

Beliefs about the Gender Division of Parental Leave and Characteristics Associated with Them

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The presented research set in a Croatian context explores beliefs about parental/maternity leave and factors explaining these beliefs. The data was gathered on a nationally representative sample of people living in Croatia (N=1000). Participants were asked questions about their beliefs towards parental leave take-up by the mother and the father, their socio-demographic data, attendance of religious services, partners' income disparity and gender-role beliefs. The results show that around 49% of both men and women believe that it is solely the mother's responsibility to use the entire leave, an additional 27% believe that the father should take some part of the leave, and around 24% believe that parents should share the leave equally. Men and women who support more equally shared leave take-up attend religious services less often and hold more egalitarian beliefs about gender division of labour, but do not differ in partners' income disparity. These results imply that gender ideology theory is more applicable in the explanation of beliefs about the gender division of parental leave compared to time-allocation theory. Results of the multinomial logistic regressions show that the strongest predictor of the belief about leave take-up is the gender-role belief. The less the participants believe that the gender division of labour should be traditionally divided, the more likely they are to support equally shared leave between parents. The implication of these findings is that shifts towards supporting gender egalitarian leave take-up will most likely not occur until the attitudes toward gender roles become more egalitarian in general.

Key words: parental leave, maternity leave, gender role beliefs, Croatia, general population.

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INTRODUCTION

Shared parental leave between the mother and the father of the newborn child is an important indicator of gender equality in relationships and society more generally. Although the benefits of shared leave for the children's socio-emotional and cognitive development (Averett, Gennetian, & Peters, 2005; Tammis-Lemonda & Cabre-rea, 2002), and also for gender equality in childcare, housework and the labour market (Almqvist & Duvander, 2014) are evident, not everyone supports such gender equality in leave sharing or even fathers' partial participation in the take-up of leave. This paper explores what people in Croatia think about shared parental leave and which characteristics of men and women are associated with supporting shared leave as opposed to believing that the mother should be the only one taking leave. Given that theories propose (e.g. theory of planned behaviour, Ajzen, 1991) and empirical data show that beliefs predict behaviour (e.g. Ben, Golube & Shamrai, 2010; French & Cooke, 2012; Perry & Langley, 2013), exploring beliefs about parental leave in more detail could also help us understand parents' actual leave taking decisions.

Different types of leave

There are different ways in which working parents of a newborn child can organize taking leave from work to stay at home

and care for the baby. Legislation usually recognizes maternity, paternity and parental leave. In most countries, maternity leave is available only to the mother of the child and is intended to protect the health of the newborn child and the mother just before, during and after childbirth¹. Additionally, paternity leave is available to fathers². Its purpose is for the father to be at home with the mother and the baby in order to provide help and support to the mother. The third type of leave is parental leave which follows after maternity leave³. It is equally available to mothers and fathers so that they can spend time caring for their child, while having some degree of financial and job security (Harrington et al., 2014; Moss, 2012; Moss & Deven, 1999). Parental leave can be defined as a family right so that parents can agree between themselves on the most suitable way of its use. However, it can also be understood as an individual right of each parent which can either be transferrable or non-transferrable to the other parent (Moss, 2012). The reason for the introduction of the non-transferable right to parental leave for fathers in Nordic countries, often called the "father's quota", was to stimulate more men to take parental leave (Hobson, 2002; O'Brien, 2004). This was needed because, although parental leave gave fathers the opportunity to stay at home with their child, when that right was transferable to the mother, it was mainly taken by mothers (Lammi-Taskula, 2008). The introducti-

¹ The average period of maternity leave in 33 countries (22 member states of the EU, Canada, Switzerland, United States, etc.) included in the International Review of Leave Policies is 3-4 months (Moss, 2012, p. 12).

² Paternity leave, defined as a short leave immediately after the birth available only to fathers, is found in 16 out of 33 countries from the international review, and varies from two to ten days, with exceptions of Spain (15 days of paternity leave), Finland (at least 18 days), Québec (3-5 weeks), Lithuania (4 weeks) and Slovenia (90 days) (Moss, 2012, p. 16).

³ Out of the 33 reviewed countries, Brazil, South Africa and Switzerland do not provide parental leave, whereas the US has an unpaid "family and medical leave" "not applicable to private employers with less than 50 employees" (Moss, 2012, p. 20). Other 29 countries provide parental leave, and the length of leave available in those countries (including maternity, parental and childcare leave) ranges from 9 to 15 months, and in some countries it can last for three years or more. For details see Moss (2012, p. 20).

on of the policies of the fathers' quota has increased parental leave take-up by fathers in Sweden, Norway, and Iceland (Brandth & Kvande, 2009; Gislason, 2004; Nyman & Pettersson, 2002).

The main objectives of the policies encouraging fathers to take parental leave are to support gender equality and to strengthen the father-child relationship (Brandth, 2013). The gender division of parental leave can be understood as an indicator of gender equality since sharing parental leave between the mother and the father supports gender equality in childcare, housework and the labour market (Almqvist & Duvander, 2014). On the other hand, policies supporting fathers' leave have been empirically confirmed to facilitate the relationship between the father and child. Research from different countries, including Sweden, the USA and the UK have found that fathers who took leave had a greater bond with their child, were more likely to spend time with children and to take sole responsibility for the children when mothers worked, and were also more involved in the care for their baby, including activities such as feeding and diaper changing (Haas & Hwang, 2008; Nepomnyaschy & Waldfogel, 2007; Pleck, 1993; Seward, Yeatts, Amin, & DeWitt, 2006; Tanaka & Waldfogel, 2007).

The Croatian context of maternity, paternity and parental leave

Croatian legislation recognizes maternity leave (*rodiljni dopust*) and parental leave (*roditeljski dopust*). The option of paternity leave does not exist in Croatia (The Maternity and Parental Benefits Act⁴). The maximum period of leave in Croatia is 12 or 14 months for the first and the second born child, depending on whether and how a mother and a father share the leave.⁵ Maternity leave lasts until the baby is six months old. The first 70 days following the birth can, one at a time, be used only by the mother, whereas the remaining period of maternity leave is usually used by the mother, but the father can use it instead, if the mother agrees.

