Married Women's Employment over the Life Course: Attitudes in Cross-National Perspective*

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Abstract

We analyze survey data from 23, largely industrialized countries on attitudes toward married women's employment at four stages of the family life course. Despite general consensus between countries, cluster and correspondence analyses show that the nations represent three distinct patterns of attitudes. There is only mixed support for the hypothesis that public opinion conforms to state welfare regime type. Instead, normative beliefs reflect both a general dimension of structural and cultural factors facilitating female labor force participation and a life course dimension specific to maternal employment. Men and women largely agree, but gender differences affect cluster membership for a few countries. Systematic analysis of a large number of countries helps to test the limits of comparative typologies and to identify anomalous cases for closer study.

Women around the globe face similar problems reconciling paid work and domestic responsibilities (Boh, Sgritta & Sussman 1989; Frankel 1996; Moen 1992; Stockman, Bonney & Sheng 1995). Compared with other women, mothers of children, particularly young children, are less likely to be employed. When they do work for pay, they are less likely to work full-time. Ideologies assigning primary child-care responsibility to women prevail in most cultures (Barry & Paxson 1971). In advanced industrial societies, the organization of work (e.g., fixed employment schedules) and its rewards (e.g., gender pay gaps) pose obstacles and

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disincentives to female caregivers' labor force participation (Glass & Estes 1997). This pattern, of course, has serious implications for the well-being of women and their children (Casper, McLanahan & Garfinkel 1994; Hogan & Lichter 1995). Because essentialist views about women's maternal nature and structural barriers to women's employment are both so widespread, we might expect to find similar attitudes toward married women's paid work from one industrialized country to the next.

Despite the strong case for similar attitudes, other factors argue for systematic, cross-national differences in public opinion regarding married women's paid work. Attitudes toward women's roles have been shown to be responsive to the structural and cultural context (Alwin, Braun & Scott 1992; Rindfuss, Brewster & Kavee 1996). Distinctive historical experiences produce distinctive national cultures (Inglehart 1990). For example, religious heritage (Haller & Hoellinger 1994) and service sector development (Schultz 1990) are contextual factors that may influence views on married women's employment. In pursuing various objectives, states themselves promote policies (e.g., public child care and employment rules) that affect the reproduction of gender relations in the home and the workplace. Since national policies institutionalize family and gender ideologies (Orloff 1993; Sainsbury 1994), state welfare regime type may form a basis for divergent views on married women's paid work. In fact, one indicator of the success of state interventions is whether state ideology is internalized by citizens and manifest in public opinion. Surprisingly lacking, however, is systematic empirical research showing whether national publics hold attitudes consistent with the ideologies that states promulgate.

In this article, we exploit newly available cross-national survey data on attitudes toward married women's paid work over the life course. Data on nearly two dozen advanced industrial countries permit the first large-scale, systematic comparison of attitudes between countries that differ in historical experience and state ideology. To clarify the link between social structure and attitudes, we test whether socialist and capitalist welfare state distinctions or other factors can adequately explain country-to-country differences in public opinion toward married women working outside the home. Cluster and correspondence analyses show that the sample countries fall into three groups, each with somewhat different attitudes toward married women's employment. A novel application of the nested, one-way analysis of variance design gauges the importance of universally shared attitudes as compared with unique national cultures or with beliefs shared by the three groupings of states. To evaluate the degree of consensus within countries, this approach is generalized to consider widely documented gender differences in attitudes toward married women's employment.

Attitudes toward Women and Work

As married women's labor force participation has increased in industrial countries, approval of nontraditional roles for women has also risen (Mason & Lu 1988; Spitze & Huber 1980). For example, the proportion of people who believe that women's employment has negative effects on family and children has declined in Britain, Germany, and the U.S. (Scott, Alwin & Braun 1996). It is not always clear whether attitudes lag or lead changes in behavior. Evidence for the U.S. suggests that increases in married women's labor force participation preceded more favorable public opinion toward women working (Oppenheimer 1978; Rindfuss, Brewster & Kavee 1996). Cohort succession, rather than within-cohort attitude change, accounted for most of the 1972-88 liberalization in American attitudes about women's public and political roles (Firebaugh 1992). Within-cohort change is credited with a larger role in the shift away from traditional thinking about women's family responsibilities (Scott, Alwin & Braun 1996).

At the individual level, women's paid employment fosters more egalitarian gender attitudes in women (Smith-Lovin & Tickamayer 1978), their husbands (Smith 1985), and their children (Powell & Steelman 1982). Not surprisingly, women who work full-time are more favorably disposed to women's employment than either women who work part-time or women who do not work for pay (Alwin, Braun & Scott 1992; Glass 1992; Vogler 1994). Although there is a positive relation between egalitarian gender beliefs and hours of paid work, the association differs between countries, being larger in Sweden and Norway than in the U.S. (Baxter & Kane 1995). Despite the association between gender role attitudes and women's labor force participation over time and at the individual level, there is no clear association at the aggregate level for the eight, mostly European nations considered by Haller and Hoellinger (1994). Countries with more liberal beliefs about gender roles do not necessarily have higher rates of female employment. The Dutch combine egalitarian views with relatively low women's labor force participation, whereas Hungarians show traditional gender attitudes and high rates of female employment (Haller & Hoellinger 1994).

Belief in a strict, gender-based division of labor, a "separate spheres" ideology justifying married women's exclusion from the paid workforce, certainly finds less support today. Between the early 1980s and the 1990s, the Americans, British, Dutch, Irish, Italians, Japanese, Swedes, and West Germans all became less likely to agree that the husband should earn the money and the wife should tend to the home (Alwin, Braun & Scott 1992; Hakim 1996). In keeping with these egalitarian trends, advanced industrial countries have come to accept married women working for pay, at least if a job is subordinated to family responsibilities such as the care of small children. Significant differences persist between and within nations. For example, 62% of the Japanese, 29% of Germans, but only 13% of

Swedes still approve of the "breadwinner husband–homemaker wife" model of family life (Hakim 1996).

Although public opinion is favorably disposed to married women's employment, attitudes about female labor force participation are conditioned by beliefs about children and maternal responsibility. People who believe children are important to personal fulfillment hold less favorable attitudes toward women's work outside the home (Jones & Brayfield 1997). Children are regarded as more central in some nations than in others. In a six-country study, Italians were the most likely to value children, followed by Austrians, West Germans, the Irish, the British, and the Dutch (Jones & Brayfield 1997). Reservations about women's paid work often reflect concerns about the well-being of children. Significant segments of national populations believe that a mother's labor force participation is deleterious to young children or to the mother-child relationship (Scott & Duncombe 1992). These concerns are more salient in some nations than in others. According to an eight-country comparison, the percentage of people who agree that preschool children suffer when the mother works is highest among Austrians, followed by Germans, Hungarians, Italians, the Dutch, the Irish, the British, and Americans (Haller & Hoellinger 1994). West Germans voice more concern about the effects of maternal employment on infants than do East Germans (Adler & Brayfield 1996).

