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The Association between Norms and Actions

The Case of Men's Participation in Housework

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Abstract: Gender and family researchers are often puzzled by the differences between gender norms and actual behaviour. For example, many previous studies have shown that since the 1970s, attitudes have changed toward more modern gender role beliefs. However, this is generally not reflected in behaviour, this being especially true for men's involvement in housework and care work. In this paper, we analyse to what extent gender norms correspond with men's participation in housework. We examine in particular cooking, vacuum-cleaning and doing the laundry, because these activities reflect pronounced variation in norms and actions with regard to modern and traditional gender role attitudes. Going beyond previous research, which assesses the general influence of norms on practices, we investigate the relative impact of different types of gender ideologies, namely the strength with which respondents endorse (1) the male provider and female homemaker model, (2) women's employment, (3) employment as men's primary role, and (4) men's participation in unpaid work. Our empirical findings indicate that positive attitudes towards male contributions to housework are a key predictor of men's housework.

Keywords: Germany · Gender · Women · Men · Housework · Division of labour · Gender ideology · Cooking · Vacuum-cleaning · Doing the laundry

1 Introduction: The relationship between gender roles and daily routine behaviour

Nowadays, it is assumed that both men and women have increasingly developed a more critical attitude toward traditional gender roles. Young couples and families in particular are believed to seek more gender egalitarian ways of combining employment and household tasks. Indeed, empirical research has shown that attitudes toward gender-specific norms have shifted toward egalitarian norms over the past decades, especially in the areas of family, employment, and housework (*Blohm* 2002; *Lück* 2004, 2009).

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Historically, it seems that society's attitude toward male and female responsibilities in private and professional life has changed. Especially housework, which was generally considered a woman's responsibility and therefore "unmanly", is increasingly considered men's responsibility as well. Panel studies analysing the gender-specific distribution of housework of married couples and families show that nearly half (45.5 percent) of recently married couples share domestic responsibilities equally (*Grunow et al.* 2007, 2012). During the first year of marriage, men and women take care of traditional female housework equally. It is striking, though, that most men gradually withdraw from doing housework, especially after entering parenthood. Thus, for many men, there appears to be an increasing discrepancy between egalitarian gender norms and their actual daily behaviour, which traditionalises during family formation (*Oberndorfer*/*Rost* 2005).

This discrepancy of norms and action is sociologically interesting as it is not clear why men and women give up egalitarian divisions of labour in favour of a more traditional division of labour. Economic factors (i.e. higher education and a better earning potential of men compared to their partners) cannot sufficiently explain this relationship, as recent empirical studies have shown (*Gupta et al.* 2010). Instead, family context appears to play an important role in the 'traditionalisation' of gender roles (*Grunow et al*. 2007, 2012; *Kühhirt* 2011). As a consequence, interest in the influence of norms on gender-specific behaviour has increased in recent years (for a summary see *Davis* and *Greenstein* 2009). Unfortunately, there is a lack of studies that measure and represent male and female norms in a contemporary and adequate way (*Grunow* 2010). In particular, studies measuring attitudes toward male roles and responsibilities in the private and domestic sphere are lacking. It is also rarely examined whether the importance of men's role as earners has changed. Recent empirical studies from the Netherlands and Sweden hint at gender-specific attitudes toward housework being an important predictor of male and female participation in housework (*Poortman*/*Van der Lippe* 2009; *Evertsson* 2014). More precisely, the respondent's own attitudes play a greater role than the partner's attitudes, and men's attitudes correspond more strongly to their actual behaviour than the attitudes of their female partners.

Hence, this paper addresses the urgent need for research on gender role change, especially in regard to men (*Ostner* 2005; *Tölke*/*Hank* 2005). Following *Lück* (Editorial on this special issue CPoS 39, 3), we analyse individual *attitudes* toward gender roles, i.e. specific normative beliefs regarding male and female roles in the family, as well as individual *assumptions* regarding the consequences of traditional and non-traditional gender-specific behaviour which often explain individual attitudes. We empirically show that both types of beliefs express common latent normative constructs, which help to explain individual behaviour. Subsequently, we label these constructs *norm systems*.

Subsequently, we introduce theories about the development and the influence of gender norms on housework. Building on recent findings that gender roles change during the formation of households and families (*Davis* 2007; *Schober* 2011), we discuss the impact of household and family contexts on gender roles. Using data from the study "The image of men in society", we examine both normative attitudes

and assumptions regarding gender roles held by men and women and the extent to which men participate in traditional female housework depending on their family context. One advantage of our study is that our data allows us to separate in our analyses norms regarding male and female behaviours which relate to different realms of life. We view these distinct norms as separate norm systems. Specifically, we investigate the influence of following norm systems on behaviour:

1) The extent to which men and women endorse the male provider and female homemaker model,
2) Men's and women's attitudes regarding women's employment,
3) Men's and women's attitudes toward employment being a man's central social role, and
4) Men's and women's attitudes regarding men's participation in unpaid work.

Especially the third and fourth system have been neglected by earlier studies due to lack of data. Thus, we allow for a dimensionally differentiated view on male gender norms. Using multivariate analyses, we explore how much of the variation in men's participation in cooking, doing the laundry and vacuum-cleaning these norm systems explain. Of particular interest is the amount of variation explained by normative beliefs compared to experience-based economic and demographic factors, especially household and family contexts. Due to spatial restrictions, our paper focuses on men's correspondence of norms and behaviour. This decision is supported by international research indicating a significant relationship between men's own attitudes and their actual behaviour (*Poortman/Van Der Lippe* 2009; *Evertsson* 2014). Our paper contributes to current research literature both by measuring the multi-dimensionality of gender norms as different male and female systems and by describing empirically how these norms correspond to daily routine behaviour of men in Germany. As our empirical analysis is based on cross-sectional data, our findings have merely explorative value.

2 Theories and concepts on the relationship between norms and behaviour

Although – across all social milieus – only a small share of Germans (5.7 percent) favour the traditional male provider and female homemaker model, it is still the dominant pattern of division of labour (52.3 percent) (*Veil* 2003: 14; see also *Bothfeld* 2005). Most men still have higher earnings than their female partners, and even in families where women have a superior professional status, women still carry out the majority of the housework (*Koppetsch/Maier* 2001).

It is yet unresolved which social mechanisms contribute to the development of both traditional and egalitarian behaviour and why the traditional division of labour between men and women predominates in couple households and families (*Grunow et al.* 2007, 2012). Normative beliefs are considered to contribute to this situation, as the associated theories predict that attitudes and behaviour of men and

women change at different paces. These theories state that a traditional division of housework develops because men and women develop different normative beliefs due to their respective social context (*Grunow* 2007).

In order to provide a conceptual and theoretical frame for our anticipated empirical findings, we describe briefly how the terms "norms", "beliefs" and "attitudes" relate to one another conceptually and why they are assumed to have an impact on the behaviour of individuals (cp. *Lück*, editorial on this special issue CPoS 39, 3). Historically, research on gender roles has produced a number of different terminologies, as is reflected in the theoretical description which follows. We follow the assessment of *Davis* and *Greenstein* (2009: 88-89) that these different terminologies are only partly of conceptual significance. For our paper, it is important to understand norms and behaviour as two separate processes which change over the life course.

Following *Bolzendahl* and *Myers* (2004), a number of interest-based and experience-based factors account for the development and shift of individual normative gender beliefs (also labelled "gender ideologies"). According to the *interest* perspective it is argued that men hold less egalitarian beliefs than women, because they expect to gain less from gender equality than women due to cultural expectations. The *experience-based factors* that are expected to affect gender norms are socialisation, education, labour market experience, and the different stages of family formation such as marriage, divorce and the birth of children (cf. *Davis* and *Greenstein* 2009).

The fact that gender norms as well as behaviours change over the life course implies that they can influence each other. For example, due to their stronger family orientation, traditionally-oriented women are more likely to start a family and have children than women with an egalitarian attitude (*Kaufman* 2000). Furthermore, a recent panel study shows that women receiving higher wages and holding egalitarian gender norms are less likely to return to a traditional division of labour after entering parenthood (*Schober* 2011). This literature largely argues that in the case of housework, norms influence behaviour and not vice versa (for a summary, see *Davis* and *Greenstein* 2009). *Lück* (Editorial on this special issue CPoS 39, 3), for example, argues that while normative beliefs both directly and indirectly influence behaviour, comparatively explicit individual *attitudes* toward gender roles have a direct effect on behaviour. Attitudes are normative beliefs that act as a basis for behaviour and do not need to be further justified. Individual *assumptions* regarding explicit gender roles of men and women are assumed to have an indirect effect on behaviour, but a direct effect on individual gender attitudes.

Based on these conceptual considerations, we will discuss the two most influential theoretical approaches that explicitly deal with gender-specific influences of norms on behaviour: role theory and the "Doing Gender" approach (described in detail in *Becker-Schmidt* 2005; *Grunow* 2007, 2010). In a second step, we discuss the implications of both theories taking into account changing social conditions and household and family constellations.

