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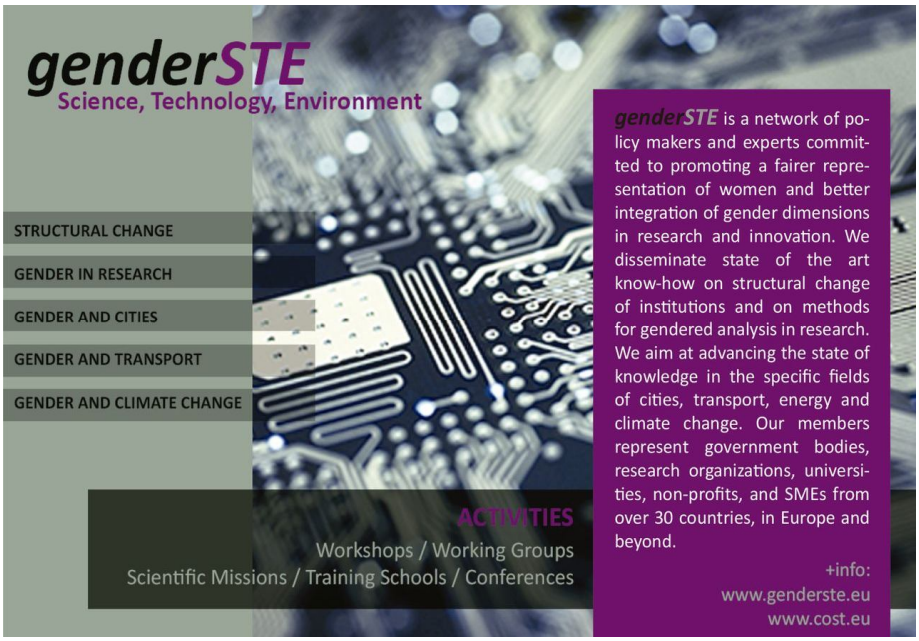
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The Spanish Society for Women's History (Asociación Española de Investigación de Historia de las Mujeres-AEIHM) was founded in June 1991 as a development of the National Commission of the IFRWH (International Federation for Research in Women's History), federation of which it is now a member. For over twenty years, it has developed many activities in order to promote research, teaching and dissemination of women's and gender history, as well as the theoretical and methodological renewal of the historical discipline, through conferences and seminars, workshops, publications, awards, dissemination of its own and others' activities through website and mailing list and participation in collective actions. It has currently 300 members.

Its aims are to promote and spread women's and gender history through research, teaching at different academic levels, and outreaching to society at large. On an annual basis, and continuously since 1993, AEIHM has been held international conferences and seminars for discussion between national and foreign specialists in women's and gender history.

Brazilian and Portuguese Writers: Writing, Ideology, Gender

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Abstract:

This research aims to investigate certain literary projects as resulting from tensions and conflicts portrayed in the works of Brazilian and Portuguese female writers, in light of pressures and choices dictated by the literary and artistic tradition, whose tracks lead us to the grand themes of the human condition.

Within an environment of coexistence between literature and writing, a few female writers began the production of their body of fiction work, among them the Portuguese Agustina Bessa-Luís (1922 -) and Maria Judite de Carvalho (1921-1998), as well as the Brazilian Clarice Lispector (1920-1977) and Rachel de Queiroz (1910-2003), by means of intense discussions with their "fellow travelers", books, other poets, creators of fiction, essayists, philosophers and critics, in the words of Goethe.

Through the different types of text they cultivate, these writers present curious and challenging discussions that run through a poetics of the female condition and a reflection of complex nature (Edgar Morin), towards a dialogue of ideas and postures regarding fundamental values of life in the twentieth century, and which are still considered in the current century.

For such a study of comparative nature – involving readings, experiences and relations of alterity and gender highlighted by the aforementioned writers -, we shall rely on the essential contributions provided by categories that will guide the research, such as *crisis* (Gilberto de Mello Kujawski), *literary system* (António Cândido), *comparatism* (Tânia Carvalhal, Sandra Nitrini), *context* (Dominique Maingueneau), *literary field* (Pierre Boudieu), *reading* (Paulo Freire), *unreading* (Harold Bloom), *existence* (Ortega y Gasset), *writing* (Roland Barthes), and *contemporaneity and liquidity* (Zygmunt Bauman).

In effect, this research rests upon a double purpose: first, to listen to the poetics of the corpus writers, through speeches and situations dramatized by their fictional characters or by virtue of

other forms of expression, such as those found in writing spacesgenerated from interviews, letters, confessions, etc., therefore imbued with an hermeneutical imprint.

Tied to the first one, the second purpose, didactic in its nature, is to stimulate a learning-educational discussion around some of the possible meanings of rediscovering life and ways of being in the world through literary reading, taking as principle ideas and projects belonging to the personal library spaces of writers, such as in-between places (Homi Bhabha, Silviano Santiago), places of intervallic dimension (João Alexandre Barbosa), symbolic places (readings) wherein the human condition is inscribed and recreated, as well as representations of social, political and ideological pressures concerning achievements and defeats of women in western world societies, from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century.