Given these concerns, it is not surprising to find resistance to mothers of preschool children working for pay. Only about half of the respondents in Italy, the Netherlands, the U.S., and Ireland endorse these mothers working, whether part-time or full-time (Haller & Hoellinger 1994). In Great Britain and Germany (West), only about a quarter of the respondents favor employment for women with very young children. In Britain, Germany, and the U.S., men are less approving than women of married women working for pay, especially when there are children in the home (Alwin, Braun & Scott 1992). In recent years, British men grew even more convinced than they were previously that children suffer when their mother works outside the home (Scott, Alwin & Braun 1996). The well-documented gender gap in attitudes extends to Hungary, where men are less likely than their female counterparts to support women's paid employment (Panayotova & Brayfield 1997). Men are more approving than women of a gender-based division of labor and of traditional roles for women (Adler & Brayfield 1992; Baxter & Kane 1995; Scott & Duncombe 1992).

In short, public opinion has become more favorable toward married women working for pay, but men continue to voice more traditional attitudes than do women. There is less support today for a strict, gendered division of labor relegating women to the home, but opposition to married women's work is still expressed in concerns about the effects of maternal employment on children. Substantial differences in attitudes toward gender roles exist between countries. Because mothers are held to different normative standards than married women

in general, comparative research needs to examine attitudes toward married women's employment over the entire life course, rather than at only one stage in family life. To understand cross-national similarities and differences in attitudes, it is important to know whether reservations about maternal employment extend to mothers of older children as well as to preschoolers and whether tolerance of married women's paid work applies equally to childless brides and empty-nest women.

Explanations for Cross-National Patterns

Cross-national survey comparisons of attitudes toward work, family, and gender have focused on a little more than a dozen European or English-heritage nations.[1] This comparative research reveals enough differences to suggest that distinctive national cultures may exist. It is not known, however, whether there are "families of nations" (Castles 1993), groups of countries that hold similar attitudes toward married women's employment as a result of common language, shared culture, or common historical experience. While case-by-case comparisons have yielded useful insights, the absence of key contrasts (e.g., among formerly socialist states) is striking. Systematic analysis for a larger number of countries is necessary to detect the general patterns in attitudes that place earlier results in broader context.

Based on the limited number of cases examined, researchers have invoked state political ideologies to explain differences between countries in attitudes toward women's work (Adler & Brayfield 1996; Braun, Scott & Alwin 1994; Haller & Hoellinger 1994; Panayotova & Brayfield 1997; Scott, Alwin & Braun 1996). Following the arguments of Kohn and Slomczynski (1990) about the influence of social structure on attitudes and values, Panayotova and Brayfield (1997) suggest that political, institutional, and ideological factors mediate the effect of social structure on public opinion regarding women's employment. Structural influences on rates of female labor force participation, including level of economic development (Pampel & Tanaka 1986; Semyonov 1980) and sector composition of the workforce (Oppenheimer 1978; Schultz 1990), are well documented. Attitudes about women's employment are based, in part, on cognitive assessments of the structural circumstances making it more or less difficult or desirable for women to combine paid work and family responsibilities. In keeping with the reigning political philosophy, states shape those perceptions, particularly with interventions that mitigate child-care problems, gender pay inequality, and family financial need. In addition to influencing beliefs about what is, state propaganda about gender, work, and family may be internalized by individuals as normative judgments of what should be.

Implicit assumptions about gender and family are codified in the welfare, labor, and taxation policies of nations (Orloff 1993; Sainsbury 1994). Western European

states have been classified according to their support for the male-breadwinner model of the family (Ostner & Lewis 1995). Britain, Germany, and the Netherlands are said to promote the traditional gendered division of labor in families by virtue of welfare policies that treat women, not as workers, but as homemakers dependent on husbands for support. Sweden and Denmark, by contrast, encourage two-income families by supporting women's paid work and compensating mothers for time out of the labor force to raise children. Liberal welfare states like Australia, the United Kingdom, and the U.S. are content to leave child care largely to market forces (Gustafsson 1994). Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, and Sweden offer maternity benefits, job protections, and public child care that promote maternal attachment to employment (Gornick, Meyers & Ross 1998). Given that mothers confronting less favorable leave policies are more likely to withdraw from the labor force (Glass & Riley 1998), the policies that states institutionalize suggest the value accorded women's employment. As manifest in legal and institutional arrangements, state ideologies are hypothesized to influence public opinion regarding the desirability of married women's paid work, especially when the women have young children. Of course, public opinion may also dictate state policy, particularly in democratic regimes.

Although most cross-national studies of public opinion toward married women's employment focus on capitalist states, the difference between capitalist and socialist countries poses an important test of the political, ideological, and institutional determinants of attitudes toward women and work. The formerly socialist nations of Central and Eastern Europe maintained a distinctive ideology. They encouraged women's full-time employment through full-employment policies, universal child care, and an ethos stressing work as a civic duty and gender equality as a social goal (Adamik 1991; Broschart 1992; Drobnic 1997; Panayotova & Adler 1997). Consistent with arguments regarding ideological, political, and institutional forces in the development of attitudes, East German women value work more highly than do their counterparts in Germany (West) (Adler & Brayfield 1997). East Germans are less likely than West Germans to endorse the husband dedicating himself to his job while the wife stays home (Adler & Brayfield 1996). Braun, Scott, and Alwin (1994) offer the tentative conclusion that East Germans' more positive attitudes toward women's paid work reflect economic necessity, namely, the greater perceived need for two incomes. Perhaps because of the tradition of well-developed child-care programs in the German Democratic Republic, East Germans are also less concerned about the consequences of women's employment for children and the family.

Comparing Hungary and the U.S., Panayotova and Adler (1997) document Hungarians' conservative gender attitudes and their high rates of women's labor force participation. They interpret this gender conservatism as evidence of a public reaction against the sweeping socialist reforms that subjected women to burdensome labor in the workplace, the informal economy, and the household.

While noting more conservative attitudes toward gender roles in Hungary than in Germany (East), Haller and Hoellinger (1994) speculate about a regional pattern where the need for two incomes fostered high female labor force participation in the face of traditional attitudes toward gender and family. Given how few formerly socialist states have been compared, we lack definitive empirical evidence that a regional, socialist pattern actually exists. If there is a socialist pattern, it is not known whether the attitudes of Hungarians or East Germans are more representative of the command economy's legacy in Central and Eastern Europe.