2.1 Role theory

Role theory is highly contested – especially in the field of women's studies (*Becker-Schmidt* 2005; *Grunow* 2010). However, it has a comparatively long tradition in family research going back to the 1940s to Ralph Linton and Talcott Parsons and – viewed historically – constitutes the starting point for current conceptions of gender identity.

Role theory assumes that people generally behave compliant to their attitudes and thereby align themselves with social norms. Men's willingness to help with domestic and family responsibilities, and women's disposition to demand this commitment, should therefore relate strongly to their normative gender role beliefs. Attitudes toward gender roles are generally measured by an individual's acceptance or disapproval of traditional gender roles, and it is assumed that individuals with traditional attitudes practice a traditional division of roles whereas individuals with egalitarian gender-specific attitudes attempt to practice egalitarian principles in their daily life. Although empirical support can be found for this approach (*Fthenakis et al.* 2002a: 100-101), the number of theoretical arguments and empirical findings contradicting this theory has grown in recent years. For example, findings showing a discrepancy between increasingly egalitarian gender norms and gender-specific behaviour falling short of these norms speak against the gender role approach. While 70 percent of West-German men and women agreed to the statement that a traditional division of labour is better for everyone involved in 1982, this agreement decreased to approximately 50 percent in 2000 (*Blohm* 2002: 537). In East Germany, the percentage of proponents of a traditional division of labour was even lower after the German reunification (35 percent of men, 30 percent of women). Yet, longitudinal studies over a similar period of time show only small changes in the daily routine behaviour of men (*Künzler et al.* 2001; *Grunow* 2007).

These results, however, have not been systematically linked to one and other; first behaviour and norms have mostly been investigated separately, and, second research has so far primarily focused on the influence of changes in attitudes toward female roles. Changes in normative attitudes toward male roles – especially regarding housework – and their influence on men's participation in housework have been neglected. We argue that progressive attitudes and beliefs regarding *women's* employment are of limited value to predict *men's* behaviour in the household. Following the basic principles of role theory, the latter should rather be the result of normative beliefs regarding male participation in domestic responsibilities. Hence, in contrast to previous research, we assume that individual attitudes toward men's unpaid work are primarily responsible for this relationship (in contrast to, for example, attitudes toward women's employment), as only these attitudes directly impact men's participation in housework.

2.2 Doing and Undoing Gender

Role theory offers an explanation for why norms have an influence on behaviour, but it has a fundamental deficit in explaining which social mechanisms cause changes in

gender norms. Drawing on socialisation theory, role theory assumes that divergent attitudes toward gender roles and behaviour already develop during adolescence and remain fairly stable through adulthood. This theoretical conjecture, however, does not correspond to empirical reality. *Davis* (2007), for example, shows that gender norms are influenced much more by individual experiences such as household formation, cohabitation and employment than by the gender norms held by parents.

The assumption that gender norms do not change over the life course has also not been conclusively verified. For example, a recent hypothesis of life course research states that men and women experience a change of *normative frames* during the transition to parenthood, which – together with prevalent institutional conditions – further traditional attitudes (*Grunow et al.* 2007, 2012). This hypothesis is consistent with psychological theories of cognitive dissonance (*Festinger* 1957; *Jakobsen* 2009). These theories assume that psychological stress, caused by dissonance between people's individual beliefs and own actions, leads them to adapt their attitudes to their circumstances. In line with this view demographic research has found that individuals in changing household contexts adapt their norms and values based on their new experiences (*Surkyn/Lesthaeghe* 2004). The more recent approaches of "Doing" and "Undoing Gender" reflect these findings which suggest that norms and behaviours change over the life course.

The "Doing Gender" theory suggests that the production and reproduction of male and female gender identities is continuously reinforced through symbolic behaviours in daily life (*West/Zimmermann* 1987). Following this theory, it is assumed that housework is, on the one hand, a necessary task of household production, but, on the other hand, a legitimate form for women to affirm their gender identity and to enact prevalent gender norms (*Berk* 1985). Conversely, men identify with their social role as provider and avoid housework as it is considered unmanly (*Brines* 1994). In contrast to the initial pessimism implied by this theoretical perspective on role changes, recent feminist approaches emphasise the possibility of deliberate breaches with prevalent gender norms through non-conforming behaviour (*Lorber* 2000, 2004). Both perspectives ("Doing Gender" and "Undoing Gender") stress that social conditions defining and institutionally framing gender-specific behaviour are important points of reference for the development and shift of individual normative beliefs and actions regarding the role of men and women.

2.3 Social conditions for gender norms

Social conditions influence how men and women interpret and reproduce gender roles in daily life. Classic "Doing Gender" theories base their assumptions on historically developed social and institutional conditions that reproduce a gender-specific division of labour. International comparative research shows that women in countries with high gender equality spend less time on housework than women in countries with low gender equality (*Stier/Lewin-Epstein* 2007; *Gupta et al.* 2010; *Grunow* 2013). Male participation in housework is also found to be higher in egalitarian countries (*Fuwa* 2004). Social conditions in the German welfare state and

labour market are traditionally aligned with the male provider and female homemaker model (*Ostner* 1995; *Pfau-Effinger* 1999; *Baur* 2007; *Hofmeister et al*. 2009). The German Civil Code dating from 01.01.1900 defined the husband and father as the superior patriarch to whom the wife and mother is legally subordinate (in West Germany until 1977). This political model was gradually relaxed – at least in regard to male and female roles and responsibilities within the family – through various legislative amendments (e.g. legal entitlement to a [half-day] place at a day nursery in 1993, flexible parental leave in 2001, introduction of tax exemptions for household help and childcare in 2002, changes in maintenance obligations and parental leave benefits in 2007) (*Leitner et al.* 2004).

Political changes that primarily affect traditional female gender roles are much more numerous and have a longer history than changes affecting traditionally male gender roles. For example, maternity leave regulations were introduced in West Germany in 1952; the right to paternity leave was only introduced through the enacting of the child-raising benefits act in 1986 (*Vaskovics*/*Rost* 1999). As a consequence of these social developments, we expect heterogeneous attitudes toward gender norms that cannot fully be explained by role theory. In particular, we anticipate differences between male and female attitudes toward gender norms regarding the approval and disapproval of different norm systems that are affected by these structural changes: alignment with the male provider and female homemaker model and approval of women's employment.

2.4 Household and family context

Household and family contexts play a central role with regard to the issues mentioned above, since laws, structures, and regulations construe gender in connection with marital status and the presence of children. Further, both classic role theories as well as "Doing Gender" theories assume gender-specific socialisation within the family to be the starting point for the formation of male and female roles and identities. While it is undisputed that boys and girls are still socialised in gender-specific ways (*Zimmermann* 2006), it is becoming increasingly likely that men gain basic proficiencies of housework such as cooking, doing the laundry and vacuum-cleaning during their adolescence and early adult years. Since young people are becoming more likely to live on their own and start a household well before partnering and starting a family (*Burkart* 1997), single men often have to do housework themselves regardless of their normative attitudes. In comparison, men living with a partner are more likely to be able to avoid housework. It can also be assumed that, when living on their own for a longer period of time, doing housework becomes a matter of course for men. How these experiences influence the relationship between gender norms and housework has unfortunately been empirically neglected. Therefore, we investigate the following hypothesis: Doing housework is not only dependent on the normative framing of gender roles, but also on structures offering men opportunities to avoid housework. Accordingly, men living with a partner should do less housework than men living without a partner.

Research has shown that women in relationships without children do more housework than single women; however, relationship status does not influence the weekly time men spend doing housework (*Künzler et al.* 2001: 141). The latter finding is contrary to our expectation that men seek to withdraw from housework. It has further been shown that the transition to parenthood is paralleled by an increasingly traditional division of labour in the household (*Grunow et al.* 2007). It is yet unresolved, though, whether normative attitudes are responsible for this. Care tasks such as child-raising are traditionally seen as maternal responsibilities (*Brannen* 2007; *Dermott* 2007) and in a broader sense include housework and other "caring" jobs. Nevertheless, a change in normative attitudes has occurred over the last couple of years, especially regarding the role of fathers (*Baur* 2007), which is reflected in recent amendments of parental leave regulations. Research from Sweden has shown that couples in which the father takes parental leave have a higher chance of having another child (*Duvander/Andersson* 2006). Therefore, it remains unresolved whether the effects of normative attitudes on daily behaviour affect the formation of households and families, e.g. regarding the number of children, or whether norms still have explanatory power regarding the participation in housework after controlling for family contexts. We therefore investigate two opposing hypotheses: since fathers are expected to participate more regularly in unpaid work, the number of children positively influences the probability that men do housework. As institutional and normative contexts merely constitute frames for individual behaviour, individual normative attitudes remain significant predictors of male participation in housework, even after controlling for the family context.

