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## How individual gender role beliefs, organizational gender norms, and national gender norms predict parents' work-Family guilt in Europe

Lianne Aarntzen <sup>a\*</sup>, Tanja van der Lippe<sup>b</sup>, Elianne van Steenberg<sup>a</sup> and Belle Derks<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Social, Health and Organizational Psychology, Utrecht University, Utrecht, the Netherlands; <sup>b</sup>Sociology, Utrecht University, Utrecht, the Netherlands

### ABSTRACT

The guilt that mothers feel about the time and energy that they invest in work instead of their family is often proposed to be an important reason for why mothers 'opt-out' the career track. We sought to understand *if* mothers indeed experience more work-family guilt than fathers and *how* this relates to both their own gender role beliefs and organizational gender norms across nine European countries. Analyses draw on the European Social Workforce Survey, with data from 2619 working parents nested in 110 organizations in 9 European countries. Results showed that when fathers and mothers work more than a full-time week (a) fathers with traditional gender role beliefs felt less guilty, and (b) especially mothers working in an organization with low support for the parent role of working fathers felt guilty. Explorative analyses showed no effect of national gender norms on gender differences in guilt. Our results are beneficial for organizations and policy makers by showing that guilt in working mothers can be reduced by developing egalitarian organizational norms, in which there is support for the parent role of mothers *and* fathers, potentially helping mothers to focus on their careers alongside their families.

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The traditional family with the man as sole breadwinner and the woman as sole caregiver is no longer representative for how parents in today's Western society structure their life. Mothers' participation in the workforce increased tremendously in the last decades (Cipollone et al., 2014), partners in heterosexual couples more often attain similar levels of education than before (Domański & Przybysz, 2007), and fathers take on more household responsibilities and childcare than they once did (Bünning, 2015). As a result, in the majority of European families with children under 18 both the father and the mother work (OECD, 2017). Yet, despite these changes, work-family divisions in the majority of

**CONTACT** Lianne Aarntzen  e.m.j.aarntzen@utwente.nl & Belle Derks  b.derks@uu.nl

\*Lianne Aarntzen carried out this research while affiliated with Utrecht University but she currently is affiliated with the University of Twente.

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heterosexual couples remain highly gendered with men still working most of the paid hours and women still taking on the majority of household and caregiving tasks (Craig & Mullan, 2010; European Commission, 2018; Pew Research Center, 2019). Such gendered divisions appear to develop and/or magnify after the first child is born (Endendijk et al., 2018; Grunow et al., 2012). Although such gendered tasks distributions occur across Europe – in comparison to men, women are employed less, work more often part-time, and do more unpaid care tasks – significant country differences can be observed (European Commission, 2018). For example, in 2018 the difference between the employment rates of men and women in Sweden was only 3.8%, but 11% in The Netherlands, 14% in Hungary and even 27.7% in Malta (European Commission, 2018).

As underlying reason for this persistent gendered work-family division within heterosexual couples, it has been proposed that mothers experience more guilt than fathers when they invest a lot of time and energy in their work instead of their family (i.e. work-family guilt; Redrick, 2011; Sandberg, 2013). This guilt, in turn, is argued to cause mothers to opt-out the career track and focus on their family instead (Redrick, 2011; Sandberg, 2013). Research indeed confirms that high work-family guilt predicts more traditional work-family choices among mothers (Aarntzen et al., 2019). Specifically, on days that mothers experience more work-family guilt, they think more about reducing their working hours and make plans to increase the time they spend with their children (Aarntzen et al., 2019). Whether work-family guilt indeed is gendered and an underlying reason for gendered tasks divisions is not known yet. Furthermore, it is unclear to what extent gender differences in guilt are universal or dependent upon the context in which parents are embedded, such as their national and/or organizational context. Considering that the endorsement of traditional gender norms is stronger in some organizations and countries than in others, would this then also imply that gender differences in work-family guilt are stronger in some organizations and countries than in others?

Empirical findings on gender differences in guilt are mixed: While some studies show that mothers experience more guilt than fathers (Borelli et al., 2017; Glavin et al., 2011), other studies do not find gender differences in guilt (Korabik, 2017; Livingston & Judge, 2008). In this paper, we propose that to gain insight in *when* gender differences in work-family guilt occur, it is crucial to examine the role of the context. Specifically, we propose that work-family guilt arises by a mismatch in the *actual* time and energy that parents invest in their work and their family and how much time and energy parents think that they *should* invest in their work and their family. Moreover, we propose that parents' idea about how they *should* divide their time and energy is in large part based upon parents' own gender role beliefs and gender norms within their immediate context such as the organization they work in and the country they live in. For example, regarding own gender role beliefs, a father who endorses traditional gender role beliefs (i.e. who strongly believes that mothers should be the primary caregiver and fathers should be the primary breadwinner) may not feel guilty at all about working a 60-hour week (he is just fulfilling his breadwinner role), while a father who does not endorse such traditional gender role beliefs would feel very guilty. In a similar vein, regarding organizational gender norms, a mother who works in an organization with relatively egalitarian gender norms may feel less work-family guilt than a mother who works in an organization with more traditional gender norms. Finally, regarding national gender norms, a mother may experience more work-family guilt about working fulltime when

she lives in a country with more traditional gender norms than when she lives in a country with more egalitarian gender norms. Note that although national contexts may influence organizational contexts and as such constrain the impact of organizational contexts (Hofstede, 2001; House et al., 2004), empirical evidence suggests that national cultures mostly only explain a small proportion of variance within organizational contexts (i.e. there is room for organizational differentiation; for a review, see Gerhart, 2009). Moreover, heterogeneity in gender outcomes across organizations within the same country (e.g. gender pay gap, Van der Lippe et al., 2019) further justifies making a distinction between the organizational and the national context.

To investigate the role of context in gender differences in work-family guilt, we draw upon a large cross-sectional survey (European Social Workforce Survey; Van der Lippe et al., 2016) containing 2619 employees nested in 110 organizations in nine European countries. These countries include Bulgaria, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Specifically, we examine how working hours are related to mothers' and fathers' work-family guilt, and whether the strength of this relationship depends on their individual gender role beliefs, organizational gender norms, and national gender norms. Studying *if* gender differences in work-family guilt exist, and which micro-, meso-, and macro-level factors drive mothers' and fathers' guilt may help to advance our understanding of how work-family decisions become gendered. The main argument guiding this research is that parents' work-family guilt does not occur in a social vacuum but is dependent upon the context in which parents find themselves. We move beyond previous research on gendered work-family guilt which merely looked at the role of individual gender beliefs (Korabik, 2017; Livingston & Judge, 2008; Martínez et al., 2011) by also exploring how contextual factors (i.e. parents own working hours, the organizational gender norms, and national gender norms) may drive gender differences in guilt.

## ***Explanations for work-family guilt***

### ***Individual gender role beliefs***

Gender role beliefs are widely held beliefs about what roles are appropriate for men and what roles are appropriate for women (e.g. Eagly & Karau, 2002). With regard to parenting, normative gender role beliefs persist that the time and energy that a mother dedicates to her children is crucial for children's well-being and is perceived to be more important than the time and energy that fathers and other caregivers dedicate to the children (Haines & Stroessner, 2019; Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013). Gender schema theory proposes that people continuously integrate novel ideas about gender from their contexts (including ideas of their family, neighbors, friends, colleagues) into their own gender schema (Bem, 1981). This way they develop their own ideas, expectations and norms about how men and women behave, which will subsequently influence how they process and experience gender-related information (Bem, 1981). Therefore, it seems a valid hypothesis that mothers experience more work-family guilt than fathers. This may especially be the case when parents themselves more strongly endorse such gender role beliefs.

