

Parental leave uptake and the work environment: a vignette experiment



October 8th 2022
Stéfanie André
ESA RN26 mid-term conference Berlin

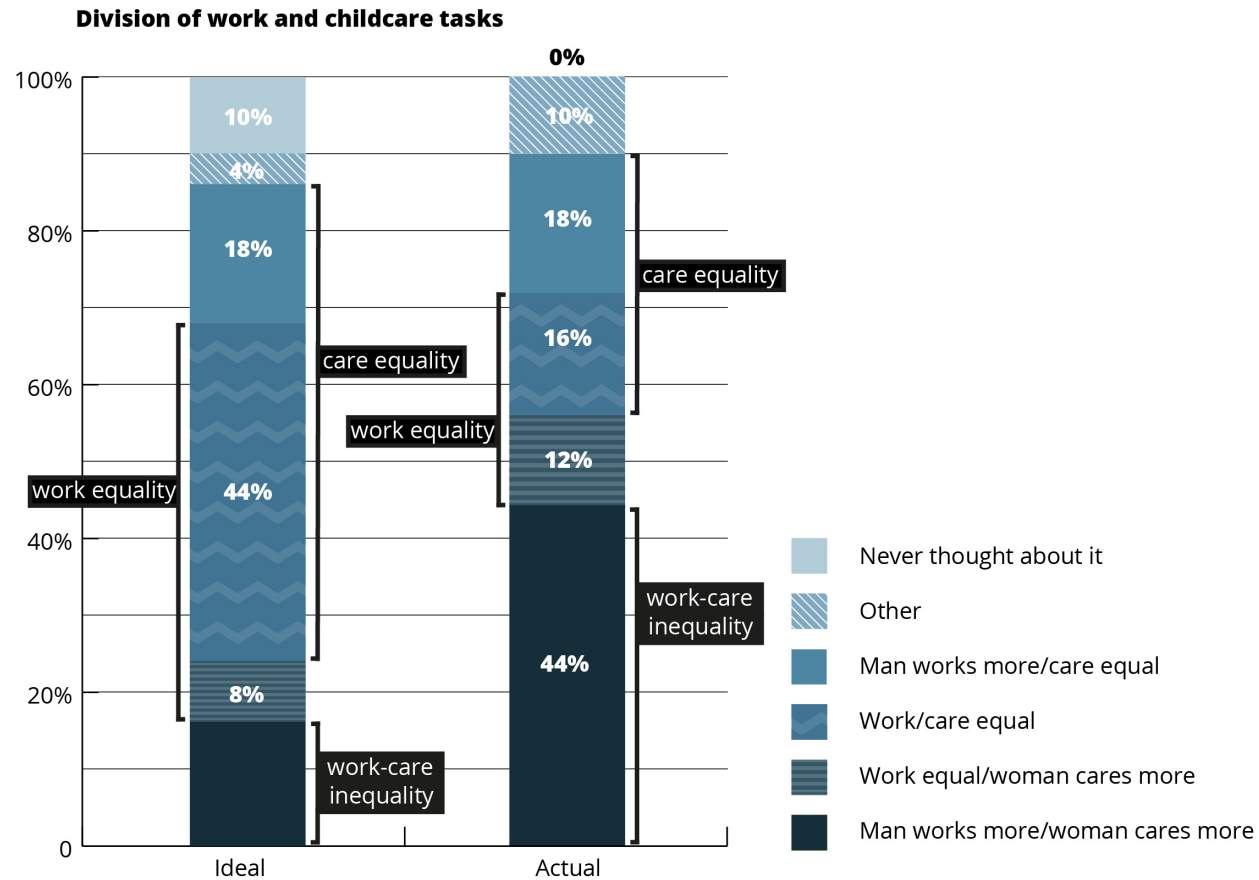


WORK-LIFE BALANCE

- *Male-breadwinner model versus dual earner model*
- Netherlands: one-and-a-half earner model
- Work-life balance: a healthy and sustainable balance between work and private life (among which care tasks)
- How to improve the Work-Life Balance?
 - Part-time work
 - Flexible working
 - Homeworking
 - **Parental leave**