2.5 Gender-specific connotation of housework

In the male provider and female homemaker model, men and women divide work in a traditional way, where the man invests more time in paid work and the woman spends more time doing unpaid work (*Hewener* 2004; *Grunow* 2007; *Dechant/Schulz* 2013 in CPoS 39,3). Thus, there are traditionally "male" and "female" tasks, and housework is typically considered a female task.

The concept of tasks being gendered not only applies to the division of employment, housework and child-raising, but also to the division within these fields. Research within the sociology of work, for example, has shown that both typically "male professions" (e.g. construction worker or mechanic) and "female professions" (e.g. nurse or nursery-school teacher) exist. In modern times, women have not only increasingly sought employment, they have also – although with a delay – increasingly entered traditionally male professions (*Krüger* 2001; *Körner* 2006; *Lundgreen/Scheunemann* 2006; *Baur/Akremi* 2011).

A similar development can be observed for the typically female domain of "housework". When men do housework, they undertake typical tasks: DIY (do it yourself), repairs, gardening, car washing, negotiations with authorities, and filing tax returns – tasks that are associated with traditionally male professions and rather concern the outside world. Other fields of responsibility such as household budgeting and household organisation, doing the laundry, and taking care of relatives

continue to be female domains (*Zulehner* 2004; *Döge/Volz* 2004; *Döge* 2006; *Baur/Akrem* 2011).

However, since 1991 – parallel to the trend of women entering male professions – a small equalisation of male and female tasks in the household can be observed (*Döge* 2006: 28-29). This equalisation is not evenly distributed over every household. Gender norms seem to have an influence on whether men participate in housework and on what tasks they do. *Zulehner* (2004) distinguishes between "old" men with traditional gender role beliefs and "new" men with modern gender role beliefs. "New" men take on additional tasks in the household that "old" men still leave to their partners such as child care and cooking (*Zulehner* 2004). Hence, similar to employment, there is not just "housework", but rather a number of different tasks, which have partly male and partly female connotations. It is therefore reasonable to distinguish different tasks when investigating whether and how much housework men undertake. In congruence with the current state of research indicating that "new men" also select rather "male" tasks in the household, we expect our multivariate analyses to show that individual normative attitudes of men best explain variations regarding tasks that are "legitimately male", namely vacuum-cleaning and cooking. Conversely, we expect situational factors such as household contexts to explain differences between those men doing and those men not doing the laundry.

3 Data

Analyses are based on data from the survey "The image of men in society", a CATI survey from 2006 conducted by Siegfried Lamnek and Nina Baur from the department of sociology and empirical social research of the Catholic University Eichstätt-Ingolstadt. The questionnaire consists of 120 questions capturing behaviour as well as different norms and values. For our research question, it is important that the gender role beliefs of participants and the information concerning who manages each household task are captured.

The respondents were male and female German citizens from 16 different municipalities in Bremen, North Rhine-Westphalia, Baden-Württemberg and Saxony-Anhalt that were selected using purposeful sampling. Detailed information regarding the municipalities and the generalisability of the sample can be found in *Otte* and *Baur* (2008). Detailed information on the sampling method and the validation of data can be found in *Baur* and *Luedtke* (2008). The full questionnaire and a detailed description of the sampling method are available on request from the second author.

The sample raises concerns regarding the generalisability of our findings. While respondents were selected randomly within the municipalities, the municipalities themselves were not selected randomly. Therefore, significance tests only indicate whether distributions can be generalised at the level of the different municipalities, but not at a federal level. We are, however, not interested in generalising distributions, but in testing theoretical assumptions about patterns and associations. To

this end, the sampling design is adequate as contrasting municipalities were consciously selected, with the aim that their inhabitants have distinct daily routines and norms. Thus, the different combinations of norms and behaviours that occur empirically should be captured in the data. Due to the above mentioned inferential limitations, our interpretations focus on effect sizes that are relatively large, and we report significance tests mainly for exploratory purposes. The municipalities were selected to maximise the regional spread of urbanity, employment situations and political situations. Within every municipality, a random sample accounting for age and gender was selected using data from the registry office. Based on the ascertained telephone numbers, the response rate was 39.3 percent. In total, 709 men and women were interviewed, and 696 answered the questions relevant for our research. In order to distinguish differences between male and female attitudes and responses, we first compare men and women. In a second step, we focus solely on men to explore the question why some men do housework and others do not.

4 Distribution of housework in the family context

4.1 Dependent Variables: Femininity of household tasks

In order to investigate the question which normative attitudes and which other factors affect housework, we follow the recommendations of current research and analyse specific tasks more closely instead of evaluating housework globally (cf. *Schulz/Grunow* 2011). Specifically, we focus on three tasks: vacuum-cleaning, cooking, and doing the laundry. Two criteria were relevant for selecting these activities:

First, the selected tasks should produce different patterns regarding the influence of gender roles. Whereas doing the laundry is nearly always the responsibility of women – even in non-traditional households – the greatest differences between "new" and "old" men become evident in cooking (*Zulehner* 2004). According to Zulehner's research, although men vacuum frequently, it seems that this is not related to modern gender role beliefs.

Second, it is unresolved whether certain household tasks are (arduous or cumbersome) housework or (pleasing and relaxing) recreation (see *Döge* 2006 in comparison to *Pinl* 2004). To account for this issue, two activities (vacuum-cleaning and doing the laundry) were selected that are unanimously seen as housework in recent studies, whereas one activity (cooking) should be somewhere in between work and leisure. For example, cooking for the family with children during the week is generally tedious routine work. Cooking sophisticated or special meals on the weekend, in contrast, can be exciting and recreational leisure. This distinction highlights gender-specific typologies: whereas women are nearly always responsible for tedious routine work, men cook what they like whenever they enjoy doing it – with or without their partner (*Lincke* 2007: 155-161).

4.2 Variations in the division of housework depending on family and household context

Most research operationalises the question of who does how much housework by letting participants state whether their partner or they themselves do it. However, looking at what couples actually do, it becomes apparent that a number of other constellations are possible in daily life. To begin with, activities can be undertaken together. Young couples with an egalitarian attitude, for example, often cook together (*Lincke* 2007: 155-161). Thus, it is not surprising that when having to choose in surveys between themselves and their partner carrying out an activity, participants generally pick themselves. In consequence, results on housework differ considerably depending on who was asked. For instance, *Zulehner* (2004) finds 80 percent of women with a traditional attitude stating to vacuum, whereas less than half of men with a traditional attitude state that their partner carries out this task.

Further, other people may live in a household and also be capable of doing housework, e.g. children, parents, or flatmates. Housework can also be externalised, that is, carried out by other people not living in the household such as friends, acquaintances, relatives, neighbours, a cleaner or social services (e.g. meals on wheels). It can be expected that housework is more likely to be delegated to women, since private help is provided more often by women (*Meulemann/Beckers* 2004) and professions that are closely related to housework and social services are traditionally female. Therefore, the frequent conclusion that young couples and singles practice a modern division of labour may partly result from the way housework is measured.

After all, daily life can be organised in such a way that certain tasks do not occur at all. Employed people often eat warm meals in the canteen and do not cook during the week (*Lincke* 2007: 155-161).

To circumvent this problem, our study specifically asks who carries out each of the mentioned tasks. The introduction for the questions concerning housework was, "In every household, different tasks have to be taken care of. Please, tell us who carries out each of the following tasks: mainly you, mainly another person, or you and another person in equal parts? By another person we mean e.g. your partner, your parents, children, flatmates, but also social services and paid workers". We then asked, "Who does the laundry in your household? Do you mainly do it yourself, does another person mainly do it, or do you and another person share it in equal parts?" A response alternative that wasn't specifically offered was, "This task does not occur in my household".

If a respondent answered "mainly me" or "me and another person in equal parts", we asked, "Which other people do the laundry in your household?". Response alternatives were not specifically offered, but coded for gender. Following options were possible: my wife/partner/girlfriend – my husband/partner/boyfriend – a female friend or acquaintance – a male friend or acquaintance – my mother – my father – my daughter – my son – other female relatives – other male relatives – a female neighbour – a male neighbour – a female flatmate – a male flatmate – a cleaner – social services (e.g. meals on wheels) – other, namely: [open-ended] – I'm the only one doing it. For vacuum-cleaning, we asked, "Who does the vacuum-cleaning?",

for cooking, "Who cooks in your household?" (questions and answers were translated by CPoS). The remaining questions and response alternatives were equivalent to the questions on doing the laundry.

As Table 1 illustrates, our data confirm previous research: overall, women carry out the mentioned household tasks more often than men, (irrespective of relationship status). At least two thirds of men receive help from their partner or other people, irrespective of the specific task, whereas women more often manage them on their own.