Based on the state ideologies guiding public policy, Blossfeld and Hakim (1997; Blossfeld & Drobnic 1999) identify five national patterns of female labor force participation. Consistent with earlier arguments, they acknowledge a distinctive pattern in Europe's *formerly socialist states*, which promoted women's full-time employment rather than part-time jobs. They also describe a distinctive regional pattern in *southern European states*, where married women are encouraged to stay home. Having lagged behind in the development of the welfare state, the modernization of family structure, and the transformation to a service economy, they argue, southern European countries continue to support a more traditional, gendered division of labor. (See also Esping-Andersen 1999.)

Blossfeld and Hakim (1997) identify three more clusters which parallel Esping-Andersen's (1990) typology of capitalist welfare states. In the *social democratic welfare states* of Scandinavia, they argue, public policy encourages women to work, particularly full-time, while also providing attractive part-time options. The *conservative welfare states* of Germany (West) and the Netherlands encourage not working over working and part-time over full-time employment for women. With varied results, *liberal welfare states* do little to encourage women's work. American women tend to choose full-time employment, while British women, placing greater emphasis on the family, choose part-time jobs.

Esping-Andersen's (1990) typology of capitalist welfare states asks whether the social rights of citizenship guarantee a livelihood regardless of labor market attachment. The typology has been criticized for neglecting gender (Sainsbury 1994), but recent work offers a stronger rationale for linking state types to women's labor market behavior (Esping-Andersen 1999). One facilitator of women's paid work is defamilialization, whereby state programs relieve the family of sole responsibility for the support and care of dependents. Esping-Andersen (1999) finds defamilialization to be most advanced in the Scandinavian social democracies, where principles of equality translate into generous benefits for all. At the other extreme are Japan and southern Europe, which remain highly familistic, as evidenced by low levels of spending on family services and subsidies. Despite having broad social benefit programs that usurp market prerogatives, the Continent's conservative states are also very familistic on some indicators, reflecting their commitment to maintaining existing status differentials and traditional family arrangements. Falling somewhere in the middle on

defamilialization are the largely Anglo-Saxon, liberal states, whose modest social insurance programs and means-tested benefits for the poor give greater play to market forces. From this analysis, we infer that the social democracies will be most supportive of women's labor force participation; that Japan, southern Europe, and conservative states will be the least; and that liberal states will fall somewhere in the middle.

Alternative explanations for national differences in attitudes must also be considered. Contrasting the relatively high gender inequality in the German-speaking nations of Germany (West) and Austria with the lower levels found in Nordic and English-speaking states (excluding Ireland), Schmidt (1993) hypothesizes that a common cultural legacy of language may be at work. He also considers religious traditions, pointing out that female labor force participation increased more slowly in Catholic countries than in Protestant ones. Lesthaeghe (1995) reaches a similar conclusion. Positive correlations are reported between Protestant religion and "female work desirability" (Siaroff 1994) and between percent Protestant and egalitarian attitudes toward women's employment (Haller & Hoellinger 1994). Protestant countries with strong labor unions and leftist political parties have been particularly successful in implementing egalitarian gender policies (Norris 1987). While shaping the historical development of capitalist welfare state regimes (Esping-Andersen 1990), religion may have an independent effect as well: Protestant countries advocated less traditional roles for women and embraced secularism earlier than did Catholic countries.

The research literature based on paired comparisons between countries has revealed significant differences in attitudes toward gender, work, and family. Because state ideologies embody assumptions about appropriate gender roles, they are one possible source of cross-national variation in public opinion. Common language and shared religious legacy are other possible sources of variation in attitudes between countries. Because ideology, language, and religion transcend the boundaries of the nation-state, they are the basis for expecting national attitudes to be summarized by a few broad patterns. Identifying attitudinal regimes calls for the systematic analysis of cross-national survey data for a large number of countries that represent the key dimensions that are hypothesized to distinguish patterns of female labor force participation over the life course.

Data and Methods

Our analysis capitalizes on new data from the International Social Survey Program (ISSP), made available by the Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung in Cologne.[2] An established program of cross-national collaboration, the ISSP has facilitated social science surveys since 1985 (Smith 1992). In 1994, independent research institutions replicated survey questions on family and gender roles,

typically as a supplement to national probability surveys. Data are available for 24, largely Western and industrial countries. Excluding the less developed Philippines, we focus on 23 nations. These include the formerly socialist states of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Germany (East), Hungary, Poland, Russia, and Slovenia; the southern European states of Italy and Spain; the Scandinavian social democracies of Norway and Sweden; the conservative welfare states of Austria, Israel, the Netherlands, and Germany (West); and the liberal welfare states of Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, and the U.S. (Esping-Andersen 1999; Stier, Lewin-Epstein & Braun 1998). Sample sizes range from 647 in Northern Ireland to 2,494 in Spain. While not exhaustive (nor representative of any universe except countries agreeing to participate in the ISSP surveys), the sample improves on previous research on attitudes toward gender roles. The ISSP data offer a larger number of countries as well as opportunities for key comparisons between capitalist nations and formerly socialist states, northern and southern European countries, countries with a Catholic heritage and those with a Protestant one, and several sets of countries sharing a common language.

Survey informants were asked to give their opinion on whether and how much women should work at various points in the life course. The question read: "Do you think that women should work outside the home full-time, part time or not at all under these circumstances?" Although single women's employment was not addressed, the survey asked for opinions about married women's work during four stages in the life course: after marriage and before they have children, when they have a preschool child, after the youngest child starts school, and after the children leave home.

The analysis begins by aggregating the percentage distributions for the 33,590 respondents into a matrix of 23 rows (the countries) by 12 columns (the three response categories for each of the four family life-stage items). The matrix, which appears below as Table 1, displays many interesting differences and similarities across countries and life-course stages, but some data reduction strategy is necessary in order to identify broad patterns in attitudes.

Our analytic strategy uses cluster analysis to group countries into homogeneous "attitude regimes" that share common views about married women's work over the life course. After the clusters and their constituent countries are identified, correspondence analysis provides a visual representation of the relationships between the countries and clusters. Correspondence analysis also suggests the factors or dimensions underlying national differences in attitudes toward married women's work at various stages of the family life course. Our substantive interpretations of these dimensions receive some validation from their correlation with independent indicators of key concepts. To assess the relative significance of cluster effects and country effects on attitudes, we generalize a one-way, nested ANOVA design. This yields a novel decomposition of the sum of squares in Table 1 into the components attributable to shared attitudes, attitudes common to multicountry clusters, and

attitudes specific to individual countries. Since gender differences in attitudes toward women's roles are well documented, we extend this decomposition to evaluate the effect of gender gaps in public opinion on the cluster membership of individual countries.