The writers quoted in this project have been studied according to the aforesaid purposes, both through classes, essays and articles and through lectures and conferences, and also within the activities developed by the Study Group.

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CONTENTS

FEMININE CITIES: NEW ORLEANS IN THE WORK OF JOHN GREGORY BROWN [11]
ARTEMIS MICHAILIDOU

HOW WELL CAN THE GENDER PAY GAP IN MISSISSIPPI BE EXPLAINED? [27]
SONDRA COLLINS

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND INTRA-HOUSEHOLD DIETARY DIVERSITY IN NIGERIA [39]
BELMONDO TANANKEM VOUFO, EFOBI UCHENNA, SCHOLASTICA NGOZI ATATA

THE ROLE OF GENDER AND MOTHERHOOD IDEOLOGIES IN PERPETUATING WORKPLACE INEQUALITY [67]
ELIZABETH C. HARRIS, MYCHEL L. ESTEVEZ

THE GENDERED PSYCHOLOGY OF POLITICAL REVOLUTION AND COUNTERCULTURAL DISSENT IN ANTONIONI'S *ZABRISKIE POINT* [86]
AUREL PERA

HEALTH DETERMINANTS IN ITALIAN TYPE 2 DIABETES MELLITUS (T2DM) PATIENTS: A CRITICAL GENDER DIFFERENCES ANALYSIS [93]
ROSARIO CARUSO, CRISTINA ARRIGONI, ARIANNA MAGON, FRANCESCO PITTELLA, FEDERICA DELLAFIORE, ANNA MARIA GRUGNETTI, DAVIDE AUSILI, FRANCESCO AUXILIA

EUROPEAN IDENTITY AND GENDER EQUALITY POLICIES: SHAPING THE PRACTICE OF GENDER EXPERTISE [109]
ATHENA ENDERSTEIN

THE INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL EMPLOYMENT STATUS ON CHILDREN'S LABOR OUTCOMES. DOES THE GENDER OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN MATTER? [136]
GABRIELLA BERLOFFA, ELEONORA MATTEAZZI, PAOLA VILLA

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN PRINTED PERSONAL ADVERTISEMENTS IN NIGERIA [165]
ARUA EKE ARUA

CONTEMPORARY PORTRAYALS OF WOMEN AND FEMININITY. A CASE STUDY OF LIFESTYLE BLOGS IN THE U.S. [186]
MERITXELL ROCA-SALES, GUILLERMO LOPEZ-GARCIA

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FEMININE CITIES: NEW ORLEANS IN THE WORK OF JOHN GREGORY BROWN

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ABSTRACT. The following paper presents a comprehensive overview of New Orleans in the novels of John Gregory Brown: *Decorations in a Ruined Cemetery* (1994), *The Wrecked, Blessed Body of Shelton Lafleur* (1996), and *Audubon's Watch* (2001). Taking as a starting point earlier scholarship which suggests that New Orleans should be seen as a "feminine" city (Eckstein, 2006; Codrescu, 2006; Harris and Robinson, 2015), as well as the ongoing dialectic between materiality and literary representation, I will contend that New Orleans in Brown's work is construed as a gendered subject, actively influencing his characters. Examining gender in relation to race and class, I will discuss how Brown's characters experience the city's contradictions, and how they often seem to embody its intriguing complexities. Ultimately, the aim of this paper is to discover if Brown's notion of the feminine city has anything new to offer both to current gender theorization and to contemporary Southern writing.

Keywords: femininity; contemporary Southern fiction; New Orleans; John Gregory Brown

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Introduction

New Orleans has always been an intriguing case for scholars interested in the relationship between literature and geographical place; its vibrant mixture of cultures, its linguistic pluralism, and the various idiosyncratic laws (both written and unwritten) that shaped its history and tradition have earned the city a unique reputation among other U.S. locations. Suzanne W. Jones (2013),

for instance, has argued that New Orleans represents the most "foreign" city of the United States: "From its origins," she says, "New Orleans has been both praised and denigrated, but almost always, it's been thought of as America's 'exotic other'." Along the same lines, Helen Taylor (2004) has argued that "it's a different language down there" (321) and Barbara Eckstein (2006) has examined the "abundant and persistent claims for the city's exceptionalism" (2).