Tab. 1: Distribution of selected household tasks for men (n=361) and women (n=335), in percent

	Oneself	Oneself with other people	Only other people	Oneself with partner	Only partner	
			Men			
Vacuum-cleaning	35	12	12	23	19	100
Cooking	21	7	19	20	34	100
Doing the laundry	17	4	22	10	47	100
			Women			
Vacuum-cleaning	45	16	12	20	7	100
Cooking	56	13	9	19	4	100
Doing the laundry	76	9	7	7	1	100

Source: Own calculations based on the study "The image of men in society"

As expected, there are clear differences between the various tasks. Participation by gender has almost equalised for vacuum-cleaning: seven out of ten men and eight out of ten women vacuum; 35 percent of men and 45 percent of women are solely responsible for this task in the household. The division of labour differs considerably, though, for cooking and doing the laundry: nine out of ten women cook and do laundry. Every second woman is solely responsible for cooking, and eight out of ten women never receive any assistance in doing the laundry. In contrast, only every second man cooks, and only three out of ten men do laundry at all (of these, only one out of five does it on his own). Examining gender-specific differences for these household tasks, it becomes apparent that doing the laundry most strongly polarises the genders whereas vacuum-cleaning is most equally distributed. Cooking holds a position between the two.

4.2.1 The relevance of household and family contexts for the division of housework

The household and family context affects the participation of men and women in housework. As Table 2 illustrates, 83 percent of single men vacuum, 57 percent cook, and 51 percent do laundry either on their own or together with another per-

Tab. 2: Division of selected household tasks depending on relationship status

	rather oneself in %	with another person in %	rather another person in %	does not occur in %	*N*
			Vacuum-cleaning		
Men					
with partner, cohabiting	27	39	35		*226*
with partner, not cohabiting	49	26	23	2	*53*
singles	51	32	16	1	*77*
Women					
with partner, cohabiting	41	38	21		*197*
with partner, not cohabiting	39	44	17		*59*
singles	60	23	17		*78*
			Cooking		
Men					
with partner, cohabiting	13	31	56		*226*
with partner, not cohabiting	38	13	47	2	*53*
singles	32	25	42	1	*77*
Women					
with partner, cohabiting	60	32	7	1	*197*
with partner, not cohabiting	31	39	31		*59*
singles	64	26	10		*78*
			Doing the laundry		
Men					
with partner, cohabiting	6	15	79		*226*
with partner, not cohabiting	36	13	49	2	*53*
singles	36	14	49		*77*
Women					
with partner, cohabiting	84	13	4		*197*
with partner, not cohabiting	51	31	19		*59*
singles	78	12	10		*78*

Source: Own calculations based on the study "The image of men in society"

son. If they have a partner with which they do not cohabit, the share of men doing the laundry remains almost the same (49 percent), but the share vacuum-cleaning and cooking decreases considerably (75 percent and 51 percent, respectively). If men move in with their partner, participation in housework decreases further: only 65 percent vacuum, 44 percent cook, and 21 percent do laundry. Overall, men do considerably less housework when in a relationship. This result corresponds to our expectations.

For women we do not find these pronounced partnership effects. Independent of their relationship status, eight out of ten women vacuum. The only partner effect for women shows that the percentage of women vacuum-cleaning together with another person doubles from approximately 20 percent to approximately 40 percent.

If women have a partner, but are not cohabiting, the percentage cooking or doing the laundry decreases from 90 percent to approximately 70 percent and 80 percent, respectively, as compared to singles. Among those with a partner but not cohabiting approximately 40 percent and 30 percent, respectively, carry out these tasks together with another person. If women move in with their partner, the percentage exceeds the level for single women, with 92 percent and 97 percent respectively, and they receive assistance as often as when they were single.

4.2.2 Delegation of tasks to third parties

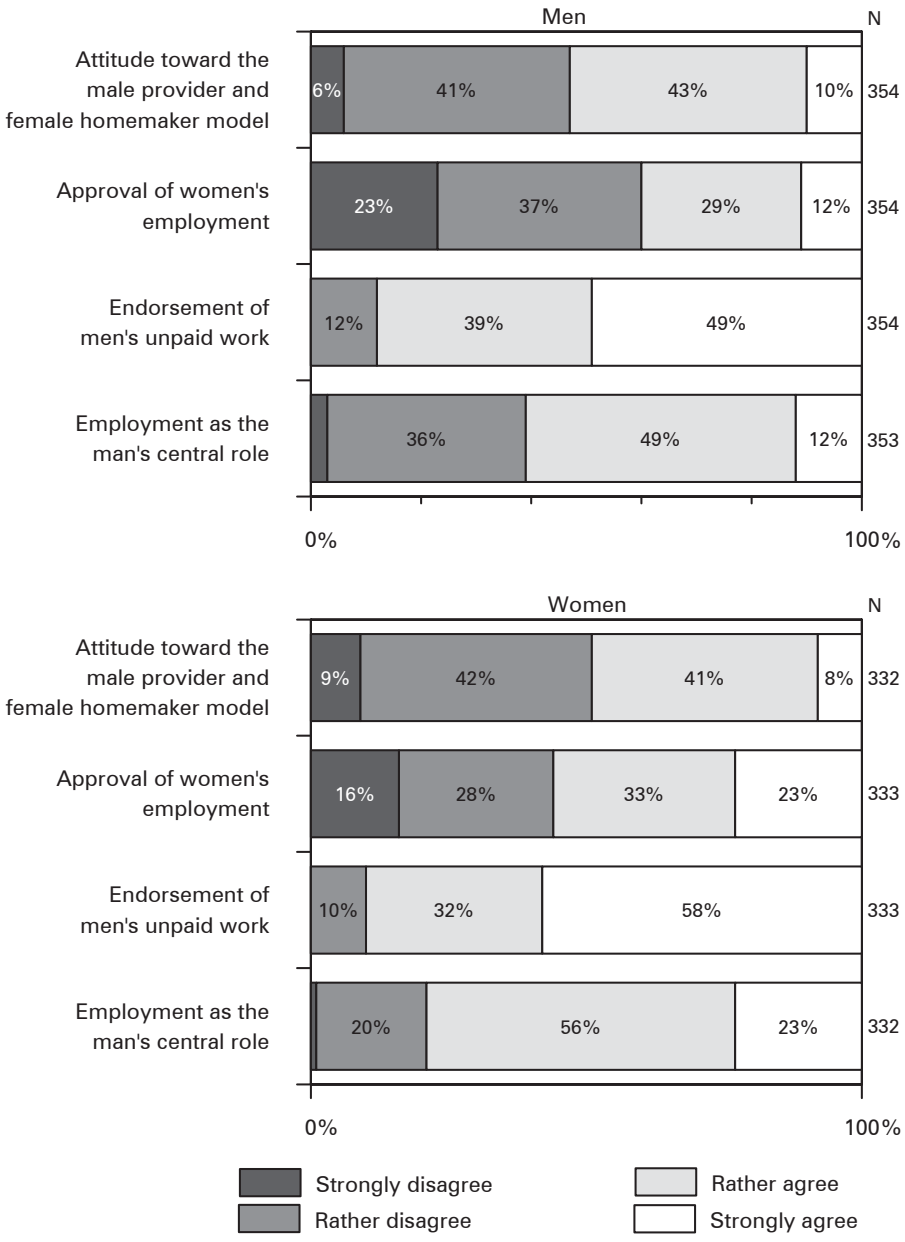
Our results indicate that relationship context only partly explains the variation of male participation in specific household tasks. As Table 1 shows, 31 percent (doing the laundry) to 70 percent (vacuum-cleaning) of men participate in the examined household tasks – irrespective of their relationship status. One in four men is assisted by another person or his partner in each of these tasks. One in four women receives assistance with vacuum-cleaning, but only one in five with cooking and one in six with laundry. These results indicate why women take on more housework when moving in with a man: they replace the other people who previously carried out household tasks for their partner. Thus, when the man does not carry out these tasks or when he does not do them on his own, it depends on the family context who takes them on. Further analyses (not displayed) show that both men and women are most often assisted by their mothers, and that women receive help from third parties considerably less often than men.

5 Gender role beliefs

When investigating the impact of norms and values on male participation in housework the question arises which norms and values are most relevant for actions. Existing surveys have operationalised attitudes toward the division of labour within the family differently, e.g. in the ISSP (*ZUMA*/*Infas* 1994, 1997, 2002), the LBS-family-study (*Fthenakis et al.* 2002a, 2002b), or *Zulehner's* (n.d.) research on men. Since the focus of this paper is on male participation in housework, and since we follow *Poortman* and *Van der Lippe* (2009) in assuming that men's participation depends on *their own* normative attitudes (and not those of their partners), the findings reported here focus on male gender role beliefs. In order to increase comparability to previous research on female gender role beliefs, we compare male and female normative attitudes, but do not relate these normative attitudes of women to actual behaviour of men.

