the analyses did not change, except when unemployed women served as the reference category (see annex six for regression coefficients). None of the working categories (e.g. fulltime, part-time and other employed), plus the not working group significantly differed on sexual satisfaction compared to unemployed women. Meaning that, on average, when unemployed women are the reference category, differences with respect to sexual satisfaction cease to exist. This finding might point towards the increased levels of anxiety and stress that comes with the status unemployed, which in turn, has a negative influence on sexual fulfilment. Rather than lack of time and feelings of fatigue, unemployed women probably suffer from their status as unemployed. Thus, the real discrepancies in terms of sexual satisfaction exist between women who are not presently gainfully employed (i.e. home makers and on parental leave), and the women who are employed. The clear exception are the part-time employed women, whose average sexual fulfilment did not significantly differ with that of not working women.

5. Conclusion & Discussion

Based on theoretical mechanisms, it has been suggested that women's entrance in the employment market is related to rising divorce rates and declining marriages, holding women's emancipation accountable for family destabilisation (e.g. Baumeister & Vohs 2004; Baumeister et al., 2017; Regnerus, 2017). However, through employment, women gained more rights over the years, resulting in more stability and satisfaction in intimate partnerships (England, 2010). This study contributed to this line of reasoning, by investigating an overlooked, though highly relevant aspect of relationship dynamics, namely women's sexual satisfaction. In particular, if women's earnings from employment are related with higher sexual satisfaction. Two noteworthy findings emerged from the analyses.

First of all, whereas the social exchange tradition (Blau, 1964; Molm & Cook, 1995) suggests that with increasing financial recourses, women should be reporting higher sexual satisfaction in their partnerships, the results indicate the opposite association. Non-working women reported higher sexual satisfaction compared to women who worked fulltime, were self-employed, or belonged to the other working type category. These findings are in line with the literature on time-poverty among women. Adding to this, part-time women did not report lower

sexual gratification than their non-working counterparts. Evidently, working longer hours is known to be correlated with higher levels of fatigue and exhaustion, especially when a second shift is waiting to be fulfilled at home (Blair, 2013). As mentioned before, exhaustion and a lack of energy may cause sexual dysfunction (Burgess, 2004), lower sexual desire (Dengrove, 1968), and lower sexual satisfaction (Oggins, Leber, & Veroff, 1993). Part-time employment or not working at all leaves more time for domestic labour and childcare responsibilities and therefore, lowers the tension of time scarcity mentioned by Hochschild (1989).

The second important finding concerns women who are unemployed. No significant differences emerged from the analysis when unemployed women served as the reference category. Meaning that none of the working categories (e.g. fulltime, part-time and other employed), plus the women who are not working (e.g. parental leave and home makers) differ significantly from unemployed women in terms of sexual satisfaction. Since unemployed women are not struggling with combining a job and a household, it was expected that their sexual satisfaction would be higher than for employed women. However, possibly, due to increased levels of anxiety and stress that comes with the status unemployed (Dooley, Fielding, & Levi, 1996), the benefits of having more time are attenuated. Future research could investigate this assumption and explore the effect of unemployment on sexual satisfaction.

An additional interesting finding involves the significant higher sexual satisfaction for women whose youngest child is above the age of six, compared to women who have no children, while women whose youngest child is below the age of six did not differ from the reference group. One possible explanation is the presence of a selection bias in which women only decide to have children when they consider their partnership as satisfactory. However, this does not explain why women whose youngest is below the age of six did not report higher sexual satisfaction than childless women. Therefore, a second feasible argument could be a combination of the previous mentioned selection bias and the fact that when children age, parents retrieve more time which profits their relationship and thus their sexual satisfaction. As Keizer and Schenk (2012) conclude in their study, relationship satisfaction turned out the be U-shaped for women, meaning that transition to parenthood negatively influences relationship satisfaction. However, when children grow older, relationship satisfaction rises as a results of increased quality time with the partner.