Parental leave in Croatia begins following the six-month maternity leave and is considered as a personal right of both the mother and the father. Each parent can use four months of parental leave for the first and second born child⁶, but one parent can maximally transfer his/her two months to the other parent (Dobrotić, 2014; Šeler, 2014). Maternity leave amounts to 100% of the parent's average earnings, with no upper limit on payments.⁷ Parental leave amounts to 100% of the parent's average earnings, but the upper limit is 80% of the budgetary base rate.⁸ Both maternity and parental leave are funded from general taxation.

⁴ NN 85/08, NN 110/08, NN 34/11, NN 54/13 and NN 152/14.

⁵ The maximum period of leave for twins, other multiple births and the third and every subsequent child is three years (Dobrotić, 2014).

⁶ Each parent can use 15 months of parental leave for twins, other multiple births and the third and every subsequent child (Dobrotić, 2014).

⁷ A parent receives 50% of the budgetary base rate if he/she does not meet the condition of at least 12 months of continual insurance or 18 months of insurance with interruptions in the last two years (Dobrotić, 2014).

⁸ Parental leave amounts to 100% of average earnings of the parent for the first six months, or eight months if both parents use it, with the upper limit of 80% of the budgetary base rate, but after the first six (or eight) months, or if parents do not fulfil the condition of at least 12 months of continual insurance period or 18 months of insurance with interruptions in the last 2 years, parental leave amounts to 50% of the budgetary base rate (Dobrotić, 2014).

Croatian official statistics show that maternity and parental leave are predominantly used by mothers. According to Dobrotić (2014), the official data from 2010 show that only 0.2% of fathers used some part of maternity leave, and that fathers account for only 2% of all parental leave taken in 2010. More recent data shows a slow increase in the percentage of men who use the leave: fathers account for 0.4% of some part of maternity leave used in 2014 and for 4.87% of all parental leave used that year (Office of the Ombudswoman for Gender Equality, 2015, p. 50). Hence, we can notice that, although there is a possibility for fathers to use a part of parental and even maternity leave, they rarely do so. Bijelić (2011) proposes that the existence of legislative possibilities for shared leave is not enough for more men to use paid leave, and that important structural changes are needed in Croatia in order to bring about the changes in gender relations.

The question raised here is what do men and women in Croatia think about shared leave and whether they find that the social context in which parents make decisions on taking leave is supportive of leave sharing or not. There is a lack of empirical data on parental leave sharing beliefs held by people living in Croatia, which could be, apart from the legislative possibilities, an important factor influencing leave take-up among parents. This is especially interesting in the light of the findings from a US study that showed that fathers' attitudes and beliefs predicted their involvement in the lives of their children (Perry & Langley, 2013).

Review of research on parents' characteristics associated with more equal sharing of parental leave

Fatherhood and motherhood are constructed not only through parent-child interaction, but also through interactions on

structural, cultural, and psychological levels (Chronholm, 2007). These include gender inequalities in the labour market, policies related to childcare and parental leave take-up, gender division of labour between partners and individual characteristics of the mother and father. The following review of research shows which characteristics of mothers and fathers are related to fathers' greater participation in leave take-up and more equal sharing of parental leave between the parents.

The mother's age, her educational level, income, occupational prestige and type of working organization are characteristics which have been related to the gender division of leave take-up. More specifically, the mother's educational level is found to be positively related to a more gender-equal sharing of parental leave in Sweden and the US (Haas, 1992; Nepomnyaschy & Waldfogel, 2007; Sundström & Duvander, 2002). Mother's income is also positively related to the father's taking parental leave in Sweden, with mothers who have higher income returning to their jobs earlier and fathers taking leave more often (Sundström & Duvander, 2002). A US study showed that mothers living with fathers who took leave were older and less likely to be employed in low-prestige occupations than those living with fathers who did not take leave (Nepomnyaschy & Waldfogel, 2007). In addition, a Swedish study showed that fathers were more likely to use less parental leave if the mother worked in a female-dominated workplace (Byrgen & Duvander, 2006).

Furthermore, research has shown that fathers who take parental leave differ from those who do not by age, educational level, personal income, income disparity between them and their partners, characteristics of their workplace and occupation, and also gender role attitudes. Younger fathers

and those better educated are more likely to take leave in Sweden and the US (Haas, 1992; Nepomnyaschy & Waldfogel, 2007; Sundström & Duvander, 2002). Father's income is also positively related to a greater leave use in Sweden (Sundström & Duvander, 2002). In addition, the greater the income disparity between the father and the mother, where the father has higher earnings than the mother, has been found as related to father's lower involvement in childrearing in a US study (Deutsch, Lussier & Servis, 1993). Characteristics of the father's workplace are also important factors influencing decision making about leave take-up. In Sweden, fathers who work in the private sector, in small organizations and male dominated workplaces are less likely to use parental leave (Byrgen & Duvander, 2006). In addition, fathers working in non-manual occupations, the public sector and in organizations with a majority of female employees were found to be more likely to take leave in the UK (O'Brien & Shemilt, 2003). Occupational prestige has been related to leave take-up in the US, with fathers in more prestigious occupations being more likely to take leave, and to take a longer leave (Nepomnyaschy & Waldfogel, 2007).

Father's gender-role beliefs are also an important determinant of gender equality in leave taking and child-care. Lammi-Taskula (2008) has found that gender-egalitarian attitudes about care and breadwinning responsibilities were a significant factor in explaining the likelihood of Finish fathers' sharing parental leave with mothers. In addition, studies from the US showed that fathers with non-traditional gender roles were more involved in infant care (Aldous, Mulligan, & Bjarnason, 1998; Deutsch, Lussier, & Servis, 1993).

Studies on relevant predictors of beliefs about parental leave are rare. A recent

British study showed that women and men have similar beliefs about how leave should be divided, as well as that younger age groups are more supportive of the gender equal division of paid leave than the older ones (Scott & Clery, 2013). One of the rare Croatian studies showed that about 80% of both men and women agreed that men should have the right to use parental leave (Bijelić, 2011).

Theories that explain the gender division of childcare and take-up of parental leave

Theories that are used to explain the gender division of parental leave are also the ones that explain the gender division of domestic work overall, including childcare. These theories are: (1) time-allocation theory and (2) gender-ideology theory, including related social role theory. The first approach stems from human capital theory, and is used primarily in economy and sociology, and the second approach is grounded in an understanding of gender roles in psychology and sociology.