Following the theories on the impact of norms on behaviour described above, we focus on four normative systems that are assumed to influence male participation in housework for different reasons: attitudes toward the male provider and female homemaker model (system 1) and attitudes toward employment as the central role for a man (system 3) are important, because both aspects normatively free men from the responsibility of participating in housework in order to be "good"

Fig. 1: Distribution of gender norms



Source: Own calculations based on the study "The image of men in society"

partners and fathers (cf. *Bielby/Bielby* 1989). The approval of women's employment (system 2) has been selected as a predictor variable in previous research, as it was

assumed to be logical that men have to participate more in housework if women are also expected to work. In contrast, we have argued in section 2 that women's role as earners has changed institutionally much more than norms regarding men's housework. Therefore, the hypothesis of previous research that both norms are interrelated may be empirically incorrect. Our final indicator – the endorsement of men's unpaid work (system 4) – seems more appropriate to determine male participation in housework, because this norm is directly related to the associated behaviour. The literature frequently discusses a further aspect regarding the attitude toward the division of labour within the family: the disposition of men to fatherhood. Research has confirmed repeatedly that men desire to be more active fathers and increasingly want a stronger role in the upbringing of their children (*Erler et al.* 1988; *Fthenakis et al*. 1999; *Matzner* 2004; *Zulehner* 2004; *Oberndorfer/Rost* 2005; *Cyprian* 2005; *Grunow* 2007; *Baur* 2007; *Hofmeister et al.* 2009). However, we decided to omit this aspect as it primarily concerns how men raise their children.

Figure 1 shows a summary of the different systems and allows a comparison of male and female rates of approval. The following sub-sections describe which items constitute each system and how men agree to each norm system.

5.1 Identification with the male provider and female homemaker model

When investigating "gender norms", the field of gender studies often examines the extent to which couples identify with the male provider and female homemaker model (*Ostner* 1995; *Pfau-Effinger* 1999). This model conforms to the ideal of classic role theory. We constructed a number of items capturing different aspects of the male provider – female homemaker model in order to identify our participants' attitudes toward this model. The specific questions and the distribution of male responses can be found in Table 3.

The comparatively large Cronbach's α in Table 3 indicates that items correlate strongly with each other. Looking at the different items, it becomes apparent that the male provider and female homemaker model involves more than a complementary division of roles in daily life, in which men are assigned the task of employment and women are assigned household tasks and – as soon as there are children – child-raising tasks. Our empirical findings further confirm *Keddis'* (2003) results indicating that the male provider – female homemaker model not only implies a pragmatic division of roles, but that the idea of partners representing a single unit plays a central role. This single unit is expressed in the belief that partners in a good relationship always spend their weekends together and always think and feel the same.

Table 3 shows that specific normative aspects polarise men, since the rates of approval vary greatly: only one third of the interviewed men state that partners should always think and feel the same in a good relationship, but seven out of ten men think that partners should always spend their weekends together, and three quarters think that in a good relationship, both partners want children. Although only 15 percent think that the career of the man takes precedence over the family, four out of ten men agree to the statement that a man should make sure that his partner never needs to worry about financial issues. At the same time, one in two

Tab. 3: Attitudes of men toward the male provider and female homemaker model

	Distribution of responses in %				Correlation of norms and behaviour (Pearson's r)			*N*
	Strongly disagree	Rather disagree	Rather agree	Strongly agree	Man vacuums	Man cooks	Man does laundry	
Attitude toward the male provider and female homemaker model	6	41	43	10	-0.15**	-0.11*	-0.13*	*354*
In a good relationship, partners always spend their weekends together.	5	26	39	30	-0.04	-0.11*	-0.10+	*358*
In a good relationship, partners always think and feel the same.	17	50	23	10	< 0.01	0.06	-0.02	*358*
In a good relationship, both partners want children.	4	20	37	39	-0.01	-0.13*	-0.16*	*356*
The career of the man takes precedence over the family.	38	47	10	5	-0.10+	< -0.01	< -0.01	*352*
In a good relationship, the man makes sure that the woman never has to worry about financial issues.	13	48	24	15	-0.16**	-0.05	-0.11*	*356*
In a good relationship, a woman makes sure that the man can focus on his job and needs not worry about other issues.	9	37	32	22	-0.07	-0.04	-0.11*	*356*
The most important task of the woman is the family.	18	36	26	20	-0.17**	-0.12*	-0.12*	*354*
The woman carries the main responsibility for the household.	23	42	23	13	-0.28***	-0.24***	-0.17***	*357*
A woman should not work, if her child is younger than three years old.	10	24	21	45	0.02	-0.13**	-0.09+	*354*
Cronbach's α	*0.76*							

Level of significance: + $\alpha \leq 0.10$; * $\alpha \leq 0.05$; ** $\alpha \leq 0.01$; *** $\alpha \leq 0.001$

Source: Own calculations based on the study "The image of men in society"

men agrees that the most important task of a woman is the family and that she should take care of things so that the man can focus on his job. The latter applies more to raising children than to housework: only one third thinks that the woman has to carry the main responsibility for the household, but two thirds think that a mother should not work if her child is younger than three years old. 45 percent of the interviewed men even oppose the idea of mothers with young children being employed.

Although the distribution of responses varies, a pattern can be detected. Respondents that agree to a particular item tend to agree to the other items as well, whereas respondents that disagree with an item tend to disagree with the other items as well. We therefore assume that the items measure the latent system "attitude toward the male provider and female homemaker model" and summarise them in one variable using factor analysis (*Fromm* 2004).[1] As Figure 1 illustrates, 10 percent of the interviewed men strongly agree to the male provider and female homemaker model, 43 percent rather agree, 41 percent rather disagree, and 6 percent strongly disagree. As expected, male rates of approval are (slightly) higher than female rates of approval.

5.2 Approval of women's employment

The male provider – female homemaker model assigns the role of employment to the man and the task of taking care of the family to the woman. However, this does not say much about women's employment: when supporting the male provider – female homemaker model it is both possible to oppose women's employment generally or in particular stages of life and to "allow" women to work while viewing this employment solely as a provision of extra income. Conversely, opposing the male provider – female homemaker model does not automatically imply seeing women's employment as the central role of women. In a qualitative study, *Keddi* (2003) shows that some men and women neither perceive employment nor the household as the central point of their life, but consider personal self-fulfilment as more important. Other people oppose the male provider – female homemaker model, but align their life completely with their partner or do not know how they want to live. Indeed, factor analysis shows that approval of women's employment is a separate normative system. Independent of whether respondents support or oppose the male provider – female homemaker model, some endorse women's employment whereas others object to it.

As Table 4 illustrates, 58 percent of interviewed men hold the view that both men and women should work. However, only 40 percent believe it is good for a child to have an employed mother, and 66 percent hold the view that a mother should not work if her child is younger than three years old. Summarising these items into a single variable, six out of ten men object to women's employment. In contrast to the

[1] We initially conducted factor analyses separately for men and women, achieving very similar results. This paper reports the results for the whole data set.

Tab. 4: Men's approval of women's employment

	Distribution of responses in %				Correlation of norms and behaviour (Pearson's r)			*N*
	Strongly disagree	Rather disagree	Rather agree	Strongly agree	Man vacuums	Man cooks	Man does laundry	
Approval of women's employment	23	37	29	12	0.03	0.15**	0.10+	*354*
A woman should not work, if her child is younger than three years old. (negative)	10	24	21	45	0.02	-0.13*	-0.09+	*354*
Men and women should both be employed.	10	32	33	25	0.05	0.05	0.08	*355*
It is good for a child, if the mother is employed.	13	47	31	9	0.01	0.16**	0.10+	*350*
Cronbach's α	*0.57*							

Level of significance: + α ≤ 0.10; * α ≤ 0.05; ** α ≤ 0.01; *** α ≤ 0.001

Source: Own calculations based on the study "The image of men in society"

attitude toward the male provider – female homemaker model, considerable gender-specific differences can be observed: six out of ten women endorse women's employment parallel to having young children in the household.

Previous research, such as the ISSP (*ZUMA/Infas* 1994, 1997, 2002), the LBS-family-study (*Fthenakis et al.* 2002a, 2002b), as well as *Zulehner's* (n.d.) research on men, and longitudinal analyses show that the share of proponents of women's employment has continuously risen in industrialised countries over the last decades (*Lück* 2004, 2006, 2009; *Hofäcker/Lück* 2004; *Lück/Hofäcker* 2008).

5.3 Employment as men's central social role

Whereas the question of how important employment is for women in comparison to her family is captured comparatively frequently in research, the inverse question – how important is employment for men – is rarely asked. Is employment – as the male provider – female homemaker model suggests – really considered the central social role of the man (*Baur/Luedtke* 2008)?