Despite the contributions made in this study, some limitations have to be acknowledged. Foremost, in terms of measurement of the variables, using employment status is not the optimal proxy assessing earnings from employment. Indeed, individual income or even individual income of a woman compared to her partner might be better to test bargaining mechanisms.

However, when using monthly net income as a proxy variable, the number of item non-response would have seriously biased the analyses. Further, work and family dynamics is a complicated process evolving over time, and this contribution is not able to make causal claims. Therefore, longitudinal studies following women from the start of their working career, and not less important, their partners, will provide a more nuanced picture of how women deal with demands from both work and family life. Next, mechanisms underlying the relationship between earnings from employment and sexual satisfaction are not accounted for in this study. Consequently, research on the second shift and its effect on women's sexual satisfaction demand more scrutiny. Finally, The German Family Panel did not provide the opportunity to investigate West and East German women, since only the West-German survey included the variable measuring sexual satisfaction. Research investigating the East-West divide with respect to women's labour market participation and the burden of the second shift is welcomed.

Overall, even though effect sizes in this contribution are rather small, some worthwhile results about women's sexual satisfaction and their employment status can be made. The combination of women's increasing integration in the labour market, which is potentially associated with the burden of the second shift, impose great distress on women and their sexual satisfaction. As mentioned before, sexual health turns out to be a relevant, though undervalued, predictor of overall well-being (Davison, Bell, LaChina, Holden, & Davis, 2009; Liu, Waite, Shen, & Wang, 2016; Rudman 2014). In addition, women's sexual pleasure and desires are generally regarded as a secondary concern (Rowland, 2020), and therefore, it is essential that women's sexual satisfaction and health receive adequate attention. Employment status might not one of the key factors predicting women's sexual satisfaction. Nevertheless, this contribution evidently shows that the chapter on women's sexual satisfaction is far from closed.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

	N	%	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Sexual satisfaction	2980		0.00	10.00	7.13	2.65
Employment status	2980		0.00	4.00		1.27
Not working	960	32.2				
Fulltime employed	909	30.5				
Part-time employed	658	22.1				
Self-employed	124	4.2				
Other, employed	329	11.0				
Controls						
Education	2973		0.00	2.00		
Low	339	11.4				
Middle	1427	47.9				
High	1207	40.5				
Age	2980		14.00	38.00	31.26	5.67
Relationship duration (in years)	2963		0.00	26.00	9.71	6.10
Relationship type	2980		0.00	2.00		0.77
Married cohabiting	1784	59.9				
Cohabiting	684	23.0				
Other type	512	17.2				
Age of youngest child	2973					
No children	1000	33.6				
Below the age of six	1320	44.3				
Above the age of six	653	21.9				
Pregnant	2932		0.00	1.00	0.05	
Infertile	2730		0.00	1.00	0.10	
Valid N	2674					

Table 2: Independent Sample Test on sexual satisfaction and

Groups compared	t	df	Mean difference	Std. Error Difference	CI_{95}
Not employed and full time employed	2.423	1735	.305*	.126	.058; .553
Not employed and part-time employed	2.056	1490	.285*	.139	.012; .557
Not employed and self-employed	2.910	1002	.762**	.262	.248; 1.276
Not employed and other employed	2.537	1118	.496*	.196	.112; .880

Note: ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed tests).