If we add the gender parameter to the debate concerning this exceptionalism, the picture gets even more complicated, in the sense that New Orleans is often perceived as a "feminine" city. Attempting to give an integrated definition of femininity may fall beyond the scope of this essay, yet it is worth noting that most of the arguments exploring the city's feminine side inevitably associate femininity with sexuality: Andrei Codrescu (2006), for instance, identifies femininity with the city's "unfeigned pleasure in Eros" (225–226), while Lakeesha Harris and Geryll Robinson (2015) see "the divine feminine energy" of New Orleans as a manifestation of its healing power. Many other similar examples can be mentioned here, as New Orleans's cultural background – with its African slaves, the institution of plaçage, the "infamous Storyville area of prostitution and jazz" and the French connection have contributed significantly to the city's "longstanding reputation as a place of sexual license and laissez-faire," a place of "feminine frivolity and pleasure-loving naughtiness" (Taylor, 2004: 321). So how does Brown's New Orleans conform to – or deviate from – this pervasive image of femininity? Can it be said that his overall handling of place in literature enriches both current gender theorization and contemporary Southern writing? The following pages will try to provide an answer.

Decorations in a Ruined Cemetery

Decorations in a Ruined Cemetery (1994) is not only the first novel that established the author's interest in the notion of place, but also the novel that earned Brown enthusiastic accolades for its original narrative voices – a young, white woman (Catherine), her 12-year old stepdaughter (Meredith), and an old, African-American man (Murphy).[1] Indeed, people who have some experience of fiction writing will know that creating a successful narrator whose gender or race is different from your own represents a significant accomplishment. Brown's two female narrators, in particular, both manage to convince the reader of their authenticity (they sound female without resorting to overused clichés and stereotypes), and simultaneously invite crucial questions about how their own experience of femininity relates to their daily life in a city traditionally perceived as "feminine." To the extent that femininity is commonly associated with nurturing and healing, or with stability, rather than movement, it would be interesting to examine whether Brown's

depiction of New Orleans reflects or contests tradition, or whether he adopts a "middle ground" that goes beyond earlier writing.

Perhaps the most memorable description of the city is given by Catherine, who believes that New Orleans is "the greatest of all possible adventures" (69);[2] her move from North Carolina to the celebrated city of Louisiana represents "not only a different world to see," but also "a different way of seeing it" (72). In the words of Barbara Ladd (2002), New Orleans symbolizes "something phantasmagoric…, a locus of desire," and perhaps a dream, rather than a reality (56). But why does New Orleans seem to Catherine "like the best city in the whole world" (72), and what does she find there? To the first question, we never get a clear answer but, normally enough for 1958, what awaits Catherine in New Orleans is her future husband, Thomas Eagen. Catherine listens to Thomas's life story one night "over raw oysters and okra gumbo at Mandina's" (69), and it is through the stories of Thomas and his two children that we get to appreciate the "real" New Orleans.

As can be expected, however, the "real" New Orleans has many contradictory faces: for Catherine herself, this phantasmagoric locus of desire will gradually turn into a place where femininity is not allowed to blossom. Catherine is expected to take full care of her husband's twins – a task she performs most willingly and sensitively – but she is not allowed to have her own baby. Her accidental impregnation by Thomas will, in fact, signal the end of their marriage. Along the same lines, her stepdaughter Meredith will grow up without a solid maternal influence, having lost her biological mother at birth and her loving stepmother shortly after entering puberty. She will eventually get pregnant at 37 but she will always feel confused about the past and doubtful about the course her life has taken (cf. p. 262: "As for the melancholy and regret that overtook me, that I have truly never shaken off, I don't know exactly what to say"). For the two main female characters, then (and in contrast with Harris's and Robinson's afore-mentioned argument), New Orleans does not seem to possess either a feminine energy or a healing power. On the contrary, it is a place of continuous spiritual struggle and unresolved family conflicts – at times attractive and homely, but often solitary and inhospitable.

Moving on to the male characters, we should notice that, for Thomas Eagen – the son of an interracial marriage who embodies the author's version of the 1960s "free person of color" – New Orleans offers all the opportunities of a typical US city. A person of color like himself, for instance, can become a doctor and live in a rich white neighborhood. He can hire "Negro nannies" (69) for his children and the latter can go to Catholic schools – desegregated since 1960 – without worrying how they will be treated. At the same time, we learn that, even in 1965, there are marked differences between the

cemeteries reserved for whites and those reserved for blacks: the former have large tombs "lined with marble doors" (223), while the latter have only cheap headstones. As Gino Grieco (2013a) has noticed, "the mere invocation of street names and gravestones" enables a discussion of topics such as race and poverty and further signals New Orleans's "major role in the story."[3] Quite clearly, racial segregation is still present, and this is perhaps why Murphy Warrington, the main black character of Brown's novel, asserts that "the city of New Orleans was no place for me" (93). In fact, throughout *Decorations*, Murphy is alienated both from the city's life, and from the social developments of the 1960s: Catherine may refer to Hurricane Betsy or the Russian scare (64), and Meredith to the Kennedy assassination and "the Cuban refugees that were then pouring into New Orleans" (261) but, for Murphy, time seems to have stopped three decades earlier. The only historical event we find in his narration is the KKK attack on the Eagen residence during the Depression, which also reveals Murphy's distrust of the possibility of change. We should also notice that, even in the mid-60s, he calls the twelve-year-old Eagen twins "Mr Lowell" and "Miss Meredith." The fact that he is also called "nigger" by the police authorities is Brown's way of telling us that Murphy's distrust was justified.