When examining these questions, an inverse pattern in comparison to the attitude toward women's employment can be observed: while the majority of women endorse women's employment and the majority of men object to it – and men therefore hold a traditional view of gender roles – women are even more conservative with regard to male employment: eight out of ten women, but only six out of ten men view employment as the central social role of men (see the rates of approval "strongly agree" and "rather agree" in Fig. 1). Overall, the attitude toward the role of men is much less ambiguous than toward the role of women. Both attitudes are not necessarily related to each other.

As displayed in Table 5, an overwhelming majority of men believe that men work in order to support their family (99 percent), because they then feel needed (77 percent), and because they enjoy working (72 percent). Roughly half think that employment is part of being a man. Only four out of ten consider work the most important thing in life, and only every fourth man thinks that men can only gain recognition from others via their job. Only 15 percent believe that the career of the man takes precedence over the family.

5.4 Endorsement of men's unpaid work

Are men able to and should they do housework? As Table 6 illustrates, the times in which men perceived housework as demeaning are over: only 4 percent see it that way, even if one in three thinks that women should carry the main responsibility for the household. 86 percent of the interviewed men believe that they are able to do housework as thoroughly as women, and 79 percent consider themselves just as competent in parenting. Overall, nine out of ten respondents endorse the participation of men in housework, women even slightly more than men.

The bivariate analyses in Tables 3 to 6 highlight a number of aspects: first, norms and behaviour correlate substantially. Second, the direction of influence of particular norm systems vary: the more men support the male provider – female home-

Tab. 5: Men's attitudes toward male employment

	Distribution of responses in %				Correlation of norms and behaviour (Pearson's r)			*N*
	Strongly disagree	Rather disagree	Rather agree	Strongly agree	Man vacuums	Man cooks	Man does laundry	
Employment as men's central social role	3	36	49	12	-0.19***	-0.12*	-0.07	*353*
Men work, because working is part of being a man.	15	32	29	24	-0.14**	-0.12*	-0.09+	*352*
Men work, because the job is the most important thing in life for them.	15	44	27	14	-0.08	-0.09+	0.03	*354*
Men work, because they enjoy working.	5	24	48	24	0.07	-0.03	-0.02	*354*
Men work, because they then feel needed.	3	20	43	34	-0.05	-0.03	-0.06	*354*
Men work in order to support their family.	0	1	27	72	-0.16**	-0.17**	-0.12*	*354*
Men work, since they can only gain recognition from others via their job.	31	44	19	5	-0.15**	-0.06	0.05	*354*
Men's career takes precedence over the family.	38	47	10	5	-0.10+	< -0.01	< -0.01	*352*
Cronbach's α	*0.71*							

Level of significance: + $\alpha \leq 0.10$; * $\alpha \leq 0.05$; ** $\alpha \leq 0.01$; *** $\alpha \leq 0.001$

Source: Own calculations based on the study "The image of men in society"

Tab. 6: Men's endorsement of men's unpaid work

	Distribution of responses in %				Correlation of norms and behaviour (Pearson's r)			*N*
	Strongly disagree	Rather disagree	Rather agree	Strongly agree	Man vacuums	Man cooks	Man does laundry	
Endorsement of men's unpaid work	0	12	39	49	0.20***	0.16**	0.11*	*354*
Men are just as competent in parenting as women.	2	19	35	44	0.13*	0.04	0.07	*354*
Men can do housework as thoroughly as women.	2	13	29	57	0.14**	0.12*	0.07	*357*
The woman carries the main responsibility for the household. (negative)	23	42	23	13	-0.28***	-0.24***	-0.17***	*357*
It is demeaning for a man to do housework. (negative)	69	27	3	1	-0.13*	-0.08	-0.01	*357*
Cronbach's α	*0.54*							

Level of significance: + $\alpha \leq 0.10$; * $\alpha \leq 0.05$; ** $\alpha \leq 0.01$; *** $\alpha \leq 0.001$

Source: Own calculations based on the study "The image of men in society"

maker model and see employment as their central role, the less they participate in the selected housework tasks. In contrast, if they endorse women's employment and men's unpaid work, the probability of doing housework increases. Third, it is worth distinguishing and looking at different norm systems and particular tasks individually, since the direction of influence of different norm systems on particular tasks is similar, but unequally strong. For example, men endorsing women's employment cook and do laundry more often than men objecting to it ($r = 0.15$ and $r = 0.10$, respectively). The relationship between the approval of women's employment and vacuum-cleaning, however, is insignificant. These relationships are different for employment as the central role of men: the impact on doing the laundry is insignificant, whereas men focussing on their career vacuum and cook significantly less often ($r = -0.19$ and $r = -0.12$, respectively).

Subsequently, we want to investigate the relative influence of the different norm systems on each other and whether the relationship between norms and behaviour can still be observed when controlling for the impact of experience-based factors that influence gender norms (*Bolzendahl/Myers* 2004). Specifically, we account for regional differences between West and East Germany, level of education, employment situation, employment prestige and income as well as household and family context (accounting for partner's employment status, number of adults in the household and number of children under the age of 18 in the household).

6 The association between gender norms and men's housework controlling for experience-based factors

Following sociological theories on the impact of norms on behaviour and previous research examining the impact of gender-specific attitudes toward housework on behaviour (e.g. *Poortman/Van der Lippe* 2009), we empirically analyse to what extent the identified norm systems can explain men's participation in housework. We use each identified norm system as an explanatory variable in multivariate analyses. The dependent variables are selected household tasks, namely vacuum-cleaning, cooking, and doing the laundry (cf. sub-section 4.2). Response alternatives "oneself", "oneself with another person", and "oneself with partner" each describe the participation of men in a household task (coded "1"). The alternatives "only other people" and "only partner" were coded "0". For each of the three dependent variables we calculate three logistic regression models.[2]

The first model only includes experience-based factors and represents current practice in model-building regarding the division of labour in the household (for a

[2] As a comparison of logit coefficients across different models is not appropriate (*Mood* 2010), we use the validation method by *Karlson, Holm*, and *Breen* (2010) to test for significant changes between models. This procedure – also called KHB method – allows the differences between logit coefficients in different models to be decomposed into a scaling and a confounding component (calculations based on the KHB method are not presented in the tables and are available on request from the authors).

summary, see *Davis* and *Greenstein* 2009). The second model contains the normative attitudes of respondents described above. The third model joins the variables of the previous models in order to analyse the extent to which the predictive power of normative attitudes is due to variations in the socio-demographic, economic, household and family context. This third model accommodates *Bolzendahl* and *Myers'* (2004) argument that individual normative beliefs are influenced by experience-based socio-demographic factors as well as the household and family context. Thus, the socio-demographic factors and the household and family context serve as control variables for experience-based differences between men, which may confound the coefficients for normative attitudes in the second model. The aim of our analyses is not to develop a parsimonious regression model, but to examine the empirical relevance (or irrelevance) of the identified norm systems for explaining men's behaviour. The following tables display the logit coefficients.

6.1 Vacuum-cleaning

As Table 7 (model 1) shows, our data suggest that neither level of education nor employment status or employment prestige have a significant impact on whether men vacuum. There are also no differences between East and West Germany. However, men are less likely to vacuum the older they are and the higher their household income is. As further calculations with fully standardised coefficients show, the net equivalent household income is the most important explanatory variable in the first model.[3]

Neither being partnered nor the partner's employment status explains why some men vacuum and others do not. Among the family context variables, only the number of adults in the household has a highly significant and negative impact: men are less likely to participate in vacuum-cleaning the more adults live in the household. This result confirms our assumption that opportunity structures matter when men withdraw from doing housework. The findings on the household context in sub-section 4.2.1 illustrate that this relationship is not trivial, as single men and women generally do not have an alternative to doing housework themselves.

Model 2 illustrates the relative impact of the four norm systems on the probability of men vacuum-cleaning. As expected, a significant relationship between norms and behaviour can only be found regarding the endorsement of men's unpaid work (cf. sub-section 2.1).[4] The more men support men's unpaid work, the greater the

[3] To compare the explanatory power of different independent variables in logistic regression models, coefficients have to be standardised – similarly to OLS. Both independent and dependent variables are standardised with a mean value of 0 and a standard deviation of 1 in order to create fully standardised coefficients (*Long/Freese* 2006). Results for the full model (model 3 in Tables 7-9) using fully standardised coefficients are reported in Table A1 in the appendix.

[4] The high value of the logit coefficient (b = 3.87) needs to be seen in light of the extreme skewness of the distribution of responses for this norm system (see Table 6). Further analyses ruled out multicollinearity. The correlation of the explanatory variable and the response variable is 0.5. As displayed in Table A1 in the appendix, the effect is strong but not implausibly high for the standardised coefficients.