Hierarchical cluster analysis determines the number of clusters, or broad attitude regimes, among the 23 countries. Instead of grouping countries into some predetermined number of clusters, the hierarchical procedure aggregates countries on a step-by-step basis (Everitt 1993). By minimizing within-cluster variance, Ward's cluster method determines how many clusters to select and what countries belong to each cluster. Sequential aggregations of clusters into larger clusters are undertaken until additional aggregations result in a significant increase in variance within clusters. To assign countries to clusters optimally, a *k*-mean algorithm is used. This algorithm ascertains the optimal clustering solution for the *N*-group partition implied by the Ward's clustering procedure.

Having identified clusters, we apply correspondence analysis to map countries and clusters in two-dimensional space. Although not routinely employed with big, cross-national surveys, this multidimensional scaling technique has seen wide application in the social sciences, particularly in cultural anthropology, where it is used to study cultural consensus (Weller & Romney 1990). Decomposing a matrix into its underlying structure based on singular value decomposition (SVD), correspondence analysis examines the relations among rows or columns without distinguishing dependent and independent variables. The method provides a visual representation derived from a chi-square decomposition of the contingency table in Table 1. Countries that are close to one another in two-dimensional space present similar patterns of responses; those that are distant have dissimilar patterns. Each axis embodies factors that underpin attitudinal differences between countries.

Cluster analysis and correspondence analysis do not provide an estimate of the relative importance of broad attitude regimes or idiosyncratic national cultures. Toward this end, we employ a form of hierarchical modeling (Byrk & Raudenbush 1992), namely, a one-way, nested ANOVA design (Kirk 1968; SAS 1989). In this analysis, the total sum of squares in Table 1 can be decomposed into three components. An indicator of the extent to which countries share attitudes, which we call the consensus model (CM) sum of squares (SS_{CM}), refers to the portion that can be attributed to the average profile across countries. The difference between the total sum of squares and the CM sum of squares represents the part that cannot be explained by the consensus model, that is, the "consensus model error" (CME). To measure the effect of partitioning units (as the cluster analysis does), we apply a nested model that further decomposes the consensus model error into two components — the sum of squares between clusters (SS_B) and the sum of squares within clusters (SS_W). The three component sums of

squares add to the total sum of squares (SS_{TOTAL}), as shown by the following equation:

$$SS_{TOTAL} = SS_{CM} + SS_B + SS_W.$$

The larger the SS_B, the more distinct the cluster from the average attitude profile. The smaller the SS_W, the more homogeneous the cluster and the less important national cultures or country-specific "error."

Findings

The data in Table 1 present clear results. Virtually everyone agrees that married women should work before they have children. On average, 80% of all respondents favor full-time employment, 15% part-time, and only 5% recommend staying home. National differences are apparent, nonetheless. No Swedes think married women should stay home before having children, whereas 21% of Poles believe they should. Support for full-time paid work early in marriage is as high as 94% in Canada and Sweden and as low as 62% in Russia. Once women have children, public opinion favors their reducing their labor force involvement. When the youngest child is a preschooler, only 9% of all respondents, on average, favor full-time work and 39% part-time. The "stay at home" option is selected by 52%. Again, there is cross-national variation. In Poland, 76% recommend that the mother of a preschooler stay at home, while only 19% in Israel do. Israelis (63%) and East Germans (64%) are the most likely to suggest that mothers of young children work part-time. Although full-time work does not find a great deal of support, the percentages endorsing this option for mothers of preschoolers range from 1% in Germany (West) to 18% in Canada and Israel.

Maternal employment is more popular when the youngest child goes to school. On average, 24% of all respondents favor full-time employment, 58% part-time, and 18% staying home. Cross-national differences are striking. While 48% of Canadians believe the mother of a schoolchild should work full-time, only 5% of West Germans recommend full-time employment. While only 3% of Swedes recommend staying home, 41% of Poles favor this option. After the children have left home, however, even full-time work finds favor. On average, 73% of the national publics recommend full-time paid work, 21% part-time, and only 6% staying at home. In a few countries, some people seem to find full-time work incompatible with domestic responsibilities even when women no longer have child-care responsibilities. In Spain and Italy, 16% and 18% of the respondents, respectively, favor women staying home. In contrast, less than 2% of the respondents from Germany (East), Great Britain, Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden regard staying home as a good choice after children are grown.

TABLE 1: Attitudes toward Married Women's Employment, by Country[a]

Country	After Marriage, before Child? Work Full-Time	Work Part-Time	Stay at Home	With Preschool Child? Work Full-Time	Work Part-Time	Stay at Home
Australia	85	13	2	4	31	65
Austria	84	15	2	3	37	61
Bulgaria	79	15	6	13	27	60
Canada	94	4	1	18	40	42
Czech Republic	80	13	7	7	39	54
Germany (East)	90	9	1	15	64	21
Germany (West)	78	19	3	1	30	69
Great Britain	88	10	2	6	31	63
Hungary	80	13	7	5	32	63
Ireland	84	12	4	12	39	49
Israel	71	26	3	18	63	19
Italy	59	33	8	5	56	39
Japan	71	22	7	11	26	63
Netherlands	89	10	1	15	45	40
New Zealand	91	8	1	3	29	68
Northern Ireland	88	9	3	9	31	60
Norway	88	10	2	8	48	45
Poland	69	10	21	11	13	76
Russia	62	28	10	4	38	58
Slovenia	77	11	12	10	36	54
Spain	63	22	15	14	39	47
Sweden	94	6	0	9	62	29
U.S.	84	13	3	11	34	55
Overall average	80	15	5	9	39	52

COUNTRY CLUSTERS

To determine whether cross-national variation in attitudes can be summarized in terms of a few broad patterns, we turn to the results of the cluster analysis. The 23 ISSP countries can be adequately described as belonging to only three clusters. In the Ward's procedure, the majority of the increase in variance within clusters occurs after the first three aggregations. Earlier aggregations do not result in a significant increase in variance.