According to the time-allocation theory, the couple's decision on who will spend time on paid work outside of the home and who on non-paid activities in the household is determined by the allocation of resources such as time and finances in the family. This theory assumes that partners will be inclined to the most efficient combination of these resources (Becker, 1965; Gronau, 1977; Juster & Stafford, 1991). Therefore, it would be expected that couples with newborn children, where the man has higher earnings than the woman, decide for the mother to take more responsibility over child-care and leave take-up, and for the father to be more responsible for labour market involvement in order to maximize their resources (Aldous, Mulli-

gan, & Bjarnason, 1998; Ray, Gomick, & Schmitt, 2009). On the other hand, couples who have similar earnings could have different arrangements that do not necessarily follow the traditional gender distribution of labour.

The gender-ideology theory assumes that gender norms are a major determinant of how women and men arrange their participation in domestic work, including child care and taking parental leave (Aldous, Mulligan, & Bjarnason, 1998). This theory predicts that men with non-traditional gender role attitudes are more likely to be involved in childrearing and taking parental leave (Deutsch, Lussier & Servis, 1993). The social role theory could be similarly used to explain gender differences in taking up parental leave. According to this theory, expectations about the behaviour of men and women are shaped by the historical division of labour between women, who were predominantly responsible for the home, and men, who were predominantly responsible for work outside the home. Consequently, the behaviour of men and women is shaped by the stereotypes of their social roles (Eagly, 1987). Therefore, it would be expected that men and women with more traditional beliefs about gender roles are less likely to share parental leave in a gender equal manner.

These two theories (time-allocation and gender ideology) that could be used to explain gender division of parental leave do not necessarily have competing hypotheses, but should rather be viewed as offering complementary explanations of sharing parental leave, with one focusing on the allocation of partners' resources (income, time) and the other on their gender role beliefs.

RESEARCH GOALS

The first research goal was to explore the beliefs of people living in Croatia about the way in which paid leave should be shared between the mother and the father, how long it should last, and who should fund it, and additionally, to explore whether beliefs about the leave differ by gender.

In line with previous studies (Bijelić, 2011; Scott & Clery, 2013), we expected women and men to have similar beliefs about parental leave.

The second research goal was to explore whether people who support a more gender egalitarian sharing of leave, as opposed to those with more traditional beliefs about leave, differ on the gender-role beliefs and background variables such as socio-demographics, religious services attendance, type of working organization and partners' income disparity, separately for men and women.

Finally, the third research goal was to explore which of the background variables and gender-role beliefs are the strongest predictors in explaining beliefs towards dividing paid leave, separately for men and women.

Given the lack of theoretical predictions and previous empirical findings about the factors shaping beliefs towards leave sharing, our hypotheses are grounded in the literature on the actual leave taking of parents of newborn children (Aldous, Mulligan, & Bjarnason, 1998; Byrge & Duvander, 2006; Deutsch, Lussier, & Servis, 1993; Lammi-Taskula, 2008; Nepomnyaschy & Waldfogel, 2007; Sundström & Duvander, 2002). According to the gender ideology theory, we expected shared leave to be more supported by men and women who have more gender egalitarian beliefs. We also expected shared leave to be more supported by those who are a part of

a couple where the man's earnings are not higher than the woman's, a premise grounded in the time allocation theory. Finally, in line with previous studies, we expected men who work in the public sector, and also better educated men and women, to be more supportive of shared leave.

METHOD

Participants

The data was gathered on a nationally representative sample of people living in Croatia who took part in the International Social Survey Programme - module Family and Changing Gender Roles IV (2013).⁹ A total of 1000 participants participated in the study: 475 men and 525 women. Participants were born between 1924 and 1995 (aged 18 to 89 years), with 1965 being the average year of birth ($M=48$ years of age). Regarding the highest educational level completed, 15.1% of participants had complete or incomplete primary schooling, 65.4% had a completed high school education and 19.5% a college/university degree. Regarding their legal partnership status, 58.6% of participants were married, 3.9% were in civil partnership, 8.3% were separated or divorced from their partners, 8.9% were widowed and 20.3% have never been married or been in a civil partnership. Around 31% of participants had children who were 17 years of age or younger and who were living with them at the time of data collection, and around 69% of participants did not have children of that age living with them.

⁹ The study was conducted on a stratified random multi-staged sample. Two-way stratification was conducted: by 6 regions (defined as the traditional groups of counties) and 4 settlement sizes (defined by the number of residents). Multistage sampling procedure included selection on the levels of settlements, household, and individual. Selection of primary sampling units (settlements) was conducted by the "probability proportionate to size" method. Selection of households within the starting points was conducted by the "random walk method". Selection of the respondent within a household was conducted by random selection by the last birthday key. Face to face interviews were used as a method of data gathering.

Instruments

Beliefs about dividing paid parental/maternal/paternal leave between the mother and the father was measured with the question "...how should this paid leave period be divided between the mother and the father?". The answers were divided into five categories and ranged from the mother taking the entire paid leave and the father none, to the reverse situation: 1="The mother should take the entire paid leave period and the father should not take any paid leave", 2="The mother should take most of the paid leave period and the father should take some of it", 3="The mother and the father should each take half of the paid leave period", 4="The father should take most of the paid leave period and the mother should take some of it" and 5="The father should take the entire paid leave period and the mother should not take any paid leave".

Opinions about the duration of paid leave and its source of funding were measured with two questions. The first one was: "Consider a couple who both work full-time and now have a new born child. One of them stops working for some time to care for their child. Do you think there should be paid leave available and, if so, for how long?" The answers were: "Yes, __ months", and "No, there should be no paid leave". The question about the source of funding was: "Who should pay for this leave?" with the following options to answer: "The government", "The employer", "Both the government and the employer", and "Other sources".

Socio-demographic variables such as gender, year of birth, highest educational level completed, personal income, and type of organization where a participant is/was employed (private-public), legal partnership status, and having children of preschool and school age in the household were also gathered in the questionnaire.

Attendance of religious services was measured with the question "Beside special occasions like weddings, funerals and so on, how often do you attend religious services?". The answers were the following: 1=Never, 2=Less frequently than once a year, 3=Once a year, 4=Several times a year, 5=Once a month, 6=2 or 3 times a month, 7=Once a week, and 8=Several times a week or more often.