However, research findings on how parents' gender together with their gender role beliefs shape their work-family guilt are mixed. For example, one study suggests that stronger traditional gender role beliefs are related to higher work-family guilt in

mothers but are not related to work-family guilt in fathers (Korabik, 2017). Another study, however, indicates that stronger traditional gender role beliefs are related to lower work-family guilt in fathers but do not predict work-family guilt in mothers (Martinez et al., 2011). Yet another study suggests that irrespective of their gender, parents feel more work-family guilt when their gender role beliefs are more egalitarian (Livingston & Judge, 2008). An explanation for these inconsistent findings is that previous research barely took parents' own work-context (e.g. their working hours) into account. Specifically, we expect that work-family guilt occurs when there is a mismatch between the actual time and energy that parents spend on work/family and the time and energy they think that they *should* spend on work/family. As such, the more traditional parents' gender role beliefs, the more work-family guilt mothers may experience and the less work-family fathers may experience, but only when mothers and fathers work approximately the same number of hours. Gender role beliefs, however, also predict mothers' and fathers' actual working hours often resulting in mothers working less hours than fathers (Corrigan & Konrad, 2007). Therefore, the relationship between fathers' and mothers' gender role beliefs and their work-family guilt may be clouded when *not* taking into account that parents with traditional gender-role beliefs tend to make different decisions regarding work hours than parents with more egalitarian gender role beliefs. For example, if a traditional-minded mother works 10 h a week and reports equal levels of work-family guilt as an egalitarian-minded mother who works 40 h a week, the conclusion that their levels of guilt are independent of their gender beliefs is too simplistic. Specifically, only when working approximately the same number of hours per week, we expect mothers with more traditional gender role beliefs to experience more work-family guilt than mothers with more egalitarian gender role beliefs and vice versa for fathers.

At the same time, gender role beliefs are changing and therefore not only mothers but also fathers may increasingly experience work-family guilt when they work many hours. For instance, fathers are involved in childcare more and more (Jones & Mosher, 2006). Additionally, although fathers still devote less time than mothers to childcare, twice as many fathers compared to mothers wish that they could spend more time with their children (i.e. 46% vs. 23%; Pew Research Center, 2013). Thus, traditional behaviors of fathers (i.e. working many hours) may no longer fit with their desire to be an active parent. Therefore, for fathers who believe that men and women are equals in raising children (i.e. fathers who endorse egalitarian gender role beliefs), the relationship between working hours and work-family guilt may be equally strong as for the average mother. However, for fathers who endorse more traditional gender role beliefs, the relationship between working hours and work-family guilt may be weaker or even absent. After all, when a father thinks that raising a child is best done by the mother and that his primary contribution to the family is financial, he has little to feel guilty about when working many hours; he is just fulfilling his breadwinner role. In sum, we hypothesize that parents experience more work-family guilt when they work longer hours but expect this main effect to be stronger for mothers who endorse more traditional gender role beliefs, and weaker for fathers who endorse more traditional gender role beliefs (*Hypothesis 1*).

### **Organizational gender norms**

Parents' work-family guilt may not only depend upon the extent to which parents themselves endorse traditional gender role beliefs but also upon the context in which parents

find themselves. An important context that may influence parents' work-family guilt is the organization in which parents work, considering that parents have (almost) daily interactions with their co-workers. Research indeed shows that organizational norms impact parents' family experiences (Allen, 2001; Thompson et al., 1999). To clarify our reasoning on how gender norms in organizations may impact parents' work-family guilt, we present a self-conceived example. A mother of a three-year old child who goes away on a business trip for a few days, may initially not feel bad about being away from her family. However, critical comments from colleagues on how her child may suffer from her absence at home may still induce her to feel guilty. In a similar vein, when the mother would work in an organization in which mothers and fathers are seen as equals in raising children, she may get reassurance from her colleagues that her husband will manage at home and therefore feels better about being away from home. Furthermore, when a father would work in an organization in which co-workers often ask how his children are doing, he may feel more responsible for childcare and, in turn, he may be quicker to experience work-family guilt than a father who is working in an organization in which co-workers assume that fathers have a female partner who takes on all the childcare.

It is widely recognized that organizations have their own distinctive culture in which there are shared beliefs, values and norms that shape employees' experiences and behaviors (Trice & Beyer, 1993). Within such an organizational culture often strong gender norms are embedded and reproduced (Acker, 2012). The top of the organization decides what goals and policies are adopted (Hultin & Szulkin, 2003), which signals to the larger organization how the top feels that employees should ideally combine their work and family. For example, when top management aims to be accommodating to fathers' parenting responsibilities, they may have developed policies to facilitate fathers' active participation in childcare, signaling to employees that it is important for fathers to be actively involved in childcare. This, in turn, is likely to result in an organization with more egalitarian gender norms. Organizational norms have been shown to be influential in shaping fathers' and mothers' work-family experiences. For example, mothers who work in an organization in which the dominant cultural ideal is that work and family are two non-overlapping spheres experience a high need to suppress their parent identity (Cahusac & Kanji, 2014). Other research shows that the more an organization supports and values employees' family life, the less work-family conflict employees experience (Allen, 2001; Thompson et al., 1999).

Although organizations are increasingly stimulated to create egalitarian gender norms (think of quota to increase the number of women in top positions that are imposed on large organizations in some countries; Idea, 2020), organizational efforts to reduce gender inequality are mostly focused on improving mothers' work-family experiences (Wise & Bond, 2003). However, just targeting women's work-family balance can backfire, because while such maternal benefits can reduce the stress of balancing multiple roles, they also communicate the norm to mothers that they are more responsible for taking care of the children than their male partner is (Gerson, 2002). Therefore, we argue that only organizations that treat fathers as active caregivers (e.g. supporting paternal leave) communicate the norm to fathers and mothers that they are seen as equal partner in raising children (see Haas & Hwang, 2007 for similar reasoning). We propose that in such 'father-friendly' organizations, gender differences in work-family guilt will be smaller (or even absent) than in organizations with more traditional gender norms. The

unique dataset used in our study allows us to study how organizational gender norms (i.e. measured as top management's support for fathers' work-family balance rated by the HR-manager) relates to parents' own work-family guilt (i.e. rated by the parent him/herself). Specifically, we hypothesize that in an organization with more traditional gender norms the effect of working hours on work-family guilt is stronger for mothers while weaker for fathers, whereas in an organization with more egalitarian gender norms the effect of working hours on work-family guilt is more similar for mothers and fathers (*Hypothesis 2*).

### ***National gender norms***

Gender differences in work-family guilt may not only be explained by individual gender role beliefs and organizational gender norms, but also by the national context in which parents live. Countries in Europe differ in their gender norms and gender (in)equality (European Commission, 2018; Lewis et al., 2009). For example, whereas 81% of the Bulgarians agrees with the statement that the most important role of a woman is to take care of her home and family, only 11% of the Swedes agrees with this statement (European Commission, 2018). The belief that mothers' primary role is to take care of her home and family communicates a strong prescriptive norm that mothers *should* prioritize their caregiver role over their worker role. When mothers work many hours, they do not adhere to this norm and therefore may experience more guilt than fathers, who by working many hours actually fulfill their primary role as breadwinner.