Indeed, Murphy is forced to return to New Orleans only to end up in the icy waters of the Lake Pontchartrain, and his miraculous rescue simply intensifies his determination to leave. Catherine, by contrast, abandoned by her husband, will be forced to leave "the best city in the whole world." As for Thomas, he oscillates between temporary aversion and a deep sense of belonging: his decision to abandon his wife is inseparable from the desire to escape New Orleans. By mirroring the actions of his black mother, who had left the city three decades earlier (when she became pregnant by Murphy), Thomas believes that he will somehow find the answers about his mixed racial heritage. His eventual visit to North Carolina, on the other hand – in a desperate attempt to set things straight with Catherine – signals a common trope in Brown's work: the fact that, in New Orleans, things *do* happen, but are *not* resolved. This oscillation between aversion and belonging is also reflected in the city's different descriptions: the long, silent ride through New Orleans on the day Thomas leaves Catherine – "down West End Boulevard and Robert E. Lee, across Carrolton Avenue, [and] up St. Charles" with "the Checker moving through the streets like a blind lizard wriggling through tall grass" (43–44) is clearly meant to be seen as a nightmare, whereas the ride in the red sportscar that Thomas's friend gives Meredith, and which involves a race "down Elysian Fields all the way to Pontchartrain Beach" is pure "magic" (224).

It is this magic of New Orleans that finally weighs more on the scales: even through a chance incident – the collapse of the Lake Pontchartrain

Causeway – Thomas understands that he will never be able to leave. His connection to his native city may seem, at times, like a predicament, rather than a blessing (see also Lyons, 2002: 110) but, for Thomas, New Orleans is never inhospitable. After all, Thomas is also portrayed as a creative teacher, and what he transmits to his children is precisely his love for his native city and, especially, for its music; consider the following recollection provided by Meredith: "My father would recite the names of New Orleans musicians as though he were speaking of well-loved friends who had passed away: Joe Oliver, Kid Ory, and Sidney Bechet, Henry Allen and Buster Bailey, and Johnny Dodds. He would pull out the old records he had bought at second-hand shops and sit Lowell and me down in the living room. 'Just listen,' he'd say, smiling. 'Just listen to this'" (9).

Even more importantly, Thomas's self-definition is inseparable from his active involvement in what he tries to teach to his children: besides taking them to jazz band performances in Audubon Park, Thomas does not hesitate to sing in public.

Such behavior, of course, cannot be easily understood by New Orleans "outsiders," like Catherine: as she tells Meredith: "I've never understood how it is that your father has trouble making two minutes of meaningful conversation with his family but can then turn around and let strangers watch him sing all those old songs about love" (146). But it seems, after all, that life in New Orleans has its own, unspoken rules, and these rules are best appreciated by the city's native residents. Brown, in other words, seems to concur with Arnold R. Hirsch and Joseph Logsdon (1996), who argued that "even a prolonged stay [in New Orleans] brings no easy recognition or familiarity," simultaneously endorsing Barbara Ladd's (2002) conception of place as a "subjective, experiential insiders' term" (44) – with Thomas embodying the prototypical "insider." And while the "feminine" credentials of nurturing and healing may often seem doubtful, Brown's New Orleans in *Decorations* can indeed be considered a "feminine" city – a city of concealed vulnerability and powerful emotion, a city that like that, like the collapse of the Lake Pontchartrain in the opening scene, can literally make you lose the ground under your feet and mark you forever. The following lines by contemporary writer Robert Olen Butler (2012) seem perfectly applicable to Brown's New Orleans: "The life of openly expressed feeling is what New Orleans really represents (…) – a city that is very conscious of its own vulnerability. One reason the partying is so hard and the life so intense is that everyone knows that at any given time…, the city could vanish".[4] In *Decorations* the city does not actually vanish, but the intense living and hard partying definitely mark the lives of Brown's major characters – whether "insiders," like Thomas, Murphy, and Meredith, or "outsiders," like Catherine and Mollie.

The Wrecked, Blessed Body of Shelton Lafleur

In comparably similar terms, life in New Orleans has also marked Shelton Lafleur, the protagonist of Brown's second novel. Like Thomas, Shelton felt an urge to leave New Orleans and experience what other cities had to offer; and again, like Thomas, Shelton eventually returned to the city of his "strange, unfortunate birth" (10).[5] For a black, physically handicapped painter who was abandoned as a baby during the Depression and yet achieved international fame, this return to the conservative South does indeed appear strange; yet we should not forget that, in Brown's novels, the characters are always haunted by their past, and New Orleans seems to be the only place that can offer redemption, as it holds the key uniting past and present. In the words of Robert Olen Butler (2011): "New Orleans is an extraordinary city in that the past is always with us, and so it's a perfect place to put a book in which memory and the past interact with the present. That's what New Orleans is all about."[6]