Partners' income disparity was explored with the question "Considering all sources of income, between you and your spouse/partner, who has the higher income?" with the following answers: 1=I have no income, 2=My spouse/partner has a much higher income, 3=My spouse/partner has a higher income, 4=We have about the same income, 5=I have a higher income, 6=I have a much higher income, and 7=My spouse/partner has no income.

Gender-role beliefs included two topics measured with two single items. *Beliefs about the traditional gender division of labour* was measured with the item "A man's job is to earn money; a woman's job is to look after the home and family". *Beliefs about shared contribution to household income* was measured with the item "Both the man and woman should contribute to the household income". Participants responded on a five point Likert type scale from 1=Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree on both items. Higher values on the scale indicated more traditional beliefs on the first item, and more egalitarian beliefs

on the second item. These two items could not be considered as a scale because the low correlation between them shows that they do not measure the same construct ($r_{\text{men}} = -0.331$, $p < 0.01$; $r_{\text{women}} = -0.385$, $p < 0.01$) and that the internal reliability of the scale, when one of these items is recorded, appears unsatisfactory ($\alpha_{\text{men}} = 0.474$; $\alpha_{\text{women}} = 0.532$).

Statistical analyses

Firstly, percentages for the belief about sharing the leave between a mother and a father, and for the beliefs about duration of the leave and the source of funding for the leave were shown for the total sample, and separately for men and women. In addition, gender differences in the belief about sharing the leave were tested. This was followed by the exploration of the differences according to the belief about gender division of the paid leave in all the background variables and gender-role beliefs, separately for men and women. These analyses included: t-tests, chi-square tests and one-way analyses of variance. In the end, multinomial logistic regressions were used to explore factors explaining belief about sharing parental leave, separately for men and women.

RESULTS

Beliefs about maternity/parental leave

Table 1 shows how participants responded to whether and how paid parental/maternity/paternity leave should be shared.

Table 1

Percentage of answers to the question “How should paid parental/maternity/paternity leave be divided between parents?” on the total sample, and separately for men and women

	Mother entire, father none	Mother most, father some	Mother and father half	Father most, mother some	Father entire, mother none
Men	48.5% (226)	27.4% (127)	23.7% (110)	0.4% (2)	0.0% (0)
Women	48.5% (247)	26.6% (135)	24.3% (124)	0.4% (2)	0.2% (1)
Total	48.5% (473)	26.9% (262)	24.0% (234)	0.4% (4)	0.1% (1)

Note. Frequencies are shown in parentheses.

Almost a half of the survey participants support the mother using the entire paid leave and the father none, which is the most common practice in Croatia. This group of participants will be labelled as “supporters of mother-only leave” for the purpose of further analyses. Slightly over a quarter of participants think that the mother should use most of the leave, and the father some part of it, which is an option legally available in Croatia under the Maternity and Parental Benefits Act, but used by only a small number of parents. The state statistics shows that maternity and parental leave are mostly used by mothers in Croatia. The group of participants who think that the father should only use some part of the leave, and the mother most of the leave will be labelled as “supporters of fathers’ partial participation in leave”. In addition, slightly under a quarter of participants think that the leave should be equally divided between parents, and will therefore be labelled as “supporters of equally shared leave”. Only 4 participants think that the father should use most of the parental leave, and the mother some part of it, whereas 1 participant said that the father should use the entire paid leave and the mother none. Given

the very small number of participants who think that a father should be the one mostly or completely using paid leave (only 0.5% share that view), these two categories were omitted from further analyses. This data implies that Croatian survey participants are not very supportive of paid leave to be equally shared between the mother and the father, although the Croatian legislation offers that option too.

The participants were also asked for their opinion on how long, if at all, paid leave should be available to a parent who stops working for some time to care of the newborn child. Less than 1% of participants think that the leave should not be paid ($N=8$), whereas 99.2% participants agree that parental leave should be paid.

Table 2

Percentage of answers to the question "How much paid leave for new-born child should be available to parents?" on the total sample, and separately for men and women

	Total sample	Men	Women
None	0.8	0.4	1.1
Less than six months	0.8	1.3	0.4
At least six months but less than a year	6.0	7.1	4.9
One year	54.0	51.7	55.9
More than one year	37.4	37.8	36.9
Don't know	1.1	1.7	0.8
Total	100	100	100

More than a half of the participants suggested that 12 months of paid leave should be available to parents (54%). The second most numerous group included participants who think that paid leave should be available to parents for more than one year – more than one third of participants shared that opinion. This adds up to 91% of participants who are supportive of a one year or even more paid leave. Although the maximum period of post-natal leave available

in Croatia is 12 months for the first and second born child, or 14 months if a father also uses parental leave (The Maternity and Parental Benefits Act), we can notice that some participants do not support a one-year paid leave available under Croatian law: 6% of participants think that the leave should last at least six months but less than a year, and 0.8% think that it should last less than six months.

Table 3

Percentage of answers to the question "Who should pay for the leave?" on the total sample, and separately for men and women

	Total sample	Men	Women
The government	52.3	51.8	52.8
The employer	8.1	8.1	8.1
Both the government and the employer	39.3	39.7	39.1
Other sources	0.2	0.4	0.0
Total	100	100	100

Over a half of the participants think that the government should pay for parental leave (52.3%). Although maternity leave and parental leave in Croatia are funded from general taxation (Dobrotić, 2014), around 40% of participants think that both the government and the employer should pay for parental leave. Around 8.1% of participants

hold the opinion that the employer should bear the costs of paid parental leave, whereas 0.2% think that it should be financed from some other sources.

Gender differences

Gender differences in beliefs about how paid leave should be divided between pa-

rents were tested with the chi-square test using the three already described groups: “supporters of mother-only leave”, “supporters of fathers’ partial participation in leave” and “supporters of equally shared leave”. The result showed that men and women do not differ in their beliefs about the division of the leave ($\chi^2=0.106, p>.05$). It seems that there is a consensus between men and women about it: around a half of both men and women think that the leave should be used by mothers only, about one quarter thinks that it should be partially shared and about one quarter that it should be shared in a gender egalitarian manner (Table 1).