In line with the above, national differences in how women's employment affects their well-being have been documented (Lee & Ono, 2008; Treas et al., 2011). For example, working for pay negatively predicts happiness among Japanese women, where women's employment is less institutionalized, but does not predict happiness among U.S. women, where women's employment is more institutionalized (Lee & Ono, 2008). Furthermore, country characteristics such as higher labor force participation of women and more egalitarian gender norms reduce the happiness disadvantage of married full-time working women compared to married women who work part-time or do not work (Treas et al., 2011). Beyond general well-being, a recent study also suggests that maternal guilt is shaped by the country context (Collins, 2020). Specifically, detailed interviews with mothers from different countries showed that all mothers were deeply invested in trying to live-up to the ideal motherhood standard as was culturally defined in their country. When they perceived not to attain this ideal, they felt guilty. For example, a Swedish mother indicated that Swedish mothers are expected to work, and as a result she did not feel guilty about her full-time employment itself. However, a German mother indicated that fulltime work was not seen as a preferred option in Germany for mothers, and it felt like a failure for her as a mother to work full-time. As such in countries where citizens endorse more egalitarian gender norms, mothers may experience more work-family guilt than in countries where citizens endorse more traditional gender norms. To examine how the relationship between working hours and gendered work-family guilt may be shaped by national gender norms, we look at the percentage of citizens who agrees with the statement that the most important role of a woman is to take care of her home and family (based upon statistics of the European Commission; 2018), p. <sup>2</sup> We group countries in an egalitarian cluster (Germany, The Netherlands, Spain, and Sweden; composed of countries in which less than 35% of citizens agrees with this statement) and a traditional cluster (Bulgaria, Finland, Hungary, Portugal, and United Kingdom;

composed of countries in which more than 35% of citizens agrees with this statement). Because only nine countries are included in our dataset, we do just a first exploration on how national context may predict work-family guilt in fathers and mothers. Specifically, although we can test whether countries differ from each other, we cannot be certain whether it is our hypothesized national indicator (i.e. belief that mothers should be the primary caregiver) that accounts for the country differences or whether other cultural differences account for these gender differences (e.g. differences in national income). To study thoroughly how a national indicator of gender culture predicts outcomes, most previous research used at least 25 countries; (Nosek et al., 2009; Gonzales et al., 2004; Treas et al., 2011). However, if we find that the relationship between working longer hours and work-family guilt is stronger for mothers than for fathers *especially* in countries that are categorized as more traditional compared to countries that are categorized as egalitarian, this is a first indication that national gender norms matter in predicting fathers' and mothers' work-family guilt.

## Method

### Sample

To test our hypotheses, we used data from wave 2018 of the European Sustainable Workforce Survey (ESWS; Van der Lippe et al., 2016). The ESWS is a multilevel organizational survey that contains data of employees, managers, and the organization (as reported by the HR-manager) from nine European countries: Bulgaria, Finland, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. In 2018, a total of 8690 (employees and managers) participants nested in 113 organizations participated in the survey. We only included a subset of participants who had at least one child living at home (excluding 5555 responses), worked at least 8 h a week (excluding 152 responses), and had complete information on all relevant measures (excluding 337 responses), resulting in an analytical sample of 2601 participants (47.1% women) nested within 110 organizations.

Participants' (youngest) child was on average 10.42 years old ( $SD = 6.82$ ). Most participants were married to their partner (69.9%) or were living together with their partner (21.2%). As highest educational degree 35.5% of participants had completed a second stage of tertiary education (MA or MSC), 26.8% had completed a first stage of tertiary education (BA or BSC), 16% had completed postsecondary nontertiary education, 13.0% had completed upper secondary education, and 8.3% attained a lower level secondary education or lower degree. Participants worked on average 42.39 h ( $SD = 8.84$ ) a week.

### Measures

**Gender** was measured by a dummy variable: ('Are you male / female?' [0 = male, 1 = female]).

**Work-family guilt** was measured with one item on a five-point Likert scale and was reverse coded: 'How often does it happen that you feel guilty about how your obligations at work are affecting your family?' (1 = Always, 5 = Seldom).

**Individuals' gender role beliefs** were measured with four items on a five-point Likert scale (i.e. 'A man is just as capable of taking care of a baby as a woman', 'It's unnatural for a man to do housework' [reverse coded], 'Man and wife should contribute equally to raising a child', and 'It's good for a young child if the father also contributes to taking care of him/her' [1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree],  $\alpha = .66$ ; see Poortman & Van Der Lippe, 2009).

**Individuals' working hours** was measured with the question: 'How many hours a week do you actually work for this organization? Include any paid or unpaid overtime, but not your commuting time.' Although this was an open question, we recoded this question to have a maximum value of 80 h a week (42 responses were recoded). Not only may an average workweek of more than 80 h be highly unlikely, these replies are also outliers and therefore may influence the findings unproportionally.

**Organizational gender norms** were measured by asking HR-managers to rate their perception of the top management's support for men's work-family balance and consisted of four items on a five-point Likert scale (i.e. 'Top management cares about how men's job affect family life', 'Over time, top management has become more positive towards supporting fathers who try to combine employment and parenthood', 'According to top management, it is OK for men to develop a career and at the same time have a practical responsibility for taking care of children', 'Top management encourages men to take parental leave' [1 = A lot more than other companies, 5 = A lot less than other companies,  $\alpha = .90$ ]). Thus, organizations' score on the *organizational gender culture* was based upon the report of the HR-manager instead of the perception of the participant ( $N = 113$  organizations). This way, we not only aimed to obtain a more objective measure of the organizational culture but we also aimed to prevent common-method bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003).

**National gender norms** were measured by using statistics of the European Commission report (European Commission, 2018) where we looked at the percentage of Europeans who agrees with the statement: 'The most important role of a woman is to take care of her home and family'. Based upon these percentage we created a dichotomous variable in which we coded Sweden (11% agrees), The Netherlands (15% agrees), Germany (28% agrees) and Spain (29% agrees) as egalitarian countries and the United Kingdom (38% agrees), Finland (40% agrees), Portugal (47% agrees), Hungary (78% agrees), and Bulgaria (81% agrees) as traditional countries<sup>2</sup>.

**Control variables.** To control for family circumstances, we added age of (youngest) child, age of (youngest) child squared and whether participants live together with a partner (0 = no, 1 = yes). In addition, we controlled for participants' level of education, the organizational industry (e.g. healthcare) and the country.

### **Analytic strategy**

The hypothesized relationships were analyzed using two-level random-intercept regression models in SPSS 21. In line with the aim of this study to explain cross-organizational variation of the effect of gender on work-family guilt, we allowed the effect of gender to vary across both the individual and the organizational level. First, we estimated a null model (model without predictors) to determine how much of the variance in work-family guilt could be explained by the organization in which parents work. Next, we tested

a model containing only the control variables (e.g. age youngest child), participants' working hours and their gender (i.e. Model 1). Then, to test Hypothesis 1, we tested a model (i.e. Model 2) in which we stepwise added parents' traditional gender role beliefs (step 1), all possible two-way interactions between gender, working hours, and traditional gender role beliefs (step 2) and the hypothesized three-way interaction (step 3). Subsequently, to test Hypothesis 2, we went back to Model 1 and tested a model (i.e. Model 3) in which we stepwise added organizational gender norms (step 1) all possible two-way interactions between gender, working hours, and organizational gender norms (step 2), and the hypothesized three-way interaction (step 3). All predictors were standardized before calculating the interaction. The jackknife procedure was performed to examine the influence of single countries on our results. Finally, to get some insight in the role of national context on the relationship between working hours and guilt, we compared the two country clusters: the traditional country cluster and the egalitarian country cluster. We present these results separately for the country clusters rather than as a three-way interaction (i.e. working hours \* gender \* country cluster) because this better fits our exploratory purpose (i.e. with only nine countries we cannot draw firm conclusions on national context).