The Depression and its aftermath, the 1950s, the 1990s: quite obviously, the socio-historical context in Brown's second novel is particularly important. Minou Parrain, Shelton's biological father, talks about Franklin Roosevelt's famous speech, according to which "each and every man deserves a job" (64), but when the Works Progress Administration was established, Minou discovered that "if there's enough white folks waiting in line to take all the jobs, they tell the Negroes to come back tomorrow, and that's that" (67). Minou was eventually given a job through the WPA, "shoveling dirt in [Audubon] Park" (70), but he forgot to tell Shelton that, throughout the ten-month period of his employment, "his legs [were] in chains" (147). Minou, apparently, had been accused of killing another man. "Was another Negro", he later explains, "not a white one, thank the Lord, or else I wouldn't be standing here" (165). As it is often the case with Brown, we never learn whether Minou was guilty or not, but what we do learn, is that New Orleans in the 1930s was not a friendly place for its black residents. For Minou, especially, his native city does not even seem to be his, and he constantly dreams of escaping: "There's a place up in New York called Harlem… That's our place…. Negroes…. Thousands and thousands of them, and of every kind. Doctors and lawyers and artists. Blacks folks sweeping those streets but with a smile. Black folks teaching the children how to count. Black folks driving their own cars, singing their own songs, making a living without a fat white hand reaching into their pockets….Just picture that…. It's there, child, where we ought to be" (159–160).

Thus, contrary to Harris's and Robinson's earlier observation about the city's "feminine" nurturing qualities, it is clear that, for an African-American man, post-Depression New Orleans has failed to deliver any vision of equality or social justice, and has become a predictable, inhospitable city that can no

longer appeal to a large part of its population. The language of desire that characterizes Minou's description of Harlem shows a most vivid contrast between a decadent, passive, and resigned "femininity," and a dream of projected, active "masculinity" that will supposedly open up new ground to New Orleans's marginalized residents.

This language of passivity and resignation that characterizes Minou's view of New Orleans is further reinforced by the repeated references to the ailing female body: the dying Genevieve (Minou's mother-in-law) is compared to a swollen pig that can only cause repulsion (92–93), and the recurring image of the white girl Margaret Soniat (Shelton's surrogate mother), who suffers from a degenerative muscle condition and is gradually confined to her bed (6) suggests not only motionlessness and stagnation, but also a slow, painful death. New Orleans, thus, seems to be a city that is slowly dying, both morally and physically, and the juxtaposition with the booming Harlem culture makes the dream of a potential escape all the more poignant.

Unlike Minou, Shelton did manage to live in Harlem, but he nevertheless chose to return because, in contrast to Minou, New Orleans always felt *his* place. Notice, for instance, the repeated references to New Orleans's exciting topography: all of Minou's confessions to Shelton – his real and fictional stories – take place as the two of them ride the city's buses or walk its streets, and Shelton's love for painting reflects his growing love for New Orleans. Venues, roads and monuments like St. Louis Cathedral or St. Charles Avenue feature most prominently in *Shelton Lafleur*, together with detailed accounts of the south Claiborne bus line and the St. Charles streetcar, Canal Street and the Garden District, Audubon Park and Jackson Square, the Lake Pontchartrain and the Mississippi River. Shelton also describes with particular excitement his visits to the lively, "black" shops of Magazine Street. As Barbara Eckstein (2006) has written, drawing on Carlo Rotella's work, "city fact and fiction, or fact and feeling … cannot be kept apart" (2). According to Eckstein (2006), New Orleans "elicits in its human inhabitants and even visitors a distinctive somatic and affective response to the place, a relation that Yi-Fu Tuan has labeled *topophilia*" (2). Shelton's inability to create meaningful art away from New Orleans represents precisely "the distinctive somatic and affective response" described above – simultaneously rendering the city an inspirational (female) Muse – and his rejection of Harlem's privileges over the struggle for "desegregation… social justice, public health and economic viability" (Eckstein, 2006: xiii) that characterized New Orleans and the entire U.S. South in the late 1950s can be seen as a clear case of topophilia.

Shelton, in other words, returns not because New Orleans was miraculously transformed into a friendlier place for its black community – a place where the color of the victim no longer mattered; neither does he return

because social injustice or prejudice ceased to exist: on the contrary, even without naming the KKK, he relates how a tiny church in St. Francisville was burned down in 1958 because its priest had decided to patronize Shelton's religious paintings. The church incident recalls an almost identical one that took place thirty years earlier and is narrated in Brown's first novel: this time, the KKK cross appears outside the house of a white man whose black wife is pregnant. In both novels, the KKK victims adopt a rather optimistic attitude: Lowell Henry Eagen in *Decorations* alerts the press and the civil rights movement activists, declaring that people will soon come to terms with mixed marriages. Similarly, Shelton Lafleur sees the burning cross as "some kind of holy presence" that would "heal both old wounds and new" and would "promise change" (34). The question that arises here, of course, is whether this envisioned change was ever given the chance to become a reality.