Table 3. Unstandardized regression coefficients for the relationship between employment status and sexual satisfaction (*N* = 2674)

	Model 1	Model 2
Employment status (reference = not working)		
Fulltime		-.438** (.158)
Part-time		-.228 (.142)
Self-employed		-.681* (.269)
Other employed		-.723** (.199)
Education (reference = low)		
Middle	-.223 (.188)	-.194 (.190)
High	-.436* (.194)	-.371 (.197)
Age	-.038** (.013)	-.045** (.013)
Relationship duration	-.041** (.012)	-.040** (.012)
Relationship type (reference = married cohabiting)		
Cohabiting	-.314* (.141)	-.277* (.141)
Other type	.323 (.184)	.387* (.184)
Age of youngest child (reference = no children)		
Below the age of six	-.104 (.135)	-.141 (.158)
Above the age of six	.559** (.196)	.473** (.182)
Pregnant	.278 (.227)	.207 (.227)
Infertile	.281 (.172)	.286 (.171)
Constant	8.808 (.403)	9.164 (.414)
R_2	.029	.036
R_2 change	.029**	.007**

Note: ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed tests), standard errors are reported in parentheses.

Annex 1: Parental leave as separate category.

Table 4. Unstandardized regression coefficients (*N* = 2674)

	Model 1	Model 2
Employment status (reference = unemployed & home maker)		
Fulltime		-.454** (.170)
Part-time		-.196 (.159)
Self-employed		-.650* (.278)
Other employed		-.693** (.210)
Parental leave		.082 (.184)
Education (reference = low)		
Middle	-.223 (.188)	-.203 (.191)
High	-.436* (.194)	-.382 (.199)
Age	-.038** (.013)	-.038** (.013)
Relationship duration	-.041** (.012)	-.040** (.012)
Relationship type (reference = married cohabiting)		
Cohabiting	-.314* (.141)	-.277* (.141)
Other type	.323 (.184)	.389* (.184)
Age of youngest child (reference = no children)		
Below the age of six	-.104 (.135)	-.154 (.161)
Above the age of six	.559** (.196)	.472** (.182)
Pregnant	.278 (.227)	.202 (.227)
Infertile	.281 (.172)	.290 (.172)
Constant	8.808 (.403)	9.140 (.417)
R_2	.029	.036
R_2 change	.029**	.007**

Note: ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed tests), standard errors are reported in parentheses.

Annex 2: Parental leave as reference category.

Table 5. Unstandardized regression coefficients (*N* = 2674)

	Model 1	Model 2
Employment status (reference = parental leave)		
Fulltime		-.536** (.197)
Part-time		-.278 (.181)
Self-employed		-.731* (.291)
Other employed		-.775** (.230)
Unemployed & home maker		.082 (.184)
Education (reference = low)		
Middle	-.223 (.188)	-.203 (.191)
High	-.436* (.194)	-.382 (.199)
Age	-.038** (.013)	-.038** (.013)
Relationship duration	-.041** (.012)	-.040** (.012)
Relationship type (reference = married cohabiting)		
Cohabiting	-.314* (.141)	-.279* (.141)
Other type	.323 (.184)	.389* (.184)
Age of youngest child (reference = no children)		
Below the age of six	-.104 (.135)	-.154 (.161)
Above the age of six	.559** (.196)	.472** (.182)
Pregnant	.278 (.227)	.202 (.227)
Infertile	.281 (.172)	.290 (.172)
Constant	8.808 (.403)	9.222 (.434)
R_2	.029	.036
R_2 change	.029**	.007**

Note: ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05 (two-tailed tests), standard errors are reported in parentheses.

Annex 3: Home maker as separate category.

Table 6. Unstandardized regression coefficients (*N* = 2674)

	Model 1	Model 2
Employment status (reference = unemployed & parental leave)		
Fulltime		-.457** (.173)
Part-time		-.199 (.162)
Self-employed		-.654* (.279)
Other employed		-.694** (.213)
Home maker		.066 (.182)
Education (reference = low)		
Middle	-.223 (.188)	-.185 (.192)
High	-.436* (.194)	-.361 (.199)
Age	-.038** (.013)	-.038** (.013)
Relationship duration	-.041** (.012)	-.040** (.012)
Relationship type (reference = married cohabiting)		
Cohabiting	-.314* (.141)	-.279* (.141)
Other type	.323 (.184)	.389* (.184)
Age of youngest child (reference = no children)		
Below the age of six	-.104 (.135)	-.138 (.159)
Above the age of six	.559** (.196)	.473** (.182)
Pregnant	.278 (.227)	.209 (.227)
Infertile	.281 (.172)	.283 (.171)
Constant	8.808 (.403)	9.131 (.434)
R_2	.029	.036
R_2 change	.029**	.007**

Note: ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed tests), standard errors are reported in parentheses.