Figure 1 shows the three clusters' percent distribution profiles, that is, the percentage of respondents in each cluster choosing full-time, part-time, or stay-at-home responses for each of the four family life-course stages. In the "after marriage, before child" stage, full-time employment is overwhelmingly the norm in all three clusters. Support for full-time work is almost as high after children

TABLE 1: Attitudes toward Married Women's Employment, by Country[a] (Continued)

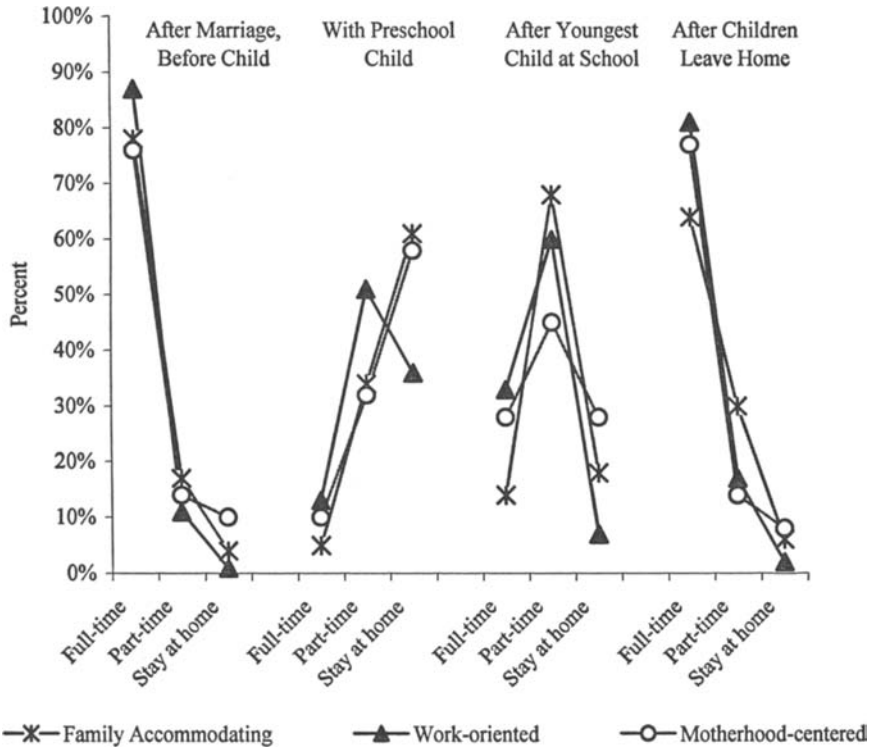
Country	After Youngest Child at School? Work Full-Time	Work Part-Time	Stay at Home	After Children Leave Home? Work Full-Time	Work Part-Time	Stay at Home
Australia	16	73	11	61	34	5
Austria	9	69	22	65	30	5
Bulgaria	26	41	33	86	9	5
Canada	48	43	9	83	15	2
Czech Republic	22	58	20	84	14	2
Germany (East)	27	67	6	82	17	1
Germany (West)	5	67	28	58	37	5
Great Britain	18	74	8	74	25	1
Hungary	19	50	31	72	18	1
Ireland	26	50	24	74	20	6
Israel	38	54	8	71	23	6
Italy	17	66	17	55	20	16
Japan	17	57	26	54	37	9
Netherlands	28	64	8	80	19	1
New Zealand	12	80	8	74	24	2
Northern Ireland	21	66	13	75	23	2
Norway	25	64	11	82	17	1
Poland	30	29	41	80	11	9
Russia	9	62	29	61	27	12
Slovenia	34	42	23	82	8	10
Spain	32	44	22	64	18	18
Sweden	25	72	3	89	11	0
USA	38	54	8	81	17	2
Overall average	24	58	18	73	21	6

[a] Percentages

are grown. Mothers of preschoolers, on the other hand, are expected to stay home or, in the case of one cluster, work only part-time. To greater or lesser extent, all clusters show part-time work as the most popular option for mothers with school-age children. Despite country-to-country differences, there is a high level of agreement that women without children should work for pay, usually full-time, but that mothers with children who require care should reduce their labor force involvement by staying home or working only part-time. The three clusters are best described as variations on this general theme.

The first cluster contains Canada, Germany (East), Israel, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the U.S. This is a "work-oriented" cluster. Whatever the life-course stage, the cluster's respondents are the least likely to recommend

FIGURE 1: Response Distribution for Four Life-Course Stages, by Cluster



married women stay home. For each stage, respondents in the work-oriented countries are somewhat more likely to endorse paid work (and even full-time paid work) than are people in other countries. Respondents are apt to recommend working, albeit part-time, when children are young. On average, only 36% of the cluster's respondents suggest that women stay at home when there is a preschooler, compared with 52% across all countries. When there is a school-age child, the figure endorsing staying home is 7% for the work-oriented countries, versus 18% across all 23 countries.

The second, and biggest, cluster, which we call "family accommodating," is made up of Australia, Austria, Germany (West), Great Britain, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, and Russia. Compared with the work-oriented cluster,

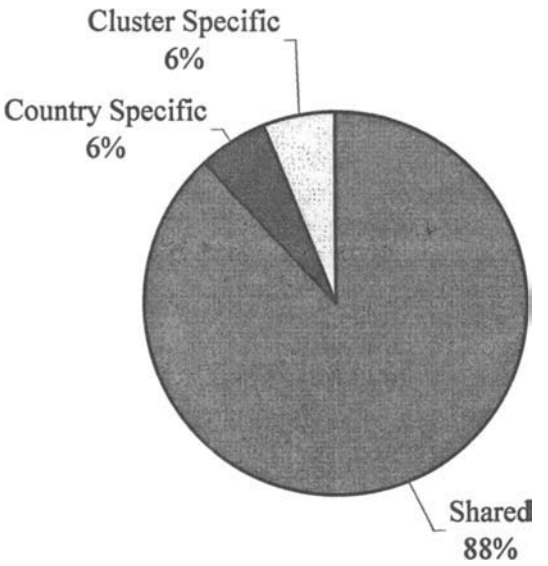
the family-accommodating cluster puts less stress on married women's labor force participation. Respondents in this cluster are less likely to endorse full-time employment, even after children are grown. When the youngest child is a preschooler, their most common recommendation is that the mother stay at home, as compared with the modal work part-time response for the work-oriented cluster. When the youngest child goes to school, they favor part-time work.

The third cluster is made up of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Ireland, Poland, Slovenia, and Spain. We describe this cluster as "motherhood-centered." Respondents favor full-time work before and after children, and, like the respondents in the family-accommodating cluster, they advocate that mothers with preschool children stay home. For mothers with school-age children, they endorse part-time work, albeit to a lesser extent than in other clusters, where there is greater agreement that part-time work is the best way to reconcile employment and family demands. In the motherhood-centered cluster, working part-time when children are in school is only slightly more popular than working full-time or staying home. While motherhood-centered countries do not uniformly reject the idea of mothers working, they have a larger contingent that does, suggesting low consensus on how mothers with school-age children should balance motherhood and employment.