It can also be observed that men and women give similar answers to the questions about the desired duration of paid leave and about the source of its funding. Altho-

ugh chi-square tests were not performed to test gender differences for these two variables due to the low number of participants in some of the categories, the frequencies in Tables 2 and 3 show men and women have similar views when it comes to paid leave duration and its source of funding.

Characteristics of the three groups who hold different beliefs about the division of paid leave

The second research goal was to explore whether supporters of mother-only leave, supporters of fathers’ partial participation in leave, and supporters of equally shared leave, differ in the gender-role beliefs and background variables. Table 4 shows the results for men and Table 5 for women.

Table 4

Descriptive statistics and percentages of three groups of men, who have different beliefs about the division of paid leave, by background variables and gender-role beliefs

	M (SD)			ANOVA
	1=Supporters of mother-only leave	2=Supporters of fathers’ partial participation	3=Supporters of equally shared leave	
Year of birth	1968 (16.112)	1967 (16.373)	1967 (16.406)	$F(2/458)=0.194$
Personal income ¹⁰	3520.16 (2266.946)	3347.84 (2119.305)	3447.42 (2265.225)	$F(2/352)=0.198$
Partners’ income disparity ¹¹	4.83 (1.348)	4.48 (1.378)	4.55 (1.698)	$F(2/274)=1.714$
Attendance of religious services	4.04 (1.942)	3.45 (2.026)	3.41 (2.006)	$F(2/451)= 5.239^{**}$ Post-hoc: 1-2*, 1-3*
Belief about traditional gender division of labour	2.84 (1.201)	2.35 (1.008)	2.33 (1.071)	$F(2/454)=11.176^{***}$ Post-hoc: 1-2***, 1-3***
Belief about shared contribution to household income	4.10 (0.795)	4.19 (0.710)	4.20 (0.913)	$F(2/458)=0.750$

¹⁰ Six participants with an income of 12000 HRK and higher were excluded from further analysis involving income (their standardized scores were higher than 3.29, which are according to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) potential outliers).

¹¹ This variable is available only for participants who have a partner, who represent 64.4% of the total sample.

	<i>M (SD)</i>			ANOVA
	1=Supporters of mother-only leave	2=Supporters of fathers' partial participation	3=Supporters of equally shared leave	
	%			Chi-square test
	Supporters of mothers-only leave	Supporters of fathers' partial participation	Supporters of equally shared leave	
Highest level of education				
(In)complete elementary education	7.6	10.2	10.0	1.025
Completed secondary education	72.4	70.3	69.1	
Completed tertiary education	20.0	19.5	20.9	
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Type of working organization³				
Public employer	26.7	33.3	42.1	4.289
Private employer	73.3	66.7	57.9	
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	

Note. Standard deviations are shown in parentheses.

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Men who hold different beliefs about the gender division of leave differed only in their attendance of religious services ($F(2/451)=5.239, p<.01$) and beliefs about the traditional gender division of labour ($F(2/454)=11.176, p<.001$). Men who support fathers' partial participation in leave and equally shared leave attend religious services less and are also less in favour of the traditional gender division of labour compared to men who support mother-only leave. These three groups of men did not differ in other background characteristics and beliefs.

Table 5
Descriptive statistics and percentages of three groups of women, who have different beliefs about the division of paid leave, by background variables and gender-role beliefs

	M (SD)			ANOVA
	1=Supporters of mother-only leave	2=Supporters of fathers' partial participation	3=Supporters of equally shared leave	
Year of birth	1962 (16.000)	1964 (16.103)	1967 (18.085)	$F(2/500)=2.722$
Personal income	2200.72 (1776.970)	2910.09 (2144.538)	2325.59 (2077.519)	$F(2/386)=4.400^*$ Post-hoc: 1-2*
Partners' income disparity	3.15 (1.657)	3.36 (1.300)	2.88 (1.406)	$F(2/316)=1.888$
Attendance of religious services	4.87 (1.956)	4.97 (2.195)	4.24 (2.110)	$F(2/492)=4.930^{**}$ Post-hoc: 1-3*, 2-3*
Belief about traditional gender division of labour	2.60 (1.166)	2.17 (1.030)	1.96 (0.971)	$F(2/500)=16.373^{***}$ Post-hoc: 1-2**, 1-3***
Belief about shared contribution to household income	4.24 (0.838)	4.31 (0.767)	4.47 (0.632)	$F(2/501)=3.733^*$ Post-hoc: 1-3*
	%			
	Supporters of mother-only leave	Supporters of fathers' partial participation	Supporters of equally shared leave	Chi-square test
Highest level of education				
(In)complete elementary education	25.3	18.0	16.1	
Completed secondary education	61.2	55.6	63.7	12.760*
Completed tertiary education	13.5	26.3	20.2	
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Type of working organization ⁴				
Public employer	40.0	43.5	47.1	
Private employer	60.0	56.5	52.9	0.696
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	

Note. Standard deviations are shown in parentheses.

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Women who hold different beliefs about leave differ in their educational level completed ($\chi^2=12.760$, $p<0.05$), personal income ($F(2/386)=4.400$, $p<0.05$), attendance of religious services ($F(2/386)=4.400$, $p<0.01$), and in beliefs about shared contribution to household income ($F(2/501)=3.733$, $p<0.05$) and gender division of labour ($F(2/500)=16.373$, $p<0.001$). For example, among women supporters of mother-only leave, only 13.5% have completed higher education, compared to 26.3% of women who have completed higher education among supporters of fathers' partial participation, and to 20.2% among supporters of equally shared leave. Women who support mother-only leave have lower personal income than women who support fathers' partial participation in the leave. In addition, our study revealed that women who think that paid leave should be entirely or mostly used by mothers attend religious services more often than women who support equally shared leave.

When it comes to gender-role beliefs, supporters of mother-only leave are the most traditional ones. For example, women supporters of mother-only leave are less likely to agree that both partners should contribute to household income, compared to women supporters of equally shared leave. Women supporters of mother-only leave are more likely to agree with beliefs about the traditional gender division of labour, compared to women who support fathers' partial participation in leave, or equally shared leave.

Both women and men who hold different beliefs about the division of paid leave did not differ in age, type of organization they are working at, and partners' income disparity.

Which factors best explain beliefs about paid leave take-up?