Annex 4: Homemaker as reference category.

Table 7. Unstandardized regression coefficients (*N* = 2674)

	Model 1	Model 2
Employment status (reference = home maker)		
Fulltime		-.524** (.193)
Part-time		-.266 (.176)
Self-employed		-.720** (.289)
Other employed		-.761** (.224)
Unemployed & parental leave		-.066 (.182)
Education (reference = low)		
Middle	-.223 (.188)	-.185 (.192)
High	-.436* (.194)	-.361 (.199)
Age	-.038** (.013)	-.038** (.013)
Relationship duration	-.041** (.012)	-.040** (.012)
Relationship type (reference = married cohabiting)		
Cohabiting	-.314* (.141)	-.272 (.141)
Other type	.323 (.184)	.391* (.185)
Age of youngest child (reference = no children)		
Below the age of six	-.104 (.135)	-.138 (.159)
Above the age of six	.559** (.196)	.473* (.182)
Pregnant	.278 (.227)	.209 (.227)
Infertile	.281 (.172)	.283 (.171)
Constant	8.808 (.403)	9.197 (.424)
R_2	.029	.037
R_2 change	.029**	.008**

Note: ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed tests), standard errors are reported in parentheses.

Annex 5: Unemployed as separate category.

Table 8. Unstandardized regression coefficients (*N* = 2674)

	Model 1	Model 2
Employment status (reference = parental leave & home maker)		
Fulltime		-.563** (.168)
Part-time		-.285 (.149)
Self-employed		-.744* (.272)
Other employed		-.788** (.204)
Unemployed		.-.314 (.254)
Education (reference = low)		
Middle	-.223 (.188)	-.182 (.190)
High	-.436* (.194)	-.369 (.197)
Age	-.038** (.013)	-.038** (.013)
Relationship duration	-.041** (.012)	-.040** (.012)
Relationship type (reference = married cohabiting)		
Cohabiting	-.314* (.141)	-.258* (.142)
Other type	.323 (.184)	.413* (.185)
Age of youngest child (reference = no children)		
Below the age of six	-.104 (.135)	-.174 (.160)
Above the age of six	.559** (.196)	.468* (.182)
Pregnant	.278 (.227)	.197 (.227)
Infertile	.281 (.172)	.289 (.171)
Constant	8.808 (.403)	9.233 (.417)
R_2	.029	.037
R_2 change	.029**	.008**

Note: ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05 (two-tailed tests), standard errors are reported in parentheses.

Annex 6: Unemployed as reference category.

Table 9. Unstandardized regression coefficients (*N* = 2674)

	Model 1	Model 2
Employment status (reference = unemployed)		
Fulltime		-.222 (.250)
Part-time		.056 (.225)
Self-employed		-.402 (.339)
Other employed		-.447 (.285)
Parental leave & home maker		.341 (.254)
Education (reference = low)		
Middle	-.223 (.188)	-.182 (.190)
High	-.436* (.194)	-.369 (.197)
Age	-.038** (.013)	-.038** (.013)
Relationship duration	-.041** (.012)	-.040** (.012)
Relationship type (reference = married cohabiting)		
Cohabiting	-.314* (.141)	-.258 (.142)
Other type	.323 (.184)	.413* (.185)
Age of youngest child (reference = no children)		
Below the age of six	-.104 (.135)	-.174 (.160)
Above the age of six	.559** (.196)	.468* (.182)
Pregnant	.278 (.227)	.197 (.227)
Infertile	.281 (.172)	.289 (.171)
Constant	8.808 (.403)	8.892 (.460)
R_2	.029	.037
R_2 change	.029**	.008**

Note: ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05 (two-tailed tests), standard errors are reported in parentheses.