On the individual level, the answer seems to be affirmative: the KKK fire inspired Shelton to produce "The Great Sea," his most influential painting. On the collective level, however, the picture is far less encouraging: Both through the 1960s owners of the Magazine street shops in *Decorations*, who keep on telling stories about a much happier past, and through the bunch of the Magazine street children who, thirty years later, clean Shelton's brushes "for a quarter apiece," children "no different from their hard-working, sweat-soaked parents" (108), Brown implies that, despite the legislative success of the civil rights movement, upward social mobility in New Orleans is still a difficult matter for its black residents. In a rather disturbing way, what the Magazine street children of the 1990s want to hear is stories of the past, of Magazine Street being "full of thriving shops and stores," of "the bright, happy faces of well-to-do Negroes" (108). "That's why you never left, isn't it?" they'd ask Shelton. "That's why you call these same streets home?" "That's why," Shelton would tell the children. To the reader, however, he tells a different story: "I left and came back and left and came back not for the grandeur and glory these children imagined, but for something else, for the hard work and pain and simple joy and terrible sadness that I needed, for my own sake, to see. What do I do now with such memories as this place has given me?" (108–109).

Shelton cannot provide an answer, but the reader can finally understand why he chose to return: because, despite his travels, New Orleans remains the only place that haunted his memory. For the famous painter, the city seems to be somehow equated with the anonymous woman who gave birth to him: at times mysterious, elusive, and impersonal, but curiously hospitable, life-sustaining, and inspirational. Like an old, story-telling grandmother, New Orleans tell the tale of a city where femininity is equated both with ailment and dangerous adventure (Shelton's anonymous mother and his half-sister Elise end up pregnant and fade in the background), and with spiritual and

physical nurturing (his second half-sister, Olivia, is a paradigmatic case of sacrificial devotion). Shelton's New Orleans also tells us that time has not exactly fulfilled "the promise of change" and racial demarcations cannot be ignored; however, it is obvious that the centripetal force towards home is stronger than anything, especially when "home" and the sense of place have marked you in ways that go beyond explaining. After all, as Scott Romine (2002) has argued, "place is both subject to representation and suggestive of things that resist representation" (24). Along the same lines, Carolyn M. Jones (2002) has shown that "home is both a stable space and a contended space; a place of conflict and negotiation as well as a place of self-expression and safety" (61). Shelton's attitude toward the puzzle that New Orleans represents for him expresses Brown's endorsement of these arguments, and Shelton's paintings, which focus almost exclusively on New Orleans, and yet defy interpretation even by the city's natives,[7] alert us to a different parameter of this debate: Brown, in other words, seems to be saying that, even though the experience of place will always remain "dynamic and vital," the "theorizing of place" will continue to generate significant questions in art, gender, and literary study.[8]

Audubon's Watch

The last novel that John Gregory Brown has so far published is *Audubon's Watch* (2001), an interesting hybrid of fictional biography and gothic mystery. It is also Brown's most erotic novel, with well-crafted love scenes and exceptionally vivid imagery, which render New Orleans "a locus of sensual memory and experience".[9] The plot may be recognizably familiar to Brown's readers – two male rivals which are also doubles, some buried secrets, and an elusive, absent woman – but, as the only novel set in the nineteenth century, it represents a clear departure from the author's previous writings. However, in consonance with Brown's earlier novels, New Orleans features prominently in *Audubon's Watch* and, on a symbolic level, its uniqueness is evident from the very beginning: the mysterious watch of the title that the fictional John James Audubon buys en route to New Orleans – even though he "had not a penny to spare" (5)[10] – stops working shortly before its new owner steps foot on the city: we can identify, thus, the two main axes of Brown's narrative: first, the different rules that apply in this particular corner of the South and, second, the construction of New Orleans as a city where you can do extravagant and daring things. From purchasing a fancy watch you cannot really afford (Audubon), to organizing public dissections of dead bodies (Gautreaux), to requesting a naked portrait of yourself (Myra), the possibilities of extravagance and transgression are almost unlimited, and the "difference" of New Orleans is never allowed to fade in the background.