## Results

Table 1 shows the correlations between study and background variables. These correlations suggest that participants who had younger children (or one younger child), who had a higher education and who lived together experienced more guilt than participants with older children, lower education or who lived alone. Interestingly, the correlation between gender and guilt in Table 1 suggests that when not adjusting for working hours mothers experienced less work-family guilt than fathers. Table 2 shows the correlations between study and background variables separately for mothers and fathers. These correlations suggest that the more hours parents work the more guilt they experience. Moreover, the correlations suggest that the stronger mothers' gender role beliefs, the less hours they worked while gender role beliefs are uncorrelated with the working hours of fathers

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Among Dependent, Independent, and Background Variables.

	Mean (SD) <sup>a</sup>	Correlations						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Gender <sup>b</sup>	0.47 (0.50)	—						
2. Work-family guilt	2.15 (1.13)	-.05*	—					
3. Age (youngest) child	10.42 (6.82)	.05**	-.07**	—				
4. Living with partner <sup>c</sup>	0.91 (0.28)	-.11**	.04*	-.21**	—			
5. Education <sup>d</sup>	5.75 (1.45)	.09**	.08**	-.26**	.05*	—		
6. Working hours	42.65 (9.47)	-.25**	.15**	-.03	.04	.10**	—	
7. Gender role beliefs	1.80 (0.62)	-.17**	.03	.12	.04*	-.11**	.00	—

Note.  $N = 2601$ . <sup>a</sup>SD = Standard deviation; <sup>b</sup>Gender was coded: 0 for men and 1 for women; <sup>c</sup>Living with partner was coded 0 for no and 1 for yes; <sup>d</sup>Education was coded: 1 not completed primary education, 2 Primary education, 3 Lower level secondary education, 4 Upper secondary education, 5 Post-secondary non-tertiary education, 6 First stage of tertiary education, 7 s stage of tertiary education, 8 Doctoral degree.

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ .

**Table 2.** Correlations Among Dependent, Independent, and Background Variables Separately for Mothers and Fathers.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Work-family guilt	—	-.01	.02	.11**	.09**	.04
2. Age (youngest) child	-.13**	—	-.25**	-.35**	-.06*	.14**
3. Living with partner <sup>b</sup>	.06*	-.14**	—	.14**	.04	-.02
4. Education <sup>c</sup>	.07*	-.19**	-.04	—	.21**	-.09**
5. Working hours	.21**	-.03	-.03	.05	—	-.06*
6. Gender role beliefs	.02	.13	.07**	-.11**	-.03	—

Note.  $N = 2601$ . Correlations for fathers are presented below the diagonal; Correlations for mothers are presented above the diagonal. <sup>a</sup>Gender was coded: 0 for men and 1 for women; <sup>b</sup>Living with partner was coded 0 for no and 1 for yes; <sup>c</sup>Education was coded: 1 not completed primary education, 2 Primary education, 3 Lower level secondary education, 4 Upper secondary education, 5 Post-secondary non-tertiary education, 6 First stage of tertiary education, 7 s stage of tertiary education, 8 Doctoral degree.

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ .

Before testing our hypotheses, we analyzed the null model with organization as Level 2 variable (i.e. model without predictors). This showed that 24.4% of the variance in work-family guilt was due to differences between organizations (i.e. Intraclass correlation = 0.24) and this justifies the need for random-intercept models. In addition, we looked at the effect of gender on guilt when controlling for background variables (e.g. working hours; Model 1). The effect of gender on guilt was not significant ( $B = .15$ ,  $p = .098$ ). Next, we tested our hypotheses. Table 3 provides an overview of the tests of hypotheses including the explained variance computed with the formula of Snijders and Boskers (1994). Appendix A provides an overview of the standardized regression weights of the control variables.

### ***Do parents' own gender role beliefs and their working hours predict how guilty they feel?***

We hypothesized that parents experience more work-family guilt when they work longer hours and that this effect is stronger for mothers who endorse more traditional gender role beliefs and weaker for fathers who endorse more traditional gender role beliefs. Indeed, we found that mothers and fathers experienced more work-family guilt when they worked longer hours (Model 1). Moreover, we found that the two-way interaction between working hours and gender role beliefs on work-family guilt was significant (Model 2, step 2). Simple slopes showed that working hours increased work-family guilt in parents with more egalitarian gender role beliefs ( $-1$  SD;  $B = 0.22$ ,  $t = 4.22$ ,  $p < .001$ ) but working hours was not related to work-family guilt in parents with more traditional gender role beliefs ( $+1$  SD;  $p = .246$ ; the other two 2-way interactions were not significant). To examine if the interplay between gender and gender role beliefs influenced the effect of working hours on guilt, we tested a three-way interaction between parents' gender, their working hours, and their gendered parenting beliefs on guilt (Model 2, step 3). This interaction was significant and is depicted in Figure 1. In contrast to our prediction, for mothers, the effect of working hours on work-family guilt was independent of their own gender role beliefs (slope difference =  $-0.08$ ,  $t = -0.96$ ,  $p = .336$ ). In line with our predictions the effect of working hours on guilt was weaker (even absent) for fathers with more traditional gender role beliefs ( $+1$  SD) than for fathers with more egalitarian

**Table 3.** Multilevel Analyses for Predicting Parents' Work-Family Guilt in Nine European Countries (Control Variables in Appendix A).