Although three distinct attitude clusters are identified, the clusters have a great deal in common. When we compute the sum of squares across the 23 countries in Table 1, we find that fully 88% of the total sum of squares is attributable to the consensus model of attitudes shared by all the countries.[3] As Figure 2 shows, only 6% of the total sum of squares is attributable to the three clusters and another 6% to country-specific "error." This implies remarkably high country-to-country similarity in attitudes.[4] Clusters are not extreme types, but rather variations on a theme — acceptance of married women's employment coupled with the idea that young children call for reductions in labor supply. The unique national cultures' component of attitudes (i.e., country-specific "error") is as significant as the broader attitudinal regimes captured by the clusters.

Correspondence analysis maps countries and clusters in two-dimensional space. The first, horizontal dimension in Figure 3 reflects the broad societal factors that promote overall female labor force participation. Schmidt (1993) constructed an unweighted, additive index of social and political factors associated with the growth in women's labor force participation rates in capitalist states. This broad index incorporates indicators of fertility trends, sector employment shifts, expansion of child-care facilities, tax incentives for female employment, trade union activity, early female suffrage, parliamentary representation of women, the dominant postwar political party, and Protestant heritage. For 13 countries for which it is available, Schmidt's index of women's labor force participation promoters correlates .798 with loadings on the first dimension from the correspondence analysis. Thus, there is persuasive evidence that countries' attitudes toward

FIGURE 2: Attitudes toward Married Women's Employment: Decomposition of Sum of Squares for 23 Industrialized Nations

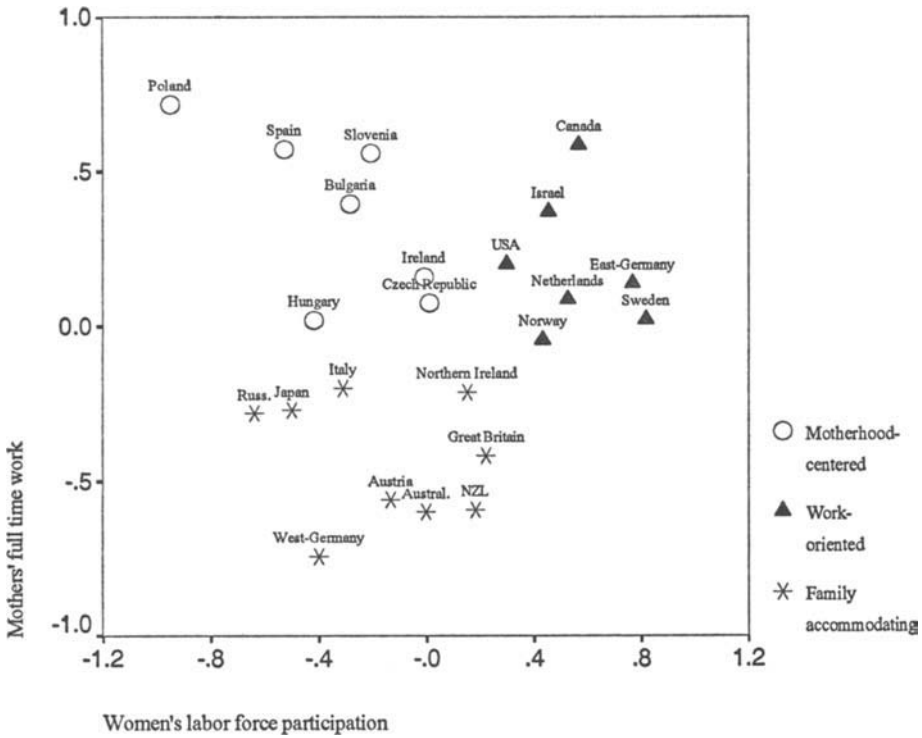


married women's labor force participation reflect the broad factors determining women's workforce involvement.

The second, vertical dimension captures the life-course component of women's employment. This dimension reflects tolerance for mothers working full-time. In fact, country loadings on this dimension correlate .864 with the percentage of the population recommending full-time employment for mothers of school-age children. The family-accommodating countries in the lower half of Figure 3 largely reject full-time work for mothers. For example, only 1% of West Germans think a woman with a preschool child should work full-time, and only 5% recommend full-time work when the child is school-age. In contrast, the motherhood-centered and the work-oriented countries dominate the upper half of Figure 2, indicating that the two clusters are comparatively tolerant of mothers' full-time work.

This is not to say that mothers' full-time employment is a popular choice. In Canada and Israel, the countries voicing the strongest support for full-time work by mothers of preschool children, only 18% of the respondents choose this response. In Canada and other work-oriented countries, the general preference is for mothers of preschoolers to stay home or to work only part-time and for mothers of schoolchildren to work, if not full-time, then part-time. By contrast,

FIGURE 3: Clusters in Correspondence Analysis Space



in motherhood-centered countries, part-time employment is not overwhelmingly preferred and comparatively strong support for mothers' full-time employment is combined with even stronger preferences that women with children stay home.

Given their liberal gender role attitudes, it is not surprising that the work-oriented countries are tolerant of full-time employment for mothers. As Table 2 shows, respondents in the work-oriented cluster hold less traditional views about the gendered division of labor and perceive fewer conflicts between women's work and family roles. On a four-point scale, they are significantly less likely than respondents in other clusters to agree with statements like "A job is all right, but what most women really want is a home and children" or "A preschool child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works." A progressive gender ideology, however, cannot account for the tolerant views of mothers' full-time employment among

respondents in the motherhood-centered cluster, because they voice the most conservative attitudes on all five statements about gender roles. Respondents in the family-accommodating cluster, who reject mothers' full-time employment, generally fall somewhere between the respondents in the other two clusters in their gender beliefs.

THE EFFECT OF GENDER DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDES

By displaying how each country is positioned vis-à-vis the clusters, Figure 2 reinforces the observation that countries — even those in different clusters — have a lot in common. For example, Ireland and the Czech Republic fall within the motherhood-centered cluster, but the opinions of the Irish and the Czechs place these countries close to the U.S., a country belonging to the work-oriented cluster. To understand why some countries have ambiguous cluster membership, we consider within-country attitude differences, focusing on the gender gap that has been documented for attitudes toward women's roles.

We first aggregate responses into a new matrix (not shown) of 46 rows (23 countries times 2 genders) by the 12 attitude response columns. Thus, each country has two profiles, one for men and one for women. When we apply cluster analysis to this matrix, both men's and women's attitude profiles fall in the same cluster for 18 of the 23 countries. This is not surprising, because the association between respondent's gender and attitudes toward married women's paid work is relatively weak. In no country does Cramer's V exceed .20. In most countries, men and women have very similar attitudes.