The goal of this paper was also to explore the factors that explain beliefs about the division of paid leave between parents. Given that the belief about the division of paid leave between parents is not a continuous variable, multinomial logistic regression was performed. The criterion variable in the multinomial logistic regression is the belief about the division of paid leave between parents with three categories: 1="supporters of the mother-only leave", 2="supporters of fathers' partial participation in leave" and 3="supporters of equally shared leave".

The following variables were selected as potential predictors: educational level, personal income, attendance of religious services, beliefs about the traditional gender division of labour and the shared contribution to household income. Year of birth, type of working organization, and partners' income disparity were not included in the logistic regression because men and women of different beliefs about paid leave did not differ in these variables. The multinomial logistic regression is shown in Table 6.

Table 6
Multinomial logistic regression results for explaining men's and women's beliefs about sharing of paid leave based on background variables and gender-role beliefs

Comparison of the odds to support mother-only leave and the odds to support fathers' partial participation	Men		Women	
	B	Exp(B)	B	Exp(B)
Educational level completed				
(In)complete elementary education	0.386	1.471	-0.528	0.590
Completed secondary education	-0.008	0.992	-0.618	0.539
Completed tertiary education	0	.	0	.
Personal income	0.000	1.000	0.000	1.000
Attendance of religious services	-0.099	0.905	0.056	1.058
Belief about traditional gender division of labour	-0.447**	0.639	-0.421**	0.656
Belief about shared contribution to household income	-0.135	0.874	-0.073	0.930
Intercept	1.541		0.514	
Comparison of the odds to support mother-only leave and the odds to support equally shared leave				
Educational level completed				
(In)complete elementary education	0.233	1.263	-0.757	0.469
Completed secondary education	-0.030	0.971	-0.680	0.506
Completed tertiary education	0	.	0	.
Personal income	0.000	1.000	0.000	1.000
Attendance of religious services	-0.082	0.921	-0.152*	0.859
Belief about traditional gender division of labour	-0.524***	0.592	-0.578***	0.561
Belief about shared contribution to household income	-0.309	0.734	0.156	1.169
Intercept	2.088		1.405	
Pseudo R^2 (Cox and Snell; Nagelkerke; McFadden) ¹⁴	0.072; 0.082; 0.036		0.135; 0.155; 0.070	
-2 Log Likelihood	656.869		681.965	

Note. Reference category of the criterion variable is "supporters of mother-only leave".

B = coefficient of logistic function; Exp B= relative odds ratio of outcome

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

¹⁴ There are few indicators in the logistic regression that are analogue to R^2 in the multiple linear regression analysis. Given that logistic regression is not grounded on the concept of variance, these "pseudo" indicators such as Cox & Snell R^2 , Nagelkerke R^2 and McFadden R^2 , have more of a descriptive role (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007).

Controlling for the other variables, beliefs about the traditional gender division of labour was found to be a statistically significant predictor of differentiation between “supporters of the mother-only leave” and “supporters of fathers’ partial participation in leave”, and of differentiation between “supporters of the mother-only leave” and “supporters of equally shared leave”, for both men and women. Participants who agree more with the traditional gender division of labour (that men should provide and women take care of the home), were more likely to support mother-only leave and not fathers’ participation nor equally shared leave.

Attendance of religious services was a predictor of differentiation between women who support mother-only leave and women who support equally shared leave. Controlling for the other predictors, women who attend religious services more often are more likely to support mother-only leave than equally shared leave. No other predictor was statistically significant on either sample. Also, a better model fit, indicated by a larger pseudo R^2 s in logistic regressions, was found for women than for men.

DISCUSSION

The goals of this research were to explore the beliefs of people in Croatia towards parental/maternity leave and, in addition, factors which explain beliefs about the division of paid leave. Around 49% of both men and women believe that it is solely the mother’s responsibility to use the entire leave, with additional 27% who believe that the father should only take some part of the leave whereas the mother should take most of it. Around 24% of both men and women believe that the mother and the father should share the leave equally. One can notice

that general public opinion is much more gender egalitarian than the actual gender practices of leave take-up in Croatia, which confirms previous research conducted in Croatia (Bijelić, 2011). In addition, over 90% of participants are in favour of 12 months and longer paid leave. Furthermore, over 50% of participants would like the leave to be funded by the government, and around 40% think that both the government and the employer should pay for the leave. Men and women have very similar views on all three issues: gender division of the leave, its desired duration and the sources of funding. Relatively similar views of men and women on these issues were also found in a study conducted in Great Britain (Scott & Clery, 2013).

When comparing these beliefs with the legislative options in Croatia, we can notice that most of the participants support the length of paid leave provided by the state legislative, which is 12 months for the first and the second born child or 14 months if both parents use the leave, and some of them are in favour of even longer leave than currently provided. We can also notice that, although the expenses of paid leave are funded fully by the government, there are almost 50% of participants who think that the leave should not be funded only by the government, but either by the government and the employer, or solely by the employer or from other sources. What is also important to point out is that almost 50% of participants hold more conservative beliefs about the gender division of paid leave compared to the options available by law. More precisely, under the Maternity and Parental Benefits Act, different options are offered for the father to take up the leave and even encouraged by providing additional months of paid leave if the father also uses parental leave, although the financial compensation is not very genero-

us. However, almost a half of the men and women think that the mother should take the entire paid leave period and the father should not take any paid leave. Though these findings reveal an unfavourable picture of gender equality in paid leave take-up, at least when it comes to beliefs, the situation is even less favourable for gender equality when actual practices of leave sharing in Croatia are considered (Dobrotić, 2014; Office of the Ombudswoman for Gender Equality, 2015).

The goal of this research was also to explore the characteristics of men and women from three groups: those who support non-shared leave, those who support fathers' partial participation in the leave and those who support equally shared leave. What can be noticed is that men who support fathers' partial participation in leave and equally shared leave attend religious services less and are also less in favour of the traditional gender division of labour compared to men who support mother-only leave. These findings are in line with research that show that men with more gender egalitarian attitudes are more likely to take parental leave and care for the newborn baby (Aldous, Mulligan, & Bjarnason, 1998; Deutsch, Lussier, & Servis, 1993; Lammi-Taskula, 2008). The results that men who support the shared division of care for children through leave take-up attend religious services less compared to men who support mother-only leave are also not surprising given previous empirical findings and theory. More specifically, the religious tradition model emphasises the influence of religious beliefs on traditional attitudes towards gender roles e.g. that a woman's natural role is to be a wife and a mother and a man's role is to be a breadwinner (Hauser, Heyns, & Mansbridge, 1993; Jugović & Ančić, 2013; King, 1993). In addition, Croatian research has shown

that more frequent religious practice was a predictor of more traditional attitudes towards marriage and sexuality in Croatia (Marinović Jerolimov & Ančić, 2014).