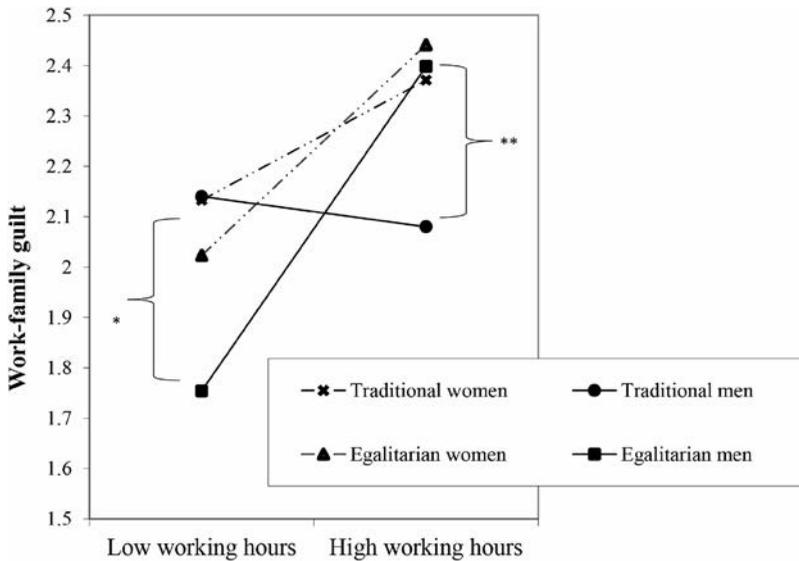
	Model 1	Model 2 (Step 1)	Model 2 (Step 2)	Model 2 (Step 3)	Model 3 (Step 1)	Model 3 (Step 2)	Model 3 (Step 3)
<i>Main effects</i>							
Working hours	0.146 (0.024)**	0.146 (0.241)**	0.139 (0.036)**	0.138 (0.036)**	0.150 (0.025)**	0.185 (0.038)**	0.154 (0.039)**
Gender	0.146 (0.088) †	0.146 (0.088) †	0.140 (0.088)	0.148 (0.088) †	0.159 (0.090) †	0.172 (0.090) †	0.177 (0.091) †
Gender role beliefs		0.001 (0.024) †	0.006 (0.031)	0.015 (0.0315)			
Organizational gender norms					0.092(0.077)	0.079 (0.079)	0.095 (0.079)
<i>Two-way interactions</i>							
Gender role beliefs * Working hours			-0.077 (0.038)*	-0.181 (0.052)**			
Gender role beliefs * Gender			-0.022 (0.049)	0.000 (0.049)			
Working hours * Gender			0.001 (0.049)	0.019 (0.049)		-0.020 (0.049)	0.027 (0.051)
Organizational gender norms * Working hours						0.085 (0.024)**	-0.006 (0.037)
Organizational gender norms * Gender						0.050 (0.089)	0.063 (0.090)
<i>Three-way interactions</i>							
Gender role beliefs * Gender * Working hours				0.140 (0.047)**			
Organizational gender norms * Gender * Working hours							0.154 (0.048)**
Explained variance individual level (level 1)	12.48%	12.48%	12.87%	13.50%	11.70%	11.93%	12.24%
Explained variance organizational level (level 2)	14.48%	14.45%	15.33%	16.49%	15.03%	15.17%	15.35%

Note. Standardized regression weights of Models 1, 2 and 3 are presented. Standard errors are in parentheses. An overview of the standardized regression weights of the control variables is presented in Appendix A. Gender was coded: 0 for men and 1 for women. Explained variance was computed with the formula of Snijders and Boskers (1994).

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , † $p < .10$ .

gender role beliefs ( $-1$  SD) and mothers (all slope differences  $> 0.150$ ,  $t > 2.15$ ,  $p < .04$ ). Specifically, *only* for fathers with more traditional gender role beliefs working more hours did *not* result in more work-family guilt ( $B = -0.04$ ,  $t = -0.67$ ,  $p = .502$ ) while working more hours did predict higher work-family guilt in fathers with more egalitarian gender role beliefs ( $B = 0.32$ ,  $t = 5.11$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and mothers with more egalitarian gender role beliefs ( $B = 0.20$ ,  $t = 3.85$ ,  $p < .01$ ) as well as mothers with more traditional gender role beliefs ( $B = 0.12$ ,  $t = 2.06$ ,  $p = .039$ ).

Unexpectedly, we also found that when working fewer hours ( $-1$  SD) fathers with more egalitarian gender role beliefs ( $-1$  SD) reported even lower levels of guilt compared to fathers with more traditional gender role beliefs ( $+1$  SD;  $B = 0.32$ ,  $t = 4.97$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and mothers irrespective of their gender role beliefs (slope difference =  $-0.14$ ,  $t = -2.20$ ,  $p = .03$  [i.e. slope of gender role beliefs on work-family guilt, is stronger for fathers than

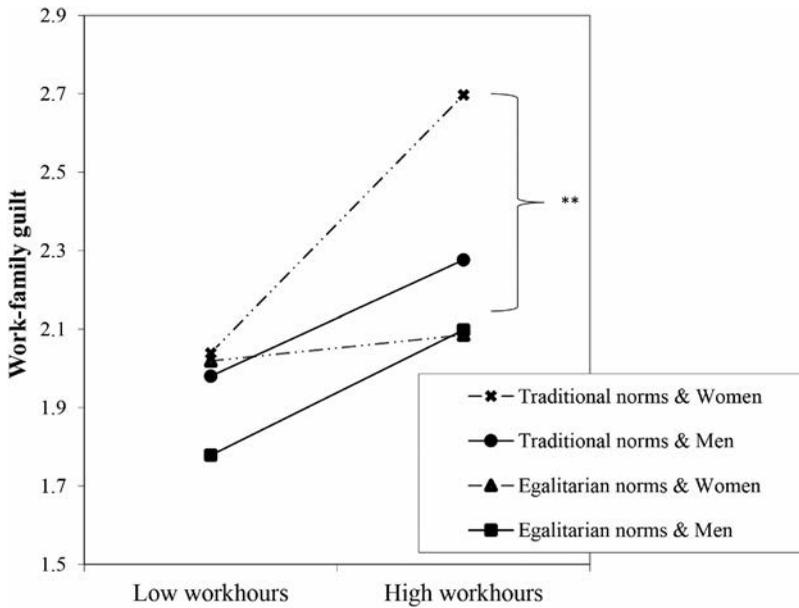


**Figure 1.** Fathers' and mothers' work-family guilt predicted by their traditional gender role beliefs (egalitarian =  $-1$  SD; traditional =  $+1$  SD) and their working hours (low =  $-1$  SD; high =  $+1$  SD). \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ .

mothers when they work few hours]). The jackknife procedure showed that results stayed largely the same when single countries were removed from the analyses, except the interaction between gender, working hours and individual gender role beliefs went to marginal significant when excluding Germany and disappeared when excluding Hungary, although the direction of relationships remained the same.<sup>1</sup> Together, these results partially confirm our hypothesis, showing that when parents work more hours, they experience more work-family guilt *except* fathers with more traditional gender role beliefs. Furthermore, work-family guilt is lowest among fathers with more egalitarian gender role beliefs who work relatively few hours. However, in contrast to our hypothesis, we do not find that the relationship between working hours and work-family guilt is stronger for mothers with more traditional gender role beliefs than for mothers with more egalitarian gender role beliefs.

### ***Does organizational support for fathers' work-family balance and parents' working hours predict how guilty parents feel?***

We hypothesized that in an organization with less support for fathers' work-family balance the effect of working hours on work-family guilt is stronger for mothers while weaker for fathers, whereas in an organization with more support for fathers' work-family balance the effect of working hours on work-family guilt is similar for mothers and fathers. First, we found a significant two-way interaction between working hours and organizational norms on work-family guilt (model 3, step 2). Simple slopes showed that working hours increased work-family guilt in both parents who worked in a more egalitarian organization ( $-1$  SD;  $B = 0.10$ ,  $t = 2.51$ ,  $p = .01$ ) and parents who worked in a more traditional organization ( $+1$  SD;  $B = 0.27$ ,  $t = 5.57$ ,  $p < .001$ ) but the effect was stronger for parents who



**Figure 2.** Fathers' and mothers' work-family guilt predicted by the gender norms of their organization (egalitarian =  $-1$  SD; traditional =  $+1$  SD) and their working hours (low =  $-1$  SD; high =  $+1$  SD). \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ .

worked in a more traditional organization (the other two 2-way interactions were not significant). Furthermore, we also found that the predicted three-way interaction between parents' gender, their working hours, and organizational gender norms was significant (Model 3, step3). This interaction is depicted in Figure 2.