IDEAL AND ACTUAL SITUATION



Source: Emancipation monitor, 2020 (Van den Brakel & Portegijs, 2020)

WORK-FAMILY POLICIES

- Fathers use work-family policies less often than mothers (Munn & Greer, 2005)
 - Financial reasons (Van Breeschoten et al, 2019, Bueno & Grau-Grau, 2021)
 - Workplace characteristics (Bygren & Duvander, 2006; Van Breeschoten et al., 2019)
- *Which work environment factors explain the potential take-up of parental leave by male civil servants working in 8 Dutch municipalities?*



PATERNITY AND PARENTAL LEAVE IN THE NETHERLANDS IN THE FIRST YEAR

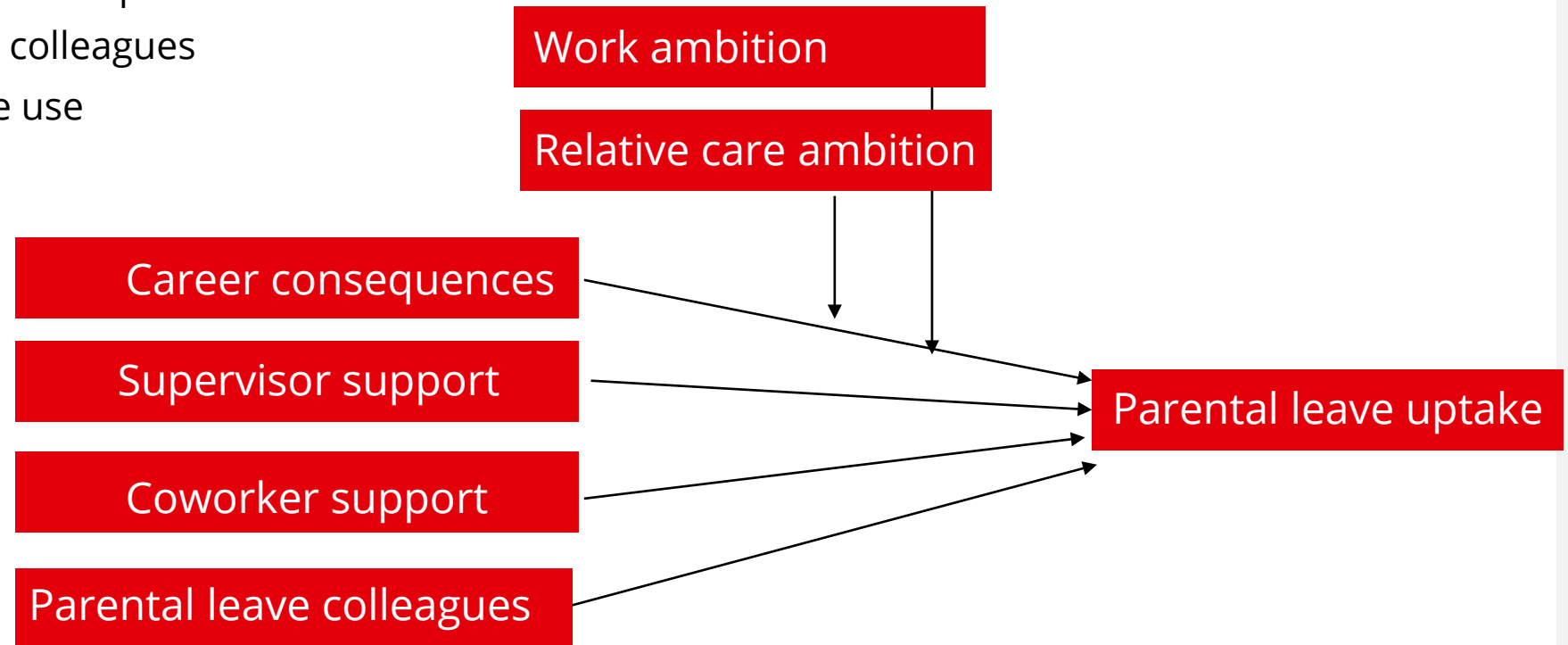
- 2018 and earlier
 - 2 days of paternity leave (paid)
 - Unpaid parental leave (26 weeks in the first 8 years)
 - In sectors like the local government 13 weeks partly paid parental leave
- 2019
 - 5 days of paternity leave (paid)
 - Unpaid parental leave (26 weeks in the first 8 years)
 - In sectors like the local government 13 weeks partly paid parental leave