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Appendix 1: Syntax (SPSS)

```
* Encoding: UTF-8.
GET
  FILE='/Users/nathalieaerts/Downloads/ZA5678_v9-
1_pairfam/Data/SPSS/English/anchor1.sav'.
DATASET NAME DataSet1 WINDOW=FRONT.

*Select only women.
frequencies sex_gen.
descriptives sex_gen.

select if (sex_gen = 2).

frequencies sex_gen.
descriptives sex_gen.
select if not missing (sex_gen).

*Sample size = 6373.

*Exclude homosexuals.
descriptives homosex.
frequencies homosex.
select if (homosex = 0).
select if not missing (homosex).

*N=6280.

*Exclude single women.
frequencies relstat.
descriptives relstat.
recode relstat (2=2) (3=3) (4=4)(5=5)(7=7)(8=8)(10=10)(11=11)(ELSE=SYSMIS) into
relation.
value labels relation 2'never married LAT' 3'never married COHAB' 4'married COHAB'
5'married noncohabiting' 7'divorced/separated LAT' 8'divorced separated COHAB'
10'widowed LAT' 11'widowed COHAB'.
recode relation (2=2)(3=1)(4=0)(5=2)(7=2)(8=1)(10=2)(11=1)(ELSE=SYSMIS) into
relationtype.
value labels relationtype 0'married COHAB' 1'not married COHAB' 2'other'.
descriptives relationtype.
frequencies relationtype.
select if not missing (relationtype).
GRAPH
  /LINE(SIMPLE)=MEAN(sat5) BY relationtype.

*N=4070.

*Sexual satisfaction = DV.
descriptives sat5.
```

```
frequencies sat5.
select if not missing (sat5).

*N=3644.

*Labour force status = IV.
descriptives lfs.
frequencies lfs.
Recode lfs (2=0)(3=0)(4=0)(5=0)(7=0)(8=4)(9=1)(10=2)(11=4)(13=4)(12=3)(ELSE=SYSMIS) into employment.
value labels employment 0'not working' 1'fulltime' 2'parttime' 3'self-employed' 4'other employed'.
descriptives employment.
frequencies employment.
GRAPH
 /LINE(SIMPLE)=MEANS(sat5) BY employment.
select if not missing (employment).


*CONTROL VARIABLES.
*Age.
descriptives age.
frequencies age.
GRAPH
 /LINE(SIMPLE)=MEANS(sat5) BY age.

*Pregnancy & infertility.
frequencies infertile pregnant.
descriptives infertile pregnant.
GRAPH
 /LINE(SIMPLE)=MEANS(sat5) BY infertile.
GRAPH
 /LINE(SIMPLE)=MEANS(sat5) BY pregnant.

*Education.
descriptives isced.
frequencies isced.
recode isced (0 thru 2=0)(3 thru 4=1)(5 thru 8=2)(ELSE=SYSMIS) into education.
value labels education 0'low' 1'middle' 2'high'.
descriptives education.
frequencies education.

*Relationship duration.
*Remove duration of 36 years (put is as missing), since it is impossible when the max. age is 38.
descriptives sd5e1by.
frequencies sd5e1by.
compute duration= (2009- sd5e1by).
frequencies duration.
```

```
descriptives duration.
GRAPH
 /LINE(SIMPLE)=MEANS(sat5) BY duration.

*Age youngest child.
*First change missing value -3 (does not apply) to valid N.
descriptives ykage.
frequencies ykage.
recode ykage (-3=0) (0 thru 71=1)(72 thru 233= 2)(ELSE=SYSMIS) into youngest.
value labels youngest 0'below 6' 1'above 6' 2'no children'.
descriptives youngest.
frequencies youngest.

*ANALYSIS.