In line with our prediction, the effect of working hours on work-family guilt was stronger for mothers who worked in a more traditional organization ( $+1$  SD;  $B = 0.33$ ,  $t = 7.73$ ,  $p < .001$ ) than for mothers who worked in a more egalitarian organization (i.e. the effect was even absent for them;  $-1$  SD;  $B = 0.03$ ,  $t = 0.68$ ,  $p = .497$ ) and for fathers independent of the organizational norms (traditional organization:  $B = 0.15$ ,  $t = 2.70$ ,  $p = .007$ ; egalitarian organization:  $B = 0.16$ ,  $t = 3.07$ ,  $p = .002$ ; all slope differences  $> 0.160$ ,  $t > 2.20$ ,  $p < .03$ ). In contrast to our prediction, for fathers the effect of working hours on work-family guilt was independent of gender norms of their organization (slope difference =  $-0.01$ ,  $t = -0.16$ ,  $p = .87$ ). The jackknife procedure showed that results stayed exactly the same when single countries were removed from the analyses. Together, these results partially confirm our hypothesis, showing that work-family guilt is highest among mothers who work many hours in an organization with more traditional gender norms while levels of guilt do not differ among fathers and mothers who work many hours in an organization with more egalitarian gender norms. However, we do not find that in an organization with more traditional gender norms, the effect of working hours on work-family guilt is weaker for fathers than in organizations with more egalitarian gender norms.

**Table 4.** Multilevel Analyses for Predicting Parents' Work-Family Guilt in Country Clusters (Standardized regression weights are presented).

	National gender culture	
	Egalitarian	Traditional
Gender	0.052 (0.114)	0.223 (0.127)†
Working hours	0.113 (0.056)*	0.149 (0.047)**
Gender X Working hours	0.013 (0.073)	0.024 (0.065)

Note. Standard errors are in parentheses. Control variables are presented in Appendix B. Gender was coded: 0 for men and 1 for women.

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , † $p < .10$ .

### ***How does the effect of gender on work-family guilt vary across European countries?***

Table 4 shows the results for the hypothesized gender differences in work-family guilt depending upon participant' working hours separately for the two country clusters (i.e. division in traditional and egalitarian countries based upon national mothering norms). Results are similar for the countries that are grouped as egalitarian (i.e. Sweden, The Netherlands, Germany, and Spain) and the countries that are grouped as traditional (i.e. the United Kingdom, Finland, Portugal, Hungary, and Bulgaria)<sup>2,3</sup>. First, working hours again significantly predicted parents' work-family guilt in both the traditional and egalitarian countries. Second, we did not find a main effect of gender on guilt in both country clusters. Finally, we did not find an interaction effect between working hours and gender on work-family guilt in both country clusters. To conclude, in contrast to our reasoning, we do *not* find evidence for the hypothesis that especially in traditional countries (compared to egalitarian countries) working longer hours is related to higher work-family guilt in mothers than fathers.

### **General discussion**

Addressing how mothers' and fathers' work-family guilt is shaped by their own gender role beliefs and gender norms within their context (i.e. organization and country) may help us understand more deeply why work-family divisions within the majority of heterosexual two-parent families remain intertwined with parents' gender. This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the conditions under which work-family guilt becomes gendered. Using unique data of 2601 employees nested within 110 organizations in nine European countries, we examined how working hours are related to mothers' and fathers' work-family guilt depending upon their individual gender role beliefs, gender norms within their organization, and their country. Note that we do *not* provide an extensive overview of all contexts that may be important in shaping parents' work-family guilt (e.g. partner, neighborhood, etc.), but we looked at the contexts that we could investigate with our dataset. Our study results in substantive findings at the individual and the organizational level.

The first conclusion, at the individual level, is that although, in general, parents experience more work-family guilt when they work longer hours, fathers with relatively strong traditional gender role beliefs are an exception to this rule. This implies that when fathers believe that mothers are superior in caregiving, they are protected against

feeling guilty, even when they work many hours. Unexpectedly, we also found that when working fewer hours, fathers with more egalitarian gender role beliefs (i.e. who believe that mothers and fathers are equally capable in taking care of children) felt even *less* guilty compared to other parents (i.e. traditional fathers and both traditional and egalitarian mothers). One possible explanation is that working fewer hours than the average employee is more remarkable for fathers than for mothers (i.e. mothers usually work less hours than fathers) and as such fathers may receive higher praise and experience more satisfaction about *how* their low working hours benefit their family resulting in less guilt. This is in line with research showing that fathers experience more praise about their parenting skills when they care for their children than mothers (e.g. Haines & Stroessner, 2019).

The second conclusion is that the organizational context clearly shapes mothers' work-family guilt. Specifically, the relationship between working hours and work-family guilt does not differ among mothers and fathers in an organization with *high* support for men's work-family balance, while in an organization characterized by *low* support for men's work-family balance, mothers who work many hours (i.e. hereby deviating from the traditional mother role) experience much more work-family guilt than fathers who work many hours. This is in line with prior research showing the impact of organizational norms on employees' work-family experiences (e.g. Allen, 2001; Cahusac & Kanji, 2014; Thompson et al., 1999).

The third conclusion is that gender beliefs and norms appear to influence men's and women's work-family experiences differently. Organizational gender cultures did only predict mothers' work-family guilt and not fathers' work-family guilt while individual gender role beliefs only predicted fathers' but not mothers' work-family guilt. One explanation for why the relationship between working hours and work-family guilt does not depend upon traditional gender role beliefs of mothers is that mothers with more traditional gender role beliefs, only work many hours when it is easy for them to justify their working hours and to not feel guilty about it, for example, when there is financial necessity. Empirical evidence indeed shows that working out of financial necessity makes it easier for mothers to justify their working hours compared to other working motives (e.g. working for personal fulfillment; Heckert et al., 1998). Furthermore, an explanation for why the relationship between working hours and work-family guilt does not depend upon the organizational context for fathers is that men and women are differently influenced by organizational cultures (Bellou, 2010), and it could be that mothers are more confronted than fathers with gender norms within their organization. For example, in a popular blog a working mother explains that she receives many questions and comments on how she combines work and family (e.g. 'Was it a hard decision to go back to work'; Campoamor, 2016, para 8) while she perceives that fathers never receive similar questions and comments (Campoamor, 2016). Because gender norms within the organizational context may be less communicated to fathers, their own gender role beliefs may become more important in shaping their levels of work-family guilt in comparison with mothers. We recommend future research to further investigate the extent to which mothers indeed are more confronted with gendered parenting norms in organizations compared to fathers and how this affects their work-family experiences.

Finally, we did not find that national endorsement of traditional mothering norms affects the relationship between working hours and fathers' and mothers' work-family

guilt. We may not have picked up the role of national context because only nine countries were included, and we only looked at one indicator of national gender role beliefs. Therefore, we encourage future research to further examine this using a large sample of parents nested within many different countries (i.e.  $n > 30$ ). Furthermore, in addition to the national endorsement of traditional mothering beliefs, it may be interesting to investigate how other national indicators of gender norms such as gender policies regarding paternity leave predict gender differences in work-family guilt. Alternatively, it could also be the case that national gender norms are less important in shaping parents' work-family experiences than their direct context, such as their organization. For example, even if a mother lives in a country in which the gender norm strongly prescribes that her primary role should be to take care of her children, she may still feel good about working a full-time week when her direct context (i.e. her organization, her family, her neighbors, her friends) endorse more egalitarian gender norms.