In five countries (the Czech Republic, Ireland, Italy, Russia, and Slovenia), attitude differences between men and women are large enough that the genders fall into different clusters. Except for Slovenia, these countries fall at the borders of the clusters in Figure 2. Small shifts in public opinion could push any one of these countries into a different cluster. For countries where the genders differ in cluster membership, men's profiles are classified as motherhood-centered. Women's profiles are classified as work-oriented, except for Russia, where women are included in the family-accommodating cluster. Were Russian women's attitudes like Russian men's, Russia would be placed in the motherhood-centered cluster, where most of the other formerly socialist states are located. Similarly, were the attitudes of Italian women more like those of Italian men, Italy would be in the motherhood-centered cluster with the other southern European country, Spain.

To measure how much gender affects attitude sharing across nations, we decompose the sum of squares in the new 46-row matrix. Assuming the general model holds for both men and women, we assign a country's overall cluster membership (as described earlier) to both genders in that country (Widmer, Treas & Newcomb 1998). Results are virtually identical to those produced by the general model: 86% of the total sum of squares is shared, 6% is cluster-

TABLE 2: Mean Scores on Attitudes toward Women's Roles, by Cluster: 23 ISSP Countries, 1994

Cluster	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Work-oriented	2.24	1.87	1.80	1.70	1.23
Family accommodating	2.37	2.35	2.62	2.01	1.86
Motherhood-centered	2.70	2.48	2.56	2.41	2.71
F-statistic	4.9	6.6	7.4	13.0	13.8
Significance	.019	.006	.004	.000	.000

Note: (1) A working mother can establish as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work. (2) A preschool child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works. (3) All in all, family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job. (4) A job is all right, but what most women really want is a home and children. (5) A man's job is to earn the money; a woman's job is to look after the home and family.

Agreement with statements is scored so that a higher score means greater approval of traditional gender roles.

specific, and 8% is country-specific "error." If we permit cluster membership to vary across genders, we get identical results. Thus, male and female profiles show some differences in five of the 23 countries. Those differences, while substantively interesting, are not large enough to undermine our general conclusion. Industrial countries share most attitudes about married women's labor force participation.

Discussion

This study demonstrates that industrialized countries hold very similar attitudes about married women's labor force participation. Given cross-national similarities in the organization of work and domestic responsibility, high consensus is to be expected. All countries endorse married women's full-time employment before children. All countries favor full-time, or at least part-time, work once children have left home. All countries recognize that motherhood demands a reduction in labor supply. Countries display three variations on this general theme.

People in work-oriented countries are the least likely to endorse women staying home. They are the most favorable to paid work but usually recommend part-time, not full-time, employment for mothers of young children. Those in family-accommodating countries believe that mothers of small children belong at home and that mothers of school-age children should work only part-time. Respondents in motherhood-centered countries are the most likely to endorse staying home, but they display little consensus regarding mothers of school-age children, if only because they are the least likely to advocate their part-time employment.

In terms of female labor force participation patterns, industrialized countries have been described as belonging to five groups, namely, the formerly socialist states of Central and Eastern Europe, the southern European countries, the social democratic welfare states, the conservative welfare states, and the liberal welfare states (Blossfeld & Hakim 1997). According to our analysis, however, the 23 ISSP countries fall into only three clusters with respect to attitudes toward married women's employment.

There are good reasons to expect a distinctive socialist influence on attitudes. The command economies of Eastern and Central Europe promoted high rates of female labor force participation not only with ideologies stressing gender equality and the obligation to work but also with institutions of full employment and universal child care. The motherhood-centered cluster captures five of the seven ISSP countries with a socialist legacy. Although Russia does not belong to this cluster, it is only because Russian women do not share Russian men's views about married women's labor force participation. While most formerly socialist states may be motherhood-centered, a socialist legacy is *not* the defining characteristic of the motherhood-centered cluster, if only because the cluster also includes Spain and Ireland.

Southern Europe has been described as distinctive in its traditionalism and its persistent familism. Spain is grouped with the once-socialist states in the motherhood-centered cluster. Italy is grouped with other conservative family-accommodating nations, although its cluster membership is due largely to gender differences in attitudes toward mothers' employment: Italy would also be motherhood-centered if Italian women's attitudes were as traditional as Italian men's. While Spain and Italy do not constitute a cluster of their own, the two countries do share traditional perspectives on married women's employment (e.g., some enthusiasm for women staying home even *after* their children are grown). The correspondence analysis shows that Italy and Spain fall close together on the first dimension, female labor force participation promoters. This lends credence to the contention that there are regional similarities among southern European countries (Blossfeld & Hakim 1997).

Although the formerly socialist countries and the southern European states were hypothesized to differ in their approaches to women's employment, both sets of countries are represented in the motherhood-centered cluster. Since Ireland also falls in this cluster, the common denominator is neither state ideology nor region. Given the countries' location on the first (horizontal) dimension of the correspondence analysis, such highly correlated factors as late economic development, traditional gender beliefs, and non-Protestant heritage offer more compelling explanations of the similarities in attitude among motherhood-centered countries.

The structure of employment also unites the southern European countries and the formerly socialist states. Compared with respondents in other clusters, those

in the motherhood-centered cluster are less likely to recommend part-time employment for mothers. Substantial numbers favor full-time work, and even more choose the stay-at-home response. This pattern is consistent with the fact that part-time work is not readily available in the once-socialist states or in southern Europe. Women have the choice of working full-time or not at all — an objective condition of employment that surely influences respondents' evaluation of alternatives.

Rather than create part-time jobs to help women balance the demands of work and family, the once-socialist states provided maternal leave followed by child care to allow mothers to return to full-time employment (Drobnic 1997). That benefits such as housing were tied to full-time employment increased the incentive to be a full-time worker. Part-time jobs created by postsocialist economic dislocations are involuntary and unwelcome, since families depend on two full incomes. In southern Europe, the slower expansion of the public sector constrained demand for female workers. Even in 1994, only 2% of working women in Slovenia and 15% in Spain were part-timers; the figures were 25% in the U.S., 44% in the U.K., and 66% in the Netherlands (Blossfeld & Hakim 1997). Without recourse to part-time jobs to reconcile work and family conflicts, respondents in the motherhood-centered cluster display low consensus on what mothers of school-age children should do. Some favor part-time work. Another segment of the population recommends full-time maternal employment (i.e., the Marxist model in socialist countries). An even bigger constituency supports mothers staying home, which is consistent with the cluster's traditional views on the gender-based division of labor.

Systematic differences in the public policies of capitalist welfare states led to the expectation that public opinion about married women's employment would differ by welfare regime type. Although they may be identified with different *public policies*, the three capitalist welfare state types — social democratic, liberal, and conservative — do not constitute distinct regimes of *public opinion*. Siaroff (1994) reaches similar conclusions regarding the limitations of Esping-Andersen's (1990) capitalist welfare state typology for understanding the desirability of women's employment. Of course, our results apply only to the ISSP nations, and a different sample of countries might yield somewhat different results.