*IV: employment status, create dummies because it is a categorical variable.
descriptives employment.
frequencies employment.
compute notworking=(employment=0).
compute fulltime=(employment=1).
compute parttime=(employment=2).
compute selfemployed=(employment=3).
compute otheremployed=(employment=4).
*Not working is reference category, not working women.

*Relationship type.
descriptives relationtype.
frequencies relationtype.
compute married=(relationtype=0).
compute COHABnm=(relationtype=1).
compute other=(relationtype=2).

*Age youngest child.
descriptives youngest.
frequencies youngest.
compute none=(youngest=0).
compute below=(youngest=1).
compute above=(youngest=2).

*Education.
descriptives education.
frequencies education.
compute low=(education=0).
compute middle=(education=1).
compute high=(education=2).

*Descriptives table.
descriptives notworking fulltime parttime selfemployed otheremployed married COHABnm
other sat5 age infertile pregnant low middle high duration none below above.
descriptives employment relationtype sat5 age infertile pregnant education duration youngest.
```

```
frequencies notworking fulltime parttime selfemployed otheremployed married COHABnm other sat5 age infertile pregnant low middle high duration none below above.
frequencies employment relationtype sat5 age infertile pregnant education duration youngest.

select if not missing (age).
select if not missing (infertile).
select if not missing (pregnant).
select if not missing (education).
select if not missing (duration).
select if not missing (youngest).

DATASET ACTIVATE DataSet1.
REGRESSION
  /MISSING LISTWISE
  /STATISTICS COEFF OUTS R ANOVA CHANGE ZPP
  /CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10)
  /NOORIGIN
  /DEPENDENT sat5
  /METHOD=ENTER COHABnm other age infertile pregnant middle high duration below above
  /METHOD=ENTER fulltime parttime selfemployed otheremployed.

*ROBUSTNESS CHECK.
descriptives lfs.
frequencies lfs.
recode lfs (2=5)(3=0)(4=0)(5=0)(7=0)(8=4)(9=1)(10=2)(11=4)(13=4)(12=3)(ELSE=SYSMIS) into parentalleave.
value labels parentalleave 0'not working' 1'fulltime' 2'parttime' 3'self-employed' 4'other employed' 5'parental leave'.
descriptives parentalleave.
frequencies parentalleave.
compute notworking1=(parentalleave=0).
compute fulltime1=(parentalleave=1).
compute parttime1=(parentalleave=2).
compute selfemployed1=(parentalleave=3).
compute otheremployed1=(parentalleave=4).
compute parentalleave1=(parentalleave=5).

*Remove parentalleave from reference category.
DATASET ACTIVATE DataSet1.
REGRESSION
  /MISSING LISTWISE
  /STATISTICS COEFF OUTS R ANOVA CHANGE
  /CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10)
  /NOORIGIN
  /DEPENDENT sat5
  /METHOD=ENTER COHABnm other age infertile pregnant middle high duration below above
  /METHOD=ENTER fulltime1 parttime1 selfemployed1 otheremployed1 parentalleave1.
```