Women who support mother-only leave are less likely to have completed higher education, compared to women who support fathers' partial participation or equally shared leave. Women who support mother-only leave have lower personal income than women who support fathers' partial participation in the leave. These results are in line with empirical findings on leave take-up by parents of newborn babies which show that better educated mothers and mothers with higher income are more likely to have a partner who takes parental leave (Nepomnyaschy & Waldfogel, 2007; Sundström & Duvander, 2002). In addition, our study revealed that women who think that paid leave should be entirely or mostly used by mothers attend religious services more often than women who support equally shared leave, which could be similarly explained, as in the case of the male sample, with the religious tradition model (Hauser, Heyns, & Mansbridge, 1993; Jugović & Ančić, 2013; King, 1993). Women who support mother-only leave are the most traditional group of women when it comes to belief about the traditional gender division of labour and belief that both partners should contribute to household income, especially in comparison to women who support equally shared leave. This is in line with the hypothesis stemming from gender-ideology theory and social role theory that shared leave is more supported by those who have more gender egalitarian beliefs (Aldous, Mulligan, & Bjarnason, 1998; Eagly, 1987).

Men seem to be a more homogeneous group than women, especially **supporters of fathers' partial participation** in leave take-up and **supporters of equally shared**

leave given that these two groups do not differ in any of the background characteristics and gender-role beliefs. They attend religious service once a year on average and also disagree that men should only be providers and women carers. On the other hand, **men who support mother-only leave** attend religious services several times a year on average and neither agree nor disagree that women's and men's roles should be traditionally divided. These findings imply that for men it could be an effort just to support the notion that men should take some paid leave at all. This could be the crucial thing that makes them different from mainstream traditional men – not the question if they support equally shared leave, but whether the father should participate in taking up the leave at all.

Women from the three groups differ more among themselves than men do. In addition to gender role beliefs and religious practices, other factors are important in differing women's beliefs about shared leave, such as educational level, personal income and belief that both partners should contribute to household income. Women who **support mother-only leave** have the lowest personal income and lowest percentage of highly educated women (13.5%) than women who think that leave should be shared. They attend religious service once a month (same as supporters of fathers' partial participation in leave), and have less egalitarian beliefs toward gender roles. On the other hand, **supporters of fathers' partial participation** in leave and **supporters of equally shared leave** are better educated (20% and more have completed higher education), and they disagree with traditional beliefs toward gender roles. Women who support equal sharing of leave are even less traditional among these two groups because they attend religious services several times a year, which is less than wo-

men from the other two groups. They are also more likely to agree that both partners should equally be providers compared to the supporters of mother-only leave (from whom supporters of fathers' participation do not differ). Supporters of fathers' partial participation are distinct compared to other groups due to their highest monthly income. A reason why more socio-structural factors like education and income could be more important for women's beliefs about the gender division of paid leave is because they are related to the amount of power women have in society, the workplace and family/relationships with the partner to negotiate their position, conditions and division of labour, including options for taking leave. It seems that men's belief about whether and how the paid leave should be shared is more of a reflection of their values in terms of traditional gender related beliefs and religious practices, and that women's belief is more founded in socio-structural factors. The reason for this could be that women are still the ones who are actually taking leave in most cases in Croatia. Therefore, men could consider leave take-up as something that is not practically their issue (but rather the women's), which could be why their beliefs remain in the domain of values and are not related to their socio-structural and practical life circumstances, whereas women do not have that privilege.

Both women and men who hold different beliefs about the division of paid leave did not differ in age, type of organization they are working at, and partners' income disparity. Previous research has given mixed results on the relationship between parents' age with leave take-up and attitudes towards leave take-up. For example, Swedish parents in couples in which the father took leave were younger (Sundström & Duvander, 2002), but US mothers whose partners took leave were older (Nepo-

nmyaschy & Waldfogel, 2007). Additionally, a recent British study showed that younger women and men were more likely to think that paid leave should be equally divided between the mother and the father than the older ones (Scott & Clery, 2013). According to Scott and Clery (2013), these results reflect the higher levels of support for the traditional division of gender roles in the domain of childcare among the older age groups. Regarding the type of workplace, Swedish and UK studies have showed that fathers working in the public sector were more likely to use parental leave than fathers working in the private sector (O'Brien & Shemilt, 2003; Byrge & Duvander, 2006), whereas the public-private dichotomy of working organization did not make a difference in the belief about leave sharing of Croatian women and men from our research. Although time-allocation theory predicts, and research supports, that a greater disparity in partners' resources when a man has higher income, results in a more traditional division of roles, with the father being less involved in childrearing (Aldous, Mulligan, & Bjarnason, 1998; Deutsch, Lussier, & Servis, 1993), our results did not show that income discrepancy is related to more traditional beliefs about leave sharing. We can conclude that characteristics such as a person's age, whether their working organization is public or private, and differences in partners' incomes are not relevant in forming the belief about how parental leave should be shared between parents in general, although, as previous research shows (e.g. Aldous, Mulligan, & Bjarnason, 1998; Byrge & Duvander, 2006; Nepomnyaschy & Waldfogel, 2007; Sundström & Duvander, 2002), they can be important when a couple makes an actual decision about how they will use the leave to care for the child. This leads to the conclusion that although time-allocation

theory could be applicable in the explanation of actual leave taking of parents, it is not suitable for the explanation of beliefs about sharing parental leave.