PATERNITY AND PARENTAL LEAVE IN THE NETHERLANDS IN THE FIRST YEAR

- 1 July 2020
 - 5 days of paternity leave (paid)
 - 5 weeks of partly paid parental leave (70% pay, in the first year)
 - Unpaid leave (maximum of 26 weeks, in the first 8 years)
- 2 August 2022
 - 5 days of paternity leave (paid)
 - 9 weeks of partly paid parental leave (70% pay, in the first year)
 - Unpaid leave (maximum of 26 weeks, in the first 8 years)

THEORY & HYPOTHESES

- Four factors from the literature are distinguished that influence leave uptake:
 - Career consequences
 - Support from the supervisor
 - Support from colleagues
 - Parental leave use



DATA & METHODS

- Data collection in 8 Dutch municipalities that were part of the FLAME project (**FL**exible work **A**rrangements among **M**en)
- Online questionnaire with 16 vignettes (4 per person)
- Career Ambition Scale (Dijkers et al, 2010)
- Self-developed scale for relative care ambition (alpha = 0,66)
- Controls: age, partner, children at home, work hours

- N=572 men
- Multilevel regression analysis

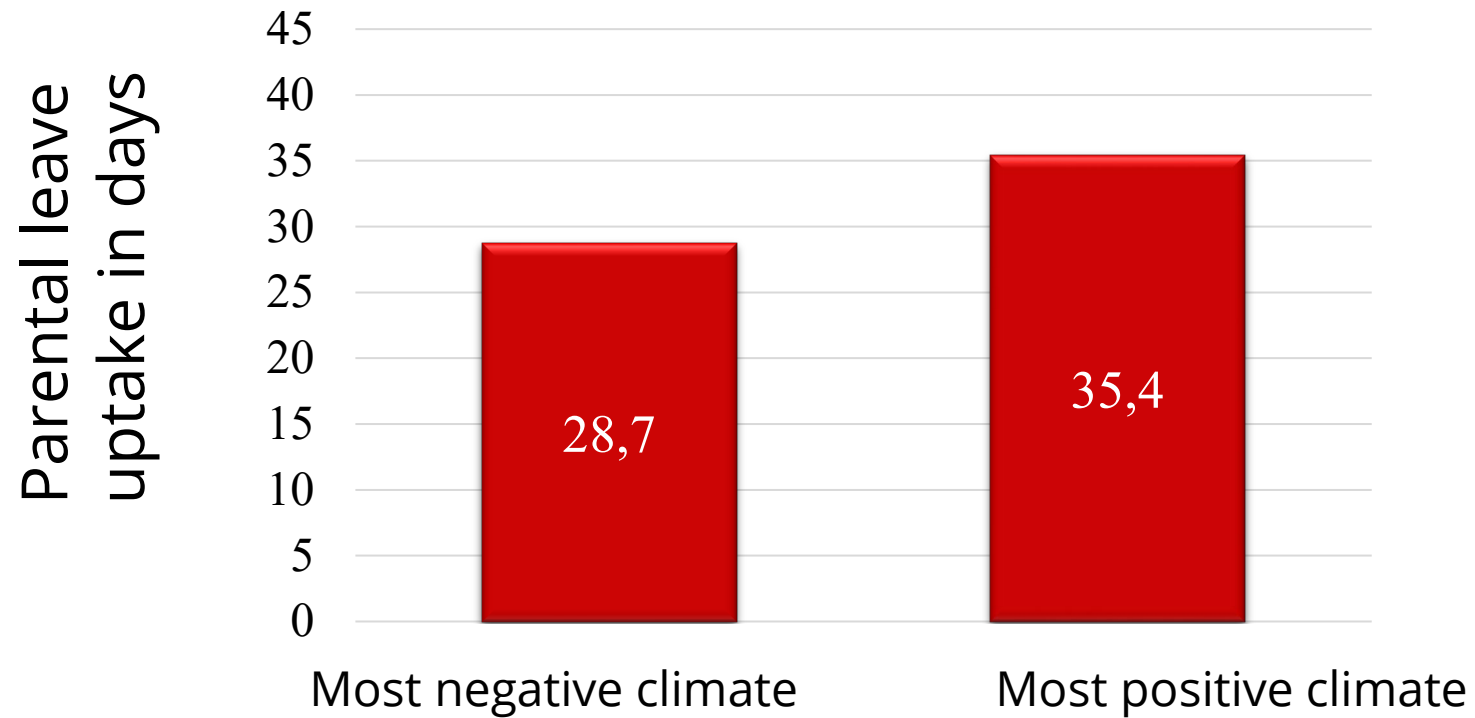
VIGNETTE EXPERIMENT

Imagine that you and your partner are expecting your first or next child. The child is wanted, and the birth is approaching. Parents will soon have the legal right to up to nine weeks of partly paid parental leave. Assume you have the financial capacity to make use of this leave. The maximum of nine weeks must be taken in the child's first year of life.

You have the following information about your **work environment**:

- Taking parental leave **may have negative/does not have** consequences for your career opportunities within the municipality.
- Your manager does **not support/support** taking parental leave.
- Most of your direct colleagues' **do not support/support** taking parental leave.
- A **small/large** proportion of the fathers in your department have taken parental leave in recent years.