*Results stay the same, parental leave does not significantly differ from the not working category.

*Use parental leave as reference category.

```
DATASET ACTIVATE DataSet1.
REGRESSION
  /MISSING LISTWISE
  /STATISTICS COEFF OUTS R ANOVA CHANGE
  /CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10)
  /NOORIGIN
  /DEPENDENT sat5
  /METHOD=ENTER COHABnm other age infertile pregnant middle high duration below above
  /METHOD=ENTER fulltime1 parttime1 selfemployed1 otheremployed1 notworking1.


descriptives lfs.
frequencies lfs.
recode lfs (2=0)(3=5)(4=0)(5=0)(7=0)(8=4)(9=1)(10=2)(11=4)(13=4)(12=3)(ELSE=SYSMIS) into homemaker.
value labels homemaker 0'not working' 1'fulltime' 2'parttime' 3'self-employed' 4'other employed' 5'homemaker'.
descriptives homemaker.
frequencies homemaker.
compute notworking2=(homemaker=0).
compute fulltime2=(homemaker=1).
compute parttime2=(homemaker=2).
compute selfemployed2=(homemaker=3).
compute otheremployed2=(homemaker=4).
compute homemaker2=(homemaker=5).
```

*Home maker as separate category.

```
DATASET ACTIVATE DataSet1.
REGRESSION
  /MISSING LISTWISE
  /STATISTICS COEFF OUTS R ANOVA CHANGE
  /CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10)
  /NOORIGIN
  /DEPENDENT sat5
  /METHOD=ENTER COHABnm other age infertile pregnant middle high duration below above
  /METHOD=ENTER fulltime2 parttime2 selfemployed2 otheremployed2 homemaker2.
```

*Results stay the same, home maker does not significantly differ from the not working category.

*Home maker as reference category.

```
DATASET ACTIVATE DataSet1.
REGRESSION
  /MISSING LISTWISE
  /STATISTICS COEFF OUTS R ANOVA CHANGE
```

```
  /CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10)
  /NOORIGIN
  /DEPENDENT sat5
  /METHOD=ENTER COHABnm other age infertile pregnant middle high duration below
above
  /METHOD=ENTER fulltime2 parttime2 selfemployed2 otheremployed2 notworking2.


descriptives lfs.
frequencies lfs.
recode lfs
(2=0)(3=0)(4=5)(5=0)(7=0)(8=4)(9=1)(10=2)(11=4)(13=4)(12=3)(ELSE=SYSMIS) into
unemployed.
value labels unemployed 0'not working' 1'fulltime' 2'parttime' 3'self-employed' 4'other
employed' 5'unemployed'.
descriptives unemployed.
frequencies unemployed.
compute notworking3=(unemployed=0).
compute fulltime3=(unemployed=1).
compute parttime3=(unemployed=2).
compute selfemployed3=(unemployed=3).
compute otheremployed3=(unemployed=4).
compute unemployed3=(unemployed=5).

*Unemployed as separate category.
DATASET ACTIVATE DataSet1.
REGRESSION
  /MISSING LISTWISE
  /STATISTICS COEFF OUTS R ANOVA CHANGE
  /CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10)
  /NOORIGIN
  /DEPENDENT sat5
  /METHOD=ENTER COHABnm other age infertile pregnant middle high duration below
above
  /METHOD=ENTER fulltime3 parttime3 selfemployed3 otheremployed3 unemployed3.
*Results stay the same, unemployment does not significantly differ from the not working
category.

*Unemployed as reference category.
DATASET ACTIVATE DataSet1.
REGRESSION
  /MISSING LISTWISE
  /STATISTICS COEFF OUTS R ANOVA CHANGE
  /CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10)
  /NOORIGIN
  /DEPENDENT sat5
  /METHOD=ENTER COHABnm other age infertile pregnant middle high duration below
above
  /METHOD=ENTER fulltime3 parttime3 selfemployed3 otheremployed3 notworking3.
```

```
descriptives employment.
frequencies employment.

T-TEST GROUPS=employment(0 1)
  /MISSING=ANALYSIS
  /VARIABLES=sat5
  /CRITERIA=CI(.95).

T-TEST GROUPS=employment(0 2)
  /MISSING=ANALYSIS
  /VARIABLES=sat5
  /CRITERIA=CI(.95).

T-TEST GROUPS=employment(0 3)
  /MISSING=ANALYSIS
  /VARIABLES=sat5
  /CRITERIA=CI(.95).

T-TEST GROUPS=employment(0 4)
  /MISSING=ANALYSIS
  /VARIABLES=sat5
  /CRITERIA=CI(.95).
```