Our findings substantially contribute to the literature on gendered work-family guilt because they show that the importance of taking into account the work context (e.g. working hours, gender norms within the organization) of parents when examining the gendered aspect of work-family guilt. Previous research often examined the effect of gender and gender role beliefs on work-family guilt without considering this work context (Korabik, 2017; Livingston & Judge, 2008; Martínez et al., 2011). For example, Livingston and Judge (2008) did not find that the interplay between gender, gender role beliefs and the degree of work-family interference that participants experienced predicted their levels of guilt. However, we propose that this may be the case because the experience of work-family interference is already gendered in itself. For example, a mother who endorses traditional gender beliefs may already think of working an eight-hour workday as a high work-family interference while a mother who endorses more egalitarian gender beliefs may not see this as a work-family interference at all. Therefore, we encourage future research to always take into account more objective work-context measures, such as parents' working hours.

An important implication for organizations is that by creating more equal gender treatment by supporting fathers' parent role (e.g. introducing extra paternity leave and stimulating men to take up this leave), you can actually improve mothers' work-family experience by reducing their guilt. This, in turn, may create more opportunities for female employees to focus on their career while they are still satisfied with how they fulfill their mother role. When trying to encourage women to fully utilize their capabilities and interests in career pursuits, the focus often has been on how to change factors directly related to work. For example, promoting higher career self-efficacy in women as a way to improve women's career development (Hackett & Betz, 1981). In this paper, we show that organizations should not overlook how they can contribute to improving family factors indirectly related to work (e.g. reduce work-family guilt).

Our study raises several questions as well, such as what happens when we look at other aspects of the organizational gender culture? In this study, we focused on support for fathers' work-family balance but we encourage future research to also look at other aspects of the organizational gender culture such as support for mothers' work-family balance. We suggest that well-intended organizational policies that focus exclusively on helping mothers in creating work-family balance may backfire because they communicate to mothers that they are solely responsible for taking care of the children and the

household which may elicit work-family guilt in mothers. However, when organizations combine support for mothers' work-family balance with equal support for fathers' work-family balance, they are likely to reduce maternal guilt. We propose that this may be the case because in such organizations, mothers are not only supported in their work-family balance, but it is also communicated to mothers that they are not solely responsible for childcare and household. We encourage future research to further explore what underlying effects of a 'father-friendly' organization reduce mothers' work-family guilt (e.g. do direct colleagues and managers talk differently about the work-family division in a 'father-friendly culture compared to a less 'father-friendly' culture or do they see the 'father-role' of their male colleagues to a bigger extent?).

Furthermore, it would be valuable in future research to take into account the role of the broader context of parents instead of just focusing on the organizational context, such as gender role beliefs of partners, families, neighbors and friends. It would be interesting to disentangle which factors are most important in explaining parents' work-family guilt. Are this the gender norms endorsed by the partner or is the organizational context more important? Moreover, we encourage researchers to collect longitudinal data because this way we will be better able to infer causality on how contexts *influence* parents' work-family guilt and how this guilt in turn may *influence* the work-family choices that parents make.

## Conclusion

Using a large-scale survey of employees nested within organizations, this study demonstrates under what conditions working mothers experience more work-family guilt than working fathers. First, this study shows that the more fathers endorse traditional gender role belief (i.e. believe that mothers are the most important caregiver), the less likely they are to feel guilty when working many hours. Moreover, this study demonstrates that when parents work more hours, mothers will experience more guilt than fathers but only if they work in an organization with more traditional gender norms while in an organization with more egalitarian gender norms mothers and fathers experience similar levels of guilt. As such, creating equal treatment of fathers and mothers in work environments can be an important step in preventing gendered work-family experiences, possibly reducing gendered work-family choices.

## Notes

1. Results of the jackknife procedure are available upon request.
2. We also explored the interplay between working hours and gender when dividing the countries in three clusters: egalitarian countries (i.e. the Netherlands and Sweden), middle countries (i.e. Germany, Finland, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom), and traditional countries (i.e. Hungary and Bulgaria). Here, we find that only in the traditional cluster an interaction effect between working hours and gender ( $B = 0.22$ ,  $SE = .09$ ,  $t[920.85] = 2.32$ ,  $p = 0.21$ ). Simple slope analysis reveals that this interaction means that while for men working more hours does not result in more work-family guilt ( $p = .47$ ), for women working more hours increases their work-family guilt ( $B = .16$ ,  $t = 3.58$ ,  $p < .001$ ).
3. Additionally, we explored gender differences in work-family guilt depending upon participant' working hours for each country separately, see Appendix C for an overview.

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## Notes on contributors

**Lianne Aarntzen** completed her PhD at Utrecht University on work-family guilt as a gendered phenomenon. From 2020, she works as a postdoctoral researcher at Twente University investigating the professional identity of STEM students.

**Tanja van der Lippe** is a Professor of Sociology of Households and Employment Relations at Utrecht University. She is also head of the Department of Sociology and research director ICS Utrecht. Her research interests are in the area of work-family linkages in Dutch and other societies. For her research she received a number of large-scale grants from Dutch and European Science Foundations.

**Elianne van Steenbergen** is a Professor by Special Appointment in the Psychology of Supervision at Utrecht University and a senior supervisory officer at the Dutch Authority for the Financial Markets (AFM). Her research focuses on stimulating compliance and ethical behavior in organizations. She is also an expert on work-life balance, leadership and organizational cultures.

**Belle Derks** is a Professor of Social and Organizational Psychology at Utrecht University. Her research focuses on psychological (motivation, self-esteem), physiological (cardiovascular) and neural (EEG/ERP) consequences of the stereotyping that women and ethnic minorities face in work- and educational settings. For her research she acquired several research grants, such as the NWO VENI (2008) and NWO VIDI (2015).