Is this difference "feminine," however, and is femininity associated, once again, with sexuality? Apparently yes; leaving aside the particular importance of the nineteenth century temporal framework, that is, the century that established the "lingering and racially evolving … image of the city as feminine" (Eckstein, 2006: xii), we should also remember that *Audubon's Watch* is a novel that refers extensively to the city's slave history: as Helen Taylor (2004) reminds us, "the associations of African slaves with sexuality itself" have contributed greatly to the configuration of New Orleans's imaginative geography as a sensual female body (322). Taylor also points out, however, that the city's analogies with North Africa, the West Indies and, of course, slavery, are consistently being downplayed in promotional materials – in contrast to the widely celebrated French connection. In this respect, Brown's novel becomes particularly important, as it attempts to redress a crucial socio-cultural imbalance. Indeed, the extended flashbacks of the male protagonists' stay in Paris, or the references to the Vieux Carré and the French Opera House, go hand-in-hand with a detailed account of the uprising and massacre in Saint Domingue, or with the "dancing slaves" in New Orleans's Congo Square (39). In a deceptively off-hand manner, the physician Emile Gautreaux talks about sharing "a bottle of sweet clear rum" with a merchant "who had just delivered three dozen healthy slaves to a nearby plantation, losing fewer than a dozen others in passage, thus securing himself a healthy profit" (73–74). Gautreaux does not fail to reveal that his own father, like the father of his former fiancée, was also a dealer in slaves (106) – an obvious link between slavery and the nineteenth century aristocracy in New Orleans. Most importantly, the connection between illicit desire and the (African) female body is impressively personified in the story of Corinne, the 16-year-old slave girl that becomes the object of desire of the rich planter James Pirrie. Watching the girl during her baptism in a river, Pirrie watches how she seemed "reborn, not just in spirit but in body as well." He observes how her white dress "had become just another layer to her skin" and how "she suddenly looked like a grown woman" (56). Unable to come to terms with his lust, Pirrie sells off the young mother and separates her from her baby.

Brown, thus, seems to belong to a new group of contemporary southern authors who are not afraid to touch the "dangerous" decades before the Civil War. As Matthew Guinn (2004) observed: "This compulsion to revisit the past suggests … that history is not altogether dead, but rather populated by restless ghosts demanding redress" (574). According to Guinn (2004): "Southern fiction at the dawn of the twenty-first century has reached a strange juncture that is uniquely southern yet also uniquely postmodern – an uneasy moment in a traditionalist literature in which history has returned, under clear-eyed scrutiny, with a vengeance" (575).

In line with this argument, Brown – who has admitted several times that New Orleans "shaped him as a writer" both because of "its peculiarities of time and place" and its "complex social and racial hierarchies"[11] – emerges as a particularly honest artist, who is not afraid to write about his native city's marginalized history and examine transgression in relation to the ghosts of the past.

As we have already seen, in a place associated with a seductive laissez-faire mentality, most forms of transgression pertain to sexuality and miscegenation. For the penniless Audubon, this could simply mean the attempt to catch a glimpse of a quadroon ball. For a young, white, upper-class woman like Myra Gautreaux, on the other hand, transgression may range from the determination to roam the dark streets of the city at night, to inviting charming strangers to her own private residence. Protected by the city's anonymity, Myra eventually invites Audubon to her Faubourg Marigny house, requests a naked portrait of herself, stirs the painter to unprecedented passion, and casts him away just before the sexual act is consummated.[12]

It comes thus as no surprise that New Orleans is experienced by its native residents as a place from which they need to flee, occasionally, because, despite its tempting liberties, the social sanctions for transgressing the norm cannot be ignored. Myra and Gautreaux are constantly afraid that "some authority on behalf of the Church" will order them "to remain in the city," and they compare themselves to "criminals whose arrest and execution had been delayed only for the lack of a sturdy gallows." Concluding that they are "a scandal," "unfit for polite company," Myra and Gautreaux declare that they "shall merely *be*" (74; original emphasis). Not coincidentally, this declaration takes place on a carriage that removes the guilt-ridden couple from New Orleans. Likewise, visitors, such as Audubon, describe the city as "dizzyingly gay and yet inhospitable" (62), welcoming the chance to escape once they have had their share of adventure. This is perhaps why, throughout the narrative (and in consonance with *Decorations in a Ruined Cemetery*), New Orleans is portrayed as the place where things *happen*, but not as the place where things are *resolved*. In *Audubon's Watch*, resolution is associated with the painter's house in upper state New York, and though Brown was probably constrained by the biographical facts of his protagonist's life, he nevertheless seems to be implying that the soberness of the North may provide a more appropriate setting for reaching a conclusion. And yet, the final scene reveals that, even within the uptight atmosphere of the North, the spirit of New Orleans cannot be forgotten, and has marked all the characters indelibly.

"Spirit," of course, is a rather abstract term, open to different interpretations, and we should remember that, in *Audubon's Watch*, Brown's characters have to come to terms with "a wild and somewhat out-of-control mélange

of cultural experiences and phenomena" (Taylor, 2001: 92–93) traditionally associated with New Orleans – illicit pleasure, forbidden knowledge, mental and physical excess, miscegenation, and an unexpected, grotesque death. However, throughout the narrative, and despite the city's repeated presentation as an active contributor (rather than mere host) to all these experiences, New Orleans is perceived as the only "sense of stability amid flux" (Ladd, 2002: 46). This is perhaps why the characters' decision to abandon New Orleans "might be more accurately imagined as a transfiguration of – rather than as a flight or liberation from – place" (Ladd, 2002: 45), a transfiguration that will always accompany both Audubon and Gautreaux and play an instrumental role in their frustrated attempts to discover the truth behind art, science, and Myra's mysterious death.