Tab. 7: Explanatory Variables for men vacuum-cleaning, logistic regression

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Region, ref. West Germany			
East Germany	-0.02		0.16
Age (in years)	-0.03**		-0.02
Education, ref. maximum "Lower School Leaving Certificate" (Hauptschule)			
"General School Leaving Certificate" (Realschule)	0.01		-0.28
Higher education entrance qualification	0.33		-0.09
Graduate degree	0.24		-0.09
Employment status, ref. employed			
Pensioner	0.37		0.49
In education	-0.92		-0.66
Other	0.24		-0.18
Treiman prestige	0.02		0.02
Net equivalent income (in thousand euro)	-0.67*		-0.76**
Partner's employment status, ref. not employed			
No partner	0.66		0.91*
Partner employed part-time	0.08		0.19
Partner employed full-time	0.23		0.35
Family context			
Number of adults in the household (apart from the respondent)	-0.45**		-0.50**
Number of children in the household	-0.19		-0.23
Normative attitudes			
Approval of the male provider - female homemaker model		0.44	0.28
Approval of women's employment		0.11	-0.55
Employment as men's central social role		-1.61	-1.27
Endorsement of men's unpaid work		3.87**	4.35**
Explained variance (pseudo R^2)	7%	7%	15%
N	303	303	303

Level of significance: + $\alpha \leq 0.10$; * $\alpha \leq 0.05$; ** $\alpha \leq 0.01$; *** $\alpha \leq 0.001$

Source: Own calculations based on the study "The image of men in society"

probability that they at least participate in vacuum-cleaning. Further analyses indicate that this effect becomes even stronger if children live in the household.

When we additionally control for the experience-based variables in the full model (model 3), the impact of attitudes toward men's unpaid work on the probability of a man vacuum-cleaning does not decrease significantly, as calculations based on the KHB method confirm. At the same time, the effect of age loses its significance indicating that older men hold more traditional views. The probability that single men vacuum also significantly increases in this model. A change of sign can be observed for education and region, but these values are below the significance level of 0.10. The other variables remain fairly stable.

The full model accounts for 15 percent of the variance. Thus, the experience-based factors mentioned in previous research only have limited explanatory power regarding male participation in vacuum-cleaning. A comparison of the different models suggests that the four norm systems in model 2 have as much explanatory power as the socio-demographic, economic, and family context variables in model 1. Both models are able to explain 7 percent of the variance in the participation of men in vacuum-cleaning. In the full model, the endorsement of men's unpaid work is the strongest predictor of the participation of men in vacuum-cleaning, followed by household income and number of adults in the household (see Table A1 in the appendix). Thus, norms appear to be highly significant in explaining male participation in vacuum-cleaning.

6.2 Doing the laundry

Table 8 summarises the explanatory variables of the multivariate logistic regressions examining men's doing of laundry. In contrast to vacuum-cleaning, doing the laundry is the most feminine task, in which men participate the least – a fact previous research has also shown.

In contrast to vacuum-cleaning, none of the normative attitudes have a (significant) impact on the probability of men doing the laundry (model 2, $\alpha \leq 0.10$). The coefficients reflecting the approval of the male provider – female homemaker model, the approval of women's employment, and the endorsement of men's unpaid work, however, point in the expected direction. The variable measuring the endorsement of men's unpaid work becomes significant in the full model (model 3). Thus, men who endorse men's unpaid work are more likely to do laundry than men who object to men's unpaid work.

Again, in contrast to vacuum-cleaning, neither demographic nor economic factors are able to explain why men (do not) do laundry (model 1). Relationship and family context, however, have explanatory power. The probability of single men and women doing the laundry is about two and a half times as high as it is for men with partners who are not in employment. If other adults or children live in the household, men also do laundry significantly less frequently. This again indicates that men often make use of opportunity structures in order to avoid housework. The effects of relationship and family context remain significant in the full model.

The full model in Table 8 explains 17 percent of the observed variance. However, normative attitudes only explain 3 percent of the observed variance (model 2), whereas relationship and family context explain 15 percent. The number of adults in the household, followed by the number of children in the household and having a partner produce the largest effects for male participation in doing the laundry (see Table A1 in the appendix). This confirms our expectation that normative attitudes explain mainly the participation of men in "legitimately male" household tasks whereas the more feminine task of doing the laundry is mainly explained by situational factors such as being single and the household context.

Tab. 8: Explanatory variables for men doing the laundry, logistic regression

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Region, ref. West Germany			
East Germany	0.43		0.32
Age (in years)	-0.02		-0.02
Education, ref. maximum "Lower School Leaving Certificate" (Hauptschule)			
"General School Leaving Certificate" (Realschule)	0.30		0.20
Higher education entrance qualification	0.21		0.09
Graduate degree	-0.13		-0.30
Employment status, ref. employed			
Pensioner	-0.27		-0.26
In education	0.74		0.77
Other	0.51		0.40
Treiman prestige	0.02		0.02
Net equivalent income (in thousand euro)	-0.14		-0.10
Partner's employment status, ref. not employed			
No partner	0.86*		1.03*
Partner employed part-time	0.43		0.43
Partner employed full-time	0.43		0.42
Family context			
Number of adults in the household (apart from the respondent)	-0.81**		-0.78**
Number of children in the household	-0.61*		-0.58*
Normative attitudes			
Approval of the male provider - female homemaker model		-1.59	-0.52
Approval of women's employment		0.74	0.72
Employment as men's central social role		0.44	0.66
Endorsement of men's unpaid work		1.25	1.71+
Explained variance (pseudo R^2)	15%	3%	17%
N	303	303	303

Level of significance: + $\alpha \leq 0.10$; * $\alpha \leq 0.05$; ** $\alpha \leq 0.01$; *** $\alpha \leq 0.001$

Source: Own calculations based on the study "The image of men in society"

6.3 Cooking

The results of the explanatory variables for men cooking are illustrated in Table 9. Men cook comparatively often; however, according to previous research, it is not clear whether cooking is actually a leisure activity.

Model 1 shows that men with a general school leaving certififi cate (Realschule) and a higher education entrance qualification cook more than twice as often as men with a maximum of lower secondary schooling (Hauptschule). The effect for graduates points in the same direction, but it is smaller and not statistically significant. In the full model, only the positive effect of a higher education entrance qualification remains significant in explaining the participation of men in cooking. The higher the

Tab. 9: Explanatory variables for men cooking, logistic regression

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Region, ref. West Germany			
East Germany	-0.52		-0.79*
Age (in years)	-0.01		0.00
Education, ref. maximum "Lower School Leaving Certificate" (Hauptschule)			
"General School Leaving Certificate" (Realschule)	0.76*		0.60
Higher education entrance qualification	1.00*		0.87*
Graduate degree	0.44		0.31
Employment status, ref. employed			
Pensioner	0.18		0.26
In education	0.33		0.51
Other	0.49		0.30
Treiman prestige	0.02*		0.02+
Net equivalent income (in thousand euro)	-0.66**		-0.63*
Partner's employment status, ref. not employed			
No partner	0.74*		0.91*
Partner employed part-time	0.37		0.39
Partner employed full-time	1.31**		1.35**
Family context			
Number of adults in the household (apart from the respondent)	-0.73**		-0.72**
Number of children in the household	-0.08		-0.08
Normative attitudes			
Approval of the male provider - female homemaker model		0.52	1.43
Approval of women's employment		1.38*	1.7*
Employment as men's central social role		-1.62	-1.78
Endorsement of men's unpaid work		2.37**	2.66**
Explained variance (pseudo R^2)	12%	6%	16%
N	303	303	303

Level of significance: + $\alpha \leq 0.10$; * $\alpha \leq 0.05$; ** $\alpha \leq 0.01$; *** $\alpha \leq 0.001$

Source: Own calculations based on the study "The image of men in society"

employment prestige, the more likely men are to participate in cooking. All of these factors indicate that particularly men from higher social classes cook. These result fit the modern trend that cooking – in particular the preparation of elaborate meals – has increasingly gained social appreciation, partly mediated by cooking shows on television. Household income, however, has a negative effect.

Relationship and family context also influence male involvement in cooking. Single men are more than twice as likely to cook in comparison to men whose partner is not employed. Men with a partner in full-time employment cook three times as often. This result indicates that cooking is not always a leisure activity for men, but often a necessity. Similarly to vacuum-cleaning and doing the laundry, men who do not live on their own make use of household structures that enable them to avoid

cooking: the number of adults in the household has a negative impact on the probability of men cooking.

Model 2 shows the influence of normative attitudes on the participation of men in cooking. The endorsement of men's unpaid work has the strongest effect. The more men approve this norm system, the greater the probability that they cook. The approval of women's employment also has a significant positive effect.

The full model (model 3) indicates that men from East Germany cook less frequently than men from West Germany when keeping norms, socio-demographic and economic factors constant. The other effects are largely unchanged compared to the previous models. The full model only explains 16 percent of the variance in cooking. Norms account for 6 percent of the variance (model 2), and the socio-demographic, economic, and family-related variables in model 1 explain 12 percent of the variance.