Both men and women who have different beliefs towards leave sharing differed most in their beliefs about the gender division of labour. The importance of these beliefs is also visible in multinomial logistic regressions in which beliefs about the traditional division of roles was the strongest factor differentiating supporters of traditional leave take-up ("mother-only leave") and those who support fathers' partial participation in the leave and equally shared leave, for both women and men. These findings are in accordance with gender ideology theory and social role theory which emphasise the importance of gender role beliefs in the division of labour between a man and a woman in the couple (Aldous, Mulligan, & Bjarnason, 1998; Eagly, 1987), which was also empirically supported in the domain of childcare and leave take-up (Deutsch, Lussier, & Servis, 1993; Lammi-Taskula, 2008). However, it is interesting to notice that only one indicator of gender role beliefs, i.e. belief about the gender division of labour, proved to be a significant predictor of beliefs towards leave sharing, whereas belief about shared contribution to household income did not. The explanation could be because belief about shared contribution to household is more related to the public sphere of the couple's life, whereas belief about partners' gender division of labour and belief about division of parental leave both encompass private dimension of partners' life: caring for the family and staying at home with the baby. Based on our results, it seems that contributing to household income is expected from both men and women, whereas caring for the family and taking the leave to stay at home with the child is still considered

predominantly a woman's obligation, hence the greater connection between the two latter beliefs.

According to the results of multinomial logistic regressions, attendance of religious services was a predictor of beliefs towards leave sharing only for women. Women who attended religious services more often were more likely to support mother-only leave than equally shared leave. The question is why religious practices differentiate between women who hold different beliefs about division of parental leave, and not between these groups of men. The explanation could be that women are more exposed to the influence of religious (Christian) beliefs that generate more traditional attitudes about gender roles (e.g. a woman's natural role is a wife and a mother and a man's natural role is a provider) (Hauser, Heyns, and Mansbridge 1993; King 1993), given that they attend religious service more often than men, as shown in our research.

The reported study's methodological limitations include the use of single items for measuring gender-role beliefs, religiosity and type of working organization. Also, beliefs about the traditional gender division of labour are measured with a double-barrelled item, an item "reflecting two separable questions or statements" (Furr, 2011, p. 22), in this case statement about a man's job and statement about a woman's job. Double-barrelled items could lead to confusion because respondents could agree with one statement, but not with the other. Usage of already existing valid and reliable scales on gender roles is recommended in future studies. Religiosity is measured as religious practices (attendance of religious services), but the question is whether the same results would be obtained if it was measured as religious self-identification. Type of working organization is measured only as public-private dichotomy. In or-

der to more thoroughly explore the role of working organizations or occupations on beliefs about parental leave, it would be recommended to include questions about female vs. male dominated organization, manual vs. non-manual occupations or prestige of the job given that these characteristics were also found to be related to parental leave take-up (e.g. Byrge & Duvander, 2006; Nepomnyaschy & Waldfogel, 2007; O'Brien & Shemilt, 2003). We would also like to point out that this is an example of correlational research which does not allow conclusions about causal relations between variables. In addition, we would like to point out that this is not research about actual decisions, but about beliefs. It would be valuable to explore the actual decisions and practice of leave sharing on the population of parents who are going through these processes, and to see what are the incentives for gender equal leave take-up, what are the barriers and problems on that path, and how could they be overcome.

CONCLUSION

Our findings imply that shifts towards beliefs which are supportive of gender egalitarian leave sharing will not occur until the attitudes towards gender roles in general become more egalitarian. Our research shows that some men hold ambivalent beliefs about the traditional gender division of labour. Changes in legislation in the more gender egalitarian direction, although necessary, are not sufficient for making the shift toward beliefs and practices of leave take-up that are more gender equal. Beliefs about the division of leave are essential given that beliefs predict behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), a theoretical hypothesis also empirically evidenced for fathers' involvement in their children's lives (Perry & Langley, 2013). Therefore, we can conclude that

what is also needed in our society is the deconstruction of traditional gender-role beliefs in general, especially in the case of men.

Given that leave take-up by fathers in Croatia is low, the practical implications of this research, if we want Croatian society to be more supportive of shared leave, are to focus on deconstructing gender roles in general, and motherhood and fatherhood specifically, including early childcare. This could be done through public campaigns that would offer different representations of motherhood and fatherhood and inform the general population and parents about the benefits of the father's participation in leave take-up and childcare for the children's socio-emotional and cognitive outcomes (Averett, Gennetian, & Peters, 2005; Tamis-Lemonda & Cabrera, 2002).

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Sažetak

UVJERENJA O RODNOJ PODJELI RODITELJSKIH DOPUSTA I ZNAČAJKE POVEZANE S NJIMA

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Prikazano istraživanje postavljeno u hrvatski kontekst problematizira uvjerenja o roditeljskom/porodiljnom dopustu i čimbenike koji utječu na takva uvjerenja. Podatci su prikupljeni na nacionalno reprezentativnom uzorku osoba koje žive u Hrvatskoj (N=1000). Sudionicima su postavljena pitanja o njihovim uvjerenjima o roditeljskim dopustima koje uzimaju majke i očevi, socio-demografskim podacima, sudjelovanju u vjerskim obredima, nejednakostima u prihodu i rodnim ulogama. Rezultati pokazuju da otprilike 49% muškaraca i žena vjeruje da je isključivo majčina odgovornost koristiti cijeli dopust, dodatnih 27% vjeruje da bi otac trebao koristiti dio dopusta, a oko 24% ispitanika vjeruje da bi roditelji trebali koristiti dopust ravnopravno. Muškarci i žene koji podržavaju ravnomjernije podijeljeno korištenje dopusta rjeđe sudjeluju u vjerskim obredima i imaju ravnopravnija uvjerenja o rodnoj podjeli rada, no ne razlikuju se u pogledu nejednakosti u prihodima partnera. Ovi rezultati ukazuju na to da je rodna ideologija primjenjivija u pojašnjenju uvjerenja o rodnoj podjeli roditeljskih dopusta u usporedbi s teorijom vremenske alokacije. Rezultati multinomijalne logističke regresije pokazuju da je najsnažniji prediktor za uvjerenje o uzimanju dopusta uvjerenje o rodnim ulogama. Što manje sudionici vjeruju da bi rodna podjela poslova trebala biti podijeljena na tradicionalan način, to je veća vjerojatnost da će podržavati ravnomjernu podjelu dopusta između roditelja. Iz ovih rezultata proizlazi da do pomaka prema podržavanju korištenja dopusta na rodno ravnopravniji način vjerojatno neće doći sve dok stavovi o rodnim ulogama općenito ne postanu ravnopravniji.

Ključne riječi: roditeljski dopust, porodiljni dopust, uvjerenja o rodnim ulogama, Hrvatska, opće stanovništvo.