## ORCID

Lianne Aarntzen  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3835-8123>

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## Appendices

### Appendix A. Effects of Control Variables of Table 3 (Predicting Parents’ Work-Family Guilt)

Control variables	Model 1	Model 2 (Step 1)	Model 2 (Step 2)	Model 2 (Step 3)	Model 3 (Step 1)	Model 3 (Step 2)	Model 3 (Step 3)
<i>Individual level</i>							
Age (youngest) child	−0.062 (0.053)	−0.062 (0.053)	−0.061 (0.053)	−0.070 (0.053)	−0.060 (0.054)	−0.067 (0.054)	−0.071 (0.054)
Age (youngest) child squared	−0.038 (0.051)	−0.037 (0.052)	−0.039 (0.052)	−0.031 (0.052)	−0.039 (0.052)	−0.034 (0.052)	−0.028 (0.052)
Partner	0.048 (0.079)	0.048 (0.079)	0.048 (0.079)	0.047 (0.079)	0.047 (0.079)	0.058 (0.081)	0.066 (0.081)
Level of education	0.057 (0.017)**	0.082 (0.025)**	0.081 (0.025)**	0.819 (0.025)**	0.082 (0.081)**	0.084 (0.026)**	0.083 (0.026)**
<i>Industry<sup>a</sup></i>							
Manufacturing	0.035 (0.232)	0.035 (0.232)	0.036 (0.231)	0.031 (0.229)	0.100 (0.250)	0.122 (0.250)	0.100 (0.250)
Healthcare	0.119 (0.129)	0.119 (0.129)	0.120 (0.128)	0.121 (0.127)	0.170 (0.138)	0.164 (0.138)	0.175 (0.138)
Higher education	0.068 (0.079)	0.068 (0.079)	0.069 (0.079)	0.068 (0.078)	(0.083) (0.026)	0.085 (0.083)	0.084 (0.084)
Transport	0.081 (0.069)	0.081 (0.069)	0.081 (0.069)	0.078 (0.068)	0.081 (0.072)	0.088 (0.072)	0.080 (0.072)
Financial services	−0.020 (0.610)	−0.020 (0.061)	−0.020 (0.061)	−0.018 (0.060)	−0.038 (0.065)	−0.034 (0.065)	−0.037 (0.065)
<i>Country<sup>b</sup></i>							
Bulgaria	−0.209 (0.300)	−0.209 (0.301)	−0.212 (0.299)	−0.207 (0.297)	−0.251 (0.309)	−0.220 (0.309)	−0.251 (0.309)
Finland	−0.066 (0.372)	−0.066 (0.372)	−0.072 (0.370)	−0.074 (0.367)	−0.037 (0.372)	−0.007 (0.371)	−0.037 (0.371)
Germany	−0.331 (0.381)	−0.331 (0.381)	−0.344 (0.378)	−0.341 (.375)	−0.274 (0.385)	−0.232 (0.385)	−0.302 (0.385)
Hungary	0.005 (0.314)	0.004 (0.314)	0.012 (0.312)	0.024 (0.310)	−0.151 (0.326)	−0.151 (0.325)	−0.170 (0.325)
Netherlands	−0.079 (0.291)	−0.080 (0.291)	−0.065 (0.289)	−0.039 (0.287)	−0.160 (0.293)	−0.154 (0.292)	−0.157 (0.292)
Portugal	−0.008 (0.359)	−0.008 (0.359)	−0.002 (0.357)	0.009 (0.354)	0.025 (0.372)	0.049 (0.371)	0.025 (0.371)
Sweden	−0.002 (0.330)	−0.002 (0.330)	0.005 (0.328)	0.016 (0.325)	−0.013 (0.335)	−0.005 (0.334)	−0.013 (0.335)

(Continued)

Continued.

Control variables	Model 1	Model 2 (Step 1)	Model 2 (Step 2)	Model 2 (Step 3)	Model 3 (Step 1)	Model 3 (Step 2)	Model 3 (Step 3)
Spain	-0.152 (0.394)	-0.152 (0.394)	-0.139 (0.392)	-0.113 (0.389)	-0.091 (0.412)	-0.065 (0.411)	-0.091 (0.412)

Note. Standardized regression weights are presented. Standard errors are in parentheses.

<sup>a</sup>Reference category is telecommunication; <sup>b</sup>Reference category is United Kingdom.

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , † $p < .10$ .

### **Appendix B. Effects of control variables of Table 4 (Predicting work-Family guilt with country clusters)**

	National gender norms	
	Egalitarian	Traditional
<i>Individual level</i>		
Age (youngest) child	0.206 (0.087)*	-0.147 (0.076)†
Age (youngest) child squared	-0.396 (0.105)**	0.059(0.065)
Partner	-0.146 (0.109)	0.256 (0.115)*
Level of education	0.129 (0.038)**	0.048 (0.034)
<i>Industry<sup>a</sup></i>		
Manufacturing	0.413 (0.316)	-.091 (0.298)
Healthcare	0.204 (0.190)	0.109 (0.165)
Higher education	0.132 (0.110)	0.047 (0.107)
Transport	0.090 (0.088)	0.164 (0.097)†
Financial services	0.080 (0.080)	-0.065 (0.082)

Note. Standardized regression weights are presented. Standard errors are in parentheses.

<sup>a</sup>Reference category is telecommunication.

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , † $p < .10$ .

### Appendix C. Multilevel analyses for Predicting parents' work-Family guilt for each country separately

	Bulgaria	Finland	Germany	Hungary	Netherlands	Portugal	Spain	Sweden	UK
Gender	0.425 (0.191)*	0.259 (0.369)	0.198 (0.275)	0.199 (0.284)	0.138 (0.149)	0.458 (0.293)	0.028 (0.334)	-0.167 (0.210)	0.651 (0.497)
Working hours	0.098 (0.048)*	0.103 (0.069)	-0.064 (0.051)	0.139 (0.076)†	0.242 (0.049)**	0.195 (0.115)†	0.166 (0.143)	0.193 (0.101)†	0.420 (0.158)*
Gender x working hours	0.229 (0.137)†	0.187 (0.530)	-0.037 (0.111)	0.349 (0.152)*	0.007 (0.097)	0.247 (0.251)	1.082 (0.272)**	-0.226 (0.214)	-0.743 (0.309)*
<i>Individual level</i>									
Age (youngest) child	-0.174 (0.111)	-0.266 (0.572)	0.888 (0.189)**	-0.178 (0.138)	0.065 (0.100)	-0.241 (0.355)	0.619 (0.318)†	-0.742 (0.286)*	0.481 (0.494)
Age (youngest) child squared	0.085 (0.093)	0.346 (0.871)	-1.045 (0.229)**	0.109 (0.112)	-0.365 (0.119)**	-0.105 (0.420)	-0.709 (0.363)†	0.943 (0.380)*	-0.701 (0.687)
Level of education	0.012 (0.046)	-0.687 (0.204)**	0.062 (0.079)	0.270 (0.062)**	-0.089 (0.052)†	-0.321 (0.131)*	0.272 (0.104)*	0.447 (0.086)**	0.004 (0.136)
Partner	0.035 (0.183)	1.052 (0.502)*	-0.090 (0.224)	0.165 (0.196)	0.016 (0.149)	0.458 (0.296)	0.290 (0.359)	-0.602 (0.228)**	-0.256 (0.705)
<i>Industry<sup>a</sup></i>									
Manufacturing	-0.156 (0.361)	-0.930 (0.987)	0 <sup>a</sup>	-0.118 (1.023)	0.008 (0.550)	-0.066 (0.624)	0 <sup>a</sup>	1.322 (0.533)*	0.952 (0.563)
Healthcare	-0.106 (0.205)	0 <sup>a</sup>	0.038 (0.222)	0.329 (0.533)	-0.069 (0.346)	-0.224 (0.322)	-0.750 (0.166)**	0.894 (0.309)*	0 <sup>a</sup>
Higher education	-0.012 (0.139)	0.032 (0.268)	0.090 (0.101)	0.092 (0.364)	0.190 (0.205)	0.111 (0.199)	-0.674 (0.098)**	0.495 (0.191)*	0 <sup>a</sup>
Transport	0.237 (0.146)	0.094 (0.234)	0 <sup>a</sup>	-0.138 (0.306)	-0.031 (0.147)	0 <sup>a</sup>	-0.459 (0.104)**	0.388 (0.178)†	0.458 (0.167)†
Financial services	0.056 (0.100)	0 <sup>a</sup>	0 <sup>a</sup>	0 <sup>a</sup>	-0.101 (0.147)	-0.115 (0.132)	0 <sup>a</sup>	0.220 (0.116)†	0 <sup>a</sup>

Note. In Step 1 of the multilevel regression analyses gender and working hours were entered, in step 2 the interaction effect between gender and working hours was entered. Standardized regression weights are presented. Standard errors are in parentheses. Gender was coded: 0 for men and 1 for women. Partner was coded 0 for no partner and 1 for partner. For industry, telecommunication was taken as reference category.

<sup>a</sup>This regression weight was set to 0 because it is redundant.

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , † $p < .10$ .