7 Conclusion and discussion of findings

What can be learned from these findings about the apparent discrepancy between egalitarian gender norms on the one hand and behaviours lagging far behind these norms on the other? Our discussion follows the order of the outlined theoretical assumptions on the relationship between norms and behaviour in the household and family context. Building on the basic assumption of role theory, our first expectation was that people adapt their behaviour to existing normative gender roles and that there is a relationship between normative attitudes and the participation of men in housework. We argue – and find empirical evidence suggesting – that an issue of previous research is the inaccurate theoretical definition and empirical measurement of gender norms. Previous research has focussed especially on attitudes toward *women's* employment (cf. sub-section 5.2). Our empirical findings suggest instead that this normative system is only relevant for explaining male participation in cooking. Normative approval of the male provider – female homemaker model and attitudes toward employment as the central social role of men also appear only marginally relevant for predicting whether men participate in household tasks such as vacuum-cleaning, doing the laundry, and cooking (see also *Schober* 2011). Attitudes toward *men's* unpaid work play a much more decisive role for male participation in housework. The empirical results not only hint at a relationship between norms and behaviour in regard to men's unpaid work, but also suggest that it is important to examine specific norms and tasks. The effect of a norm system can vary for different tasks, and, depending on the task, various norm systems may be relevant predictors. Furthermore, based on more precise theoretical assumptions and data allowing a separate analysis of male and female roles regarding employment and housework, our findings suggest that historical changes regarding women's employment do not automatically lead to changes in norms regarding men's and women's participation in unpaid work. The asymmetry of gender role changes (*Grunow et al*. 2007) therefore does not only apply to behaviours, but also to attitudes.

Based on recent theoretical contributions arguing that gender constructions refer to (normative and institutional) context, our second expectation was that men generally hold less egalitarian beliefs than women. Due to the asynchronous changes of male and female roles in Germany during the 20th and the early 21st century, our third expectation was to find gender-specific differences regarding the endorsement of or objection to those norm systems that were mostly affected by structural changes. Our findings indicate that there is still variation in the acceptance of, or objection to, women's employment, both among men and women, and that employment is still seen as the central social role of men by a vast majority. Our findings further point to *men* having more traditional attitudes toward *women's* employment than women themselves. At the same time, *women* are more conservative regarding *male* employment: eight out of ten women, but only six out of ten men view employment as the central social role of men. A possible interpretation of these results is that normative stereotypes – such as those expressed here – are applied more readily to the opposite gender. Perhaps life contexts viewed from the outside appear less complex and ambivalent in comparison to one's own life context. The findings are also in line with the hypothesis of *interest-based* factors influencing individual normative beliefs (*Bolzendahl/Myers* 2004). Furthermore, the evidence we have found suggests that individual attitudes toward men's and women's employment are not necessarily related to each other, i.e. someone holding a progressive view on the role of women does not automatically hold a progressive view on the role of men.

Our fourth expectation focused on the impact of household and family context on normative framing and on individual behaviour regarding participation in housework. We assumed that both household structures offering men opportunities to withdraw from housework and the individual gender role beliefs influence whether men participate in housework or not. Our findings support this hypothesis. We find that single men vacuum, do laundry and cook significantly more often than men with a partner. Men's own normative endorsement of men's unpaid work plays a decisive role in predicting whether they perform either of these tasks. The evidence suggesting that men withdraw from housework with an increasing number of adults in the household further emphasises the importance of opportunity structures. The more adults live in the household, the less likely men are to vacuum, do laundry, or cook. Our descriptive analyses further indicate that women take on more housework when moving in with their partner, particularly because they replace other people (often mothers) who carried out these tasks before. Thus, the family context not only influences whether men do housework, it also influences who takes on certain tasks when the man does not do them himself.

Our fifth expectation was that the number of children in the household has a positive effect on the participation of men in vacuum-cleaning, doing the laundry, and cooking, since more commitment is demanded of fathers with young children in the private domain these days and research has shown that couples with committed fathers have more children. Our multivariate analyses, however, indicate the opposite, yet the effect is only statistically significant for doing the laundry: the more children living in the household, the less inclined fathers are to participate in

doing the laundry. This result complements earlier time-use studies (*Künzler et al.* 2001) and research on the relative participation of men in household tasks (*Grunow et al*. 2007) in one important aspect: parenthood not only leads to a more traditional gender-specific division of work because women take on the greater share of additional housework, some tasks – such as doing the laundry – are not performed by certain fathers at all. Since institutional and normative contexts merely frame individual behaviour, we moreover assumed that individual normative attitudes of men influence whether they do housework even after controlling for family context. This hypothesis is confirmed in our analyses.

Finally, our findings on the gender-typing of specific household tasks are in line with the current state of research on the commitment of "new men" to housework. As even men with an egalitarian attitude tend to perform "male" rather than "female" tasks in the household, we assumed that normative attitudes of men especially explain male participation in "legitimately male" tasks (vacuum-cleaning and cooking). In the case of doing the laundry – still the most feminine task – we assumed a bigger impact of situational factors such as household and family context. This hypothesis is confirmed in our multivariate analyses: in the case of vacuum-cleaning, the norms-based models explain as much of the variance as the models including socio-demographic, economic and family context variables. In the case of cooking, norms explain one third of the variance explained by the full model. However, in the case of doing the laundry, norms make up only one fifth of the total explanatory power of the full model.

Our findings have both theoretical and methodological implications: first, our norm systems help explain some of the variation in all three dependent variables in addition to socio-demographic, economic and family context variables. This implies that regression models not controlling for norms are incomplete, and results may be biased by spurious effects or suppressor effects.

Second, our findings suggest that future studies on the division of housework should not – in contrast to common practice so far – sum up domestic work hours using indices or time budgets. Such measures are likely to lead to ambiguity regarding both the contribution of men toward housework and the gender-specific connotation of particular household tasks.

Third, we want to point out the limitations of our findings. It has been argued repeatedly (*Cooke* 2004; *Grunow et al.* 2007) that it is necessary to analyse processes of gender-specific divisions of work with longitudinal data. Cause and effect of competing theoretical concepts can only be separated from mere composition effects or life course effects with panel data collecting norms that are differentiated over time and on an individual level (cf. *Grunow* 2007). Our multivariate cross-sectional analyses presume that the operationalised norm systems influence behaviour and not vice versa. However, this assumption cannot be confirmed by our data. Thus, our regression models mainly have explorative value. Future research needs to collect and analyse differentiated longitudinal data on gender norms to verify these results. However, we interpret the relatively stable effects of norm systems after controlling for household and family context as an indication of our results not being significantly affected by the mixture of norms and family context as explanatory

variables for the participation of men in housework, despite using cross-sectional data.

In theory, it would have been appropriate to look at the impact of interaction effects between family context and normative attitudes of men on the investigated household tasks. Although we conduct these analyses and report some results, the full potential of such analyses could not be exploited due to the small sample size. We find some indication that household and family context re-emphasise the effect of certain attitudes. It would be interesting for future research to understand how normative attitudes and gender-specific behaviour influence each other and change over the course of a relationship.

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Appendix

Tab. A1: Relative explanatory power of independent variables for men vacuum-cleaning, doing the laundry and cooking, logistic regression, fully standardised b-coefficients

	Man vacuums	Man does laundry	Man cooks
Region, ref. West Germany			
East Germany	0.05	0.09	-0.23+
Age (in years)	-0.29**	-0.17	-0.04
Education, ref. maximum "Lower School Leaving Certificate" (Hauptschule)			
"General School Leaving Certificate" (Realschule)	-0.08	0.06	0.18
Higher education entrance qualification	-0.03	0.03	0.25*
Graduate degree	-0.03	-0.09	0.09
Employment status, ref. employed			
Pensioner	-0.14	-0.07	0.07
In education	-0.15	0.17	0.11
Other	-0.04	0.09	0.07
Treiman prestige	0.20	0.20	0.23+
Net equivalent income (in thousand euro)	-0.35*	-0.04	-0.28*
Partner's employment status, ref. not employed			
No partner	0.26*	0.28*	0.25*
Partner employed part-time	0.05	0.12	0.11
Partner employed full-time	0.10	0.11	0.37**
Family context			
Number of adults in the household (apart from the respondent)	-0.31**	-0.47**	-0.44**
Number of children in the household	-0.12	-0.29*	-0.04
Normative attitudes			
Approval of the male provider - female homemaker model	0.03	-0.06	0.17
Approval of women's employment	-0.08	0.11	0.25*
Employment as men's central social role	-0.14	0.07	-0.20
Endorsement of men's unpaid work	0.52**	0.20+	0.31**
Explained variance (pseudo R^2)	15%	17%	16%
N	303	303	303

Level of significance: + $\alpha \leq 0.10$; * $\alpha \leq 0.05$; ** $\alpha \leq 0.01$; *** $\alpha \leq 0.001$

Source: Own calculations based on the study "The image of men in society"

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