The social democratic welfare states of Scandinavia, represented here by Sweden and Norway, present the anticipated work-oriented pattern, but they are not unique. Two liberal welfare states, the U.S. and Canada, are also part of the work-oriented cluster. In two-dimensional space, the Netherlands, a conservative welfare state, lies very close to the Scandinavian countries. So does Germany (East), which might be expected to adopt the motherhood-centered orientation of other formerly socialist states. (Of course, the transition from socialism in Germany (East) has been complicated by German reunification, which has posed unique economic pressures, including high consumer aspirations and large layoffs of women

workers.) In short, the strong support for female labor force participation in the work-oriented cluster is found in countries with very different political heritages — social democratic, liberal, conservative, and socialist.

The family-accommodating group is also diverse, containing conservative, liberal, and formerly socialist states. As anticipated, it includes conservative welfare regimes, like Austria, Italy, and Germany (West), that support a traditional, gender-based division of labor (Bimbi 1993; Ostner 1993). It also includes the liberal states of Australia, Great Britain, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, and Japan. While they may all deemphasize public responsibility in favor of market and family provisions, liberal states are quite heterogeneous in their approaches to welfare and employment. That the U.S. and Canada fall into a work-oriented cluster while Great Britain and Australia belong to the family-accommodating group is consistent with fine-grained social policy analyses of these four liberal states (O'Connor, Orloff & Shaver 1999). Unexpectedly, Russia also falls in the family-accommodating cluster, due largely to the attitudes of Russian women.

Because a shared language points to shared culture and facilitates institutional convergence between countries, language might be expected to influence cluster membership more than it apparently does. If there is a German-language "family of nations" (Schmidt 1993) with respect to attitudes toward women's labor force participation, it does not include the former Germany (East). Nor do we find evidence of an English-speaking family of nations. Australia, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, and Great Britain belong to the family-accommodating cluster, but Canada and the U.S. are grouped with the work-oriented, while Ireland belongs to the motherhood-centered. Another cultural explanation, religious tradition, fares better. For 20 countries for which we have data, the percent Protestant in 1900 (Barrett 1992) correlates .717 with loadings on the first dimension of the correspondence analysis. This finding is consistent with the argument that countries with a Protestant heritage emphasized less rigid gender roles, moved more quickly toward secularism, and more readily implemented a leftist agenda of policies that were favorable toward women.

Conclusion

On a case-by-case basis, a substantial research literature has documented cross-national differences in attitudes toward gender, work, and family. This article presents a methodological approach — the systematic analysis of survey data on a larger number of countries — that establishes a context for evaluating and extending this research tradition. Although the analysis confirms that there are differences between nations in attitudes toward married women's labor force participation, decomposing the total sum of squares shows that attitude similarities far overshadow the differences. Despite the various programmatic initiatives of

individual countries, it would appear that more universal factors, namely, the structural obstacles to combining motherhood and employment, are the dominant influences on normative views. The 23 countries do cluster into three broad attitude patterns, although the residual differences between countries (i.e., national cultures) are as important as differences between the clusters. The clusters represent subtle variations on shared views: There is widespread agreement that married women should work for pay but that mothers of young children should reduce their labor force involvement.

Nations show no one-to-one correspondence between public opinion regarding women's employment and the political ideologies that shape public policies. Rather than mapping closely to political orientations, attitudes reflect location along a general dimension of cultural and structural factors promoting women's overall labor force participation and along a specific maternal employment dimension, reflecting the availability of part-time work. As the clusters demonstrate, Scandinavian social democracies hold common views, but these are shared with other types of welfare regimes. A capitalist welfare regime like the conservative or liberal state may be compatible with several patterns of public opinion. While most of the formerly socialist states that we examined display attitudes that place them in the same cluster, the importance of socialist state ideology is hardly certain; some nonsocialist states — characterized by Catholic heritage, gender traditionalism, and late industrial development — share these views. No factor taken individually is sufficient to understand cluster membership. Instead, we must consider a constellation of highly correlated variables that affect public opinion on married women's employment.

While more research is required to sort out these relationships, the map of countries generated by correspondence analysis is a useful guide for future investigation. Our systematic analysis of a relatively large number of countries provides a context for interpreting the results of prior studies. Our analysis suggests, for example, that Hungary (or perhaps Bulgaria) is a better exemplar than is Germany (East) of attitudes toward married women's employment in formerly socialist states. In fact, the former Germany (East) would seem to constitute a deviant case inviting closer study. Germany (West), regarded as the archetype of a conservative state promoting breadwinner-husband-and-homemaker-wife families, is shown to be a particularly extreme case in its aversion to maternal employment. The Netherlands, often compared with Germany in its view of female employment, proves to be surprisingly supportive of mothers working, even full-time. Despite high rates of full-time female employment in the U.S. that contribute to a careerist reputation, American attitudes toward married women's employment are not particularly extreme. As a tool to select countries that best fit theoretical concepts and to identify anomalies that call for further study, this empirical approach is a useful complement to the methods of comparative research.

Notes

1. There are comparisons for the United Kingdom and Germany (West) (Adler & Brayfield 1992), Britain and the U.S. (Scott & Duncombe 1992), Britain and France (Procter & Ratcliffe 1992), Germany, Britain, and the U.S. (Alwin, Braun & Scott 1992; Scott, Alwin & Braun 1996), Australia, Canada, Norway, Sweden, and the U.S. (Baxter & Kane 1995), Austria, Britain, the U.S., and Germany (West) (Davis & Robinson 1991), Hungary and the U.S. (Panayotova & Brayfield 1997), Britain, Norway, and the Czech Republic (Crompton & Harris 1997), East and Germany (West) (Adler & Brayfield 1996, 1997), and Austria, Britain, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, and the U.S. (Braun, Scott & Alwin 1994; Haller & Hoellinger 1994).

2. Neither the Zentralarchiv nor the original collectors of the data bear any responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.

3. The total sum of squares is 20.6, the sum of squares between clusters 1.3, and the sum within clusters 1.3.

4. Widmer, Treas, and Newcomb (1998) investigated normative attitudes toward nonmarital sex (i.e., premarital, teenage, extramarital, and homosexual sex). Their study, which also used the 1994 ISSP data, demonstrates the extent of country-to-country similarity in employment attitudes. Although the degree of country-specific "error" is almost the same for both domains of attitudes (5% for sex and 6% for women's employment), ideological clusters account for less variation (6% versus 14%) in attitudes toward women's employment than in beliefs about sex. The shared or consensus sum of squares is even higher for employment attitudes than for attitudes toward nonmarital sex (81%).

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