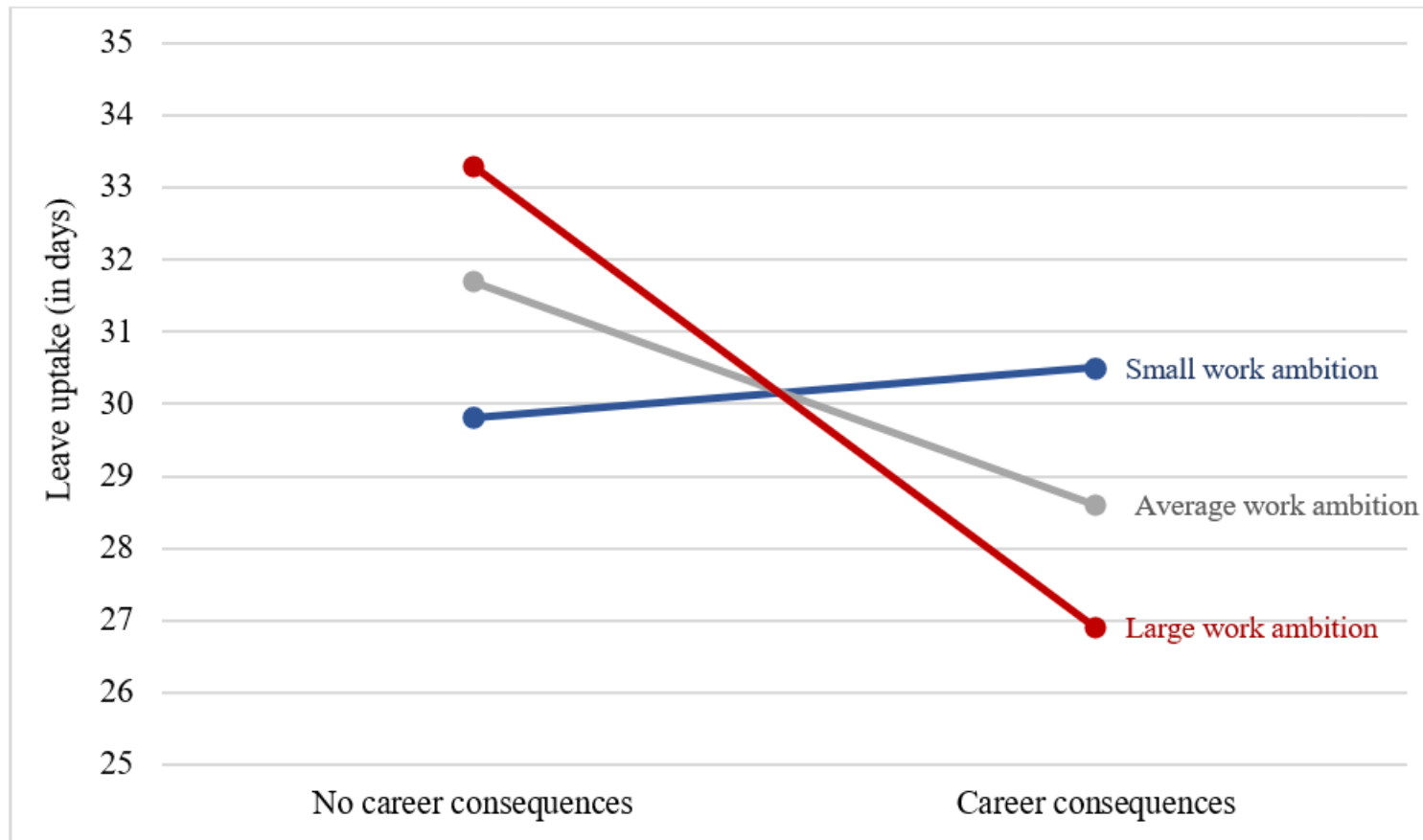
DIFFERENCE IN PARENTAL LEAVE UPTAKE BETWEEN MOST EXTREME VIGNETTES



MULTILEVEL REGRESSION ANALYSIS

	b
Intercept	6,44***
Career consequences	-0,62***
Support supervisor	0,42***
Support coworkers	0,30***
Use parental leave coworkers	0,10
Controls	Yes

INTERACTION EFFECT WITH WORK AMBITION



CONCLUSION

- Largest effect of career consequences, followed by support supervisor and coworker. No effect of parental leave uptake of colleagues.
- Effect of career consequences was stronger for those with a stronger work ambition, point at diversity among men.
- No significant effect of relative care ambition (although $p < 0.10$)



DISCUSSION

- Give fathers a place in the scientific debate on work-life balance and work-life family policy (Munn & Greer, 2015)
- Frame of reference for men might be difficult, because the policy was not implemented yet
- Select sample of municipalities that participated in the research

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thank you for your attention!

Questions or comments? stefanie.andre@ru.nl



Data were collected within the FLAME project (*Flexibele Work Arrangements Among Men*) which was (partly) financed by a Radboud Gender & Diversity Grant. The research was also supported by the Radboud Interdisciplinary Grant for Consortiums which was granted to the Radboud WORKLIFE consortium.

