

Magdalena Gerum

*"Parental Division of Labor. The Division of Paid Work, Domestic Work,
and Childcare Depending on the Age of the Child"*

eDiss Open Access of the Göttingen State and University Library (SUB), Göttingen, 2021

Outline (short version)

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Conceptual Framing: The Family Cycle Model and the Life Course Perspective
 - 2.1 The Family Cycle Model
 - 2.2 The Life Course Perspective
- 3 State of the Research
 - 3.1 The Division of Paid Work
 - 3.2 The Division of Domestic Work
 - 3.3 The Division of Childcare
 - 3.4 Research Gap and Research Questions
- 4 Theoretical Approaches to the Division of Paid Work, Domestic Work and Childcare
 - 4.1 Resource-based Approaches
 - 4.2 Gender Role-, Norm-, and Identity-based Approaches
 - 4.3 Summary and Discussion
- 5 Institutional and Cultural Frameworks of the Division of Parental Labor
 - 5.1 Germany from a Welfare State Perspective
 - 5.2 Gender Arrangements and Cultural Models in East and West Germany
 - 5.3 Family Models
 - 5.4 Time, Money and Infrastructure: On the Development of the 'Triad of Family Policy' in Germany
 - 5.5 Linking Theoretical Approaches to Institutional Frameworks
- 6 Hypothesis Generation
- 7 Data and Methods
 - 7.1 Data Basis: Survey of the German Youth Institute 2013/14 "AID:A"
 - 7.2 Operationalization of Variables
 - 7.3 Methods
 - 7.4 Distributions of Central Variables

7.5	Excursus: Latent Class Analysis for Multidimensional Mapping of Gender role Attitudes
8	Division of Paid Work
8.1	Descriptive Findings
8.2	Multivariate Analyses
9	Division of Domestic Work
9.1	Descriptive Findings
9.2	Multivariate Analyses
10	Division of Childcare
10.1	Descriptive Findings
10.2	Multivariate Analyses
11	Conclusion
A.	Appendix
	Bibliography
	List of Tables
	List of Figures

Summary

Family sociological research has so far neglected the importance of child age as an explanation of how parents divide up gainful employment, housework and childcare. It is obvious, however, that an adolescent child offers parents a different scope of arrangement than an infant. At the same time, the division of labor immediately after the birth of a child sets a course that can shape the division of labor in subsequent years. Therefore, this dissertation focuses on research questions related to the role that the child age plays in parents' division of labor.

Furthermore, this dissertation is interested in the role of influencing factors such as relative resources or gender role attitudes for the division of labor and whether their importance changes depending on the age of the child. One strand of theory is represented by economic theories such as family economic theory and bargaining theory; another strand of theory is represented by gender role-, norm- and identity-based approaches. In both theoretical strands, this dissertation elaborates on the significance that can be attributed to the age of the child in each case.

But in addition, given institutional and cultural conditions in Germany, such as family policies (e.g., monetary policies, time policies, and infrastructural regulations) and family models (in German "Familienleitbilder"), play an important role. Therefore, hypotheses are derived that make assumptions about what role the influencing factors play at different ages of the child and under the respective framework conditions. It is assumed that the influencing factors do not yet play a role for children under 1 year of age due to institutional frameworks, but that the importance of the influencing factors increases as the child grows older.

The Survey of the German Youth Institute "Growing Up in Germany: Everyday Worlds" (in German "AID:A" for short) from 2013/14 serves as the data basis for answering the research questions. Using diverse, multivariate analyses, it is worked out which role the age of the child plays for the division of labor of the parents and to what extent the importance of further influencing factors changes depending on the age of the child. The results show that the age of the child is of central importance for the division of gainful employment, while it plays only a minor role for the division of housework and childcare. While the division of paid work becomes much more egalitarian as the child ages, the division of housework and childcare are relatively traditional across child ages. Mothers are thus able to realize greater gainful employment options as the child grows older, but apparently not because fathers are more involved in childcare, but possibly because children are less care-intensive or institutional and cultural settings make this more feasible.

From the results, lower maternal resources (relative to fathers' resources) have a negative effect on mothers' labor force participation, but higher maternal resources, in contrast, show no positive effect on mothers' labor force participation. Thus, relative resources do not have a symmetric, gender-independent effect. The same is true for the division of unpaid work: Here we find that mothers take on more housework and more childcare if they have lower resources, but conversely, they do not take on less housework and not less childcare if they have higher resources than fathers. The age-specific hypotheses on this, i.e., that the importance of relative resources is lower for younger children than for older children, cannot be confirmed in most cases. Overall, relative resources are only of minor importance.

In terms of gender role attitudes, egalitarian attitudes are found to be associated with a more egalitarian division of paid work, housework, and childcare. In contrast, the age-specific assumptions that gender role attitudes have a smaller effect for younger children and a stronger effect for older children cannot be confirmed for the most part for all three

dimensions of the division of labor. In more in-depth analyses, gender role attitudes are further mapped multidimensionally using a latent class analysis: From this, the three latent classes "intensive mothering/parenting", "egalitarian essentialism" and "egalitarian" emerge. These classes also have significant effects on the division of labor: In the "intensive mothering/parenting" class, gainful employment, housework, and childcare are most traditionally divided; in the "egalitarian" class, they are most egalitarian; and the "egalitarian essentialism" class is between these two extremes. However, even here there is generally no significant change as a function of the child's age, i.e., attitudes play an equal role in parental division of labor at most ages of the child.

In summary, the results can be interpreted as follows: The fact that most of the influencing factors do not yet play a major role at a young age can be attributed to unfavourable institutional and cultural framework conditions. The fact that, contrary to expectations, the influencing factors do not become significantly stronger with older children can possibly be attributed to the fact that the course for the division of labour was already set at a very young child age and thus previous patterns of division of labor (especially in the division of housework and childcare) are maintained. This dissertation hereby provides new and detailed insights into how parents divide paid work and family work as a function of the child's age, mapping all ages of the child - starting from toddler and kindergarten age to elementary school and adolescent age.

Keywords: Parental division of labor; division of paid work; division of domestic work; division of childcare; age of child; relative resources; gender role attitudes; normative context; institutional framework; family models; family policy; multidimensional gender role attitudes; latent class analysis; „intensive mothering/parenting“; family cycle model; life course perspective