This publication is part of the project *Fathers combining work and care* with project number VI.Veni.211S.046 of the NWO talent programme VENI 2021 which is (partly) financed by the Dutch Research Council (NWO).

REFERENCES

- Bueno, X., & Grau-Grau, M. (2021). Why is part-time unpaid parental leave (still) gendered? Narratives and strategies of couples in Spain. *Journal of Family Issues*, 42(3), 503-526.
- Bygren, M., & Duvander, A.-Z. (2006). Parents' workplace situation and fathers' parental leave use. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 68(2), 363–372.
- Dijkers, J., Van Engen, M., & Vinkenburg, C. (2010). Flexible work: Ambitious parents' recipe for career success in The Netherlands. *Career Development International*, 15(6), 562-582.
- Groeneveld, S., Steijn, B., & Van der Parre, P. (2009). Joining the Dutch civil service. *Public Management Review*, 11(2), 173-189.
- Munn, S.L., & Greer, T.W. (2015). Beyond the “ideal” worker: Including men in work–family discussions. In M.J. Mills (Ed.), *Gender and the workfamily experience: An intersection of two domains* (pp. 1–38). New York: Springer International Publishing.
- Van Breeschoten, L., Begall, K., Poortman, A.-R., & Den Dulk, L. (2019). Investments in working parents: The use of parental leave. In T. Van der Lippe & Z. Lippényi (Eds.), *Investments in a sustainable workforce in Europe* (pp. 78–97). London: Routledge
- Van den Brakel, M., Portegijs, W., & Hermans, B. (2020). *Emancipatiemonitor 2020*. Den Haag: Textcetera.