Conclusions and Future Study

So how does Brown's depiction of New Orleans interact with current debates about place and gender? Do his novels have anything new to offer to the problematic theorization of these notions? To the extent that Brown cannot be said to deviate either from the classic themes of southern literature, or from the socio-cultural constants associated with both New Orleans and femininity, the answer seems to be negative. While it is true that some readers might interpret Brown's endorsement of the city's "official" aesthetic – seductive, dangerous, mysterious, appealing yet intimidating – as a refusal to construct an argument about how place might function differently than public opinion, I would contend that the author actually re-channels the question of "difference" away from strict critical schemata, in order to place greater emphasis on the personal and the emotional – and their interaction with the inescapable (and often suppressed) collective.

Thus, Brown's reluctance to provide concrete answers to the crucial "whys" that trouble all his New Orleans-enchanted characters, combined with the absence of overt didacticism and moralistic judgments, suggest that the key to the uniqueness of New Orleans lies in its being "impervious to criticism, more than sensual in pursuit of pleasure, more than usually tolerant of human frailties."[13] And it is the sensitive exploration of human frailties in relation to our personal and collective history that enables Brown to produce rewarding and meaningful writing. The author's discourse of New Orleans goes beyond the folkloric, the stereotypical, or the geographical; it is a discourse that is also "historiographical, aesthetic, rhetorical, and ideological" (Jones and Monteith, 2002: 6–7). Brown's New Orleans is both nurturing and inhospitable, strangely exotic and reassuringly familiar – an adventurous Aphrodite exploring the forbidden, and a faithful Penelope awaiting the return of her loved ones. In this respect, the author's investigation of his native city

can widen "the parameters within which the South may be examined, critiqued, and understood," and his novels do possess, as Richard Gray (2002) would put it, the "peculiarly intense and focused gaze" that "any reading of the South now requires" (xxi). For all these reasons, I am convinced that John Gregory Brown's New Orleans – simultaneously "feminine" and distrustful of restrictive labels – deserves an equally focused look.

NOTES

1. See http://worldwriters.english.sbc.edu/jbrown.reviews.html

2. Brown, J. G. (1996), *Decorations in a Ruined Cemetery*. London: Sceptre. Page references hereafter in the main text correspond to the above edition.

3. For an excellent discussion of racial segregation in relation to private and public space, see also Christine Wiltz's *Glass House* (1994).

4. Berry, L. (2012), "Interview with Robert Olen Butler: The Danger of Wanting to be a Writer," *Talking Writing*, http://talkingwriting.com/robert-olen-butler-the-danger-of-wanting-to-be-a-writer.

5. Brown, J. G. (1996), *The Wrecked, Blessed Body of Shelton Lafleur*. London: Sceptre. Page references hereafter correspond to the above edition.

6. Martin, N. C. (2011), "To Learn the Language of Feeling: An Interview with Robert Olen Butler," *Press Street*, 13 September.

7. For a more extensive discussion of this artistic / racial defiance see also Michailidou (2006).

8. See also Ladd (2002: 51).

9. See Gino Grieco's discussion of New Orleans in the work of Brown's contemporary Robert Olen Butler (2013b).

10. Brown, J. G. (2001), *Audubon's Watch*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin. Page references hereafter correspond to the above edition.

11. See Brown's interview to R. Ruggeri (2013).

12. For a more detailed, recent discussion of transgression in relation to gender and sexuality in *Audubon's Watch*, see Michailidou (2013). For the specific appeal of Faubourg Marigny to artists, see also "Faubourg Marigny and Bywater," http://www.neworleansonline.com/tools/neighborhoodguide/marigny.html.

13. See also Searight, in Eckstein (2006: 2).

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APPENDIX: BACK COVER PLOT SUMMARIES

Decorations in a Ruined Cemetery
Set in New Orleans, *Decorations in a Ruined Cemetery* begins on the day the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway collapsed. One car plunges into the water and all the other Sunday travelers must turn back. Among them is Thomas Eagen, who that morning had packed his belongings and his 12-year-old twins and left his wife to head for a new start in his childhood home. But, as the bridge crumbles, all his plans go with it and, it seems to his daughter, it is then that the whole Eagen world is thrown off-balance… an historical family saga of miscegenation and misery, of the depths of racism and the thickness of blood.

The Wrecked, Blessed Body of Shelton Lafleur
A black child abandoned during the Depression, Shelton Lafleur was lucky enough to be adopted by a wealthy Louisiana white family. But at the age of eight, a tumble from a tree permanently cripples him. Incarceration in an orphanage follows until he is rescued, inexplicably, by a stranger – the man who holds the key to Shelton's entangled past and, ultimately, proves the source of his redemption.

Audubon's Watch
On his deathbed, the great ornithologist John James Audubon is haunted by an incident that occurred thirty years earlier: a beautiful woman died suddenly on a Louisiana plantation where the young tutor was employed as tutor… Having failed

as a businessman and a portraitist, Audubon in 1821 is just beginning to formulate his grand design to draw all the birds of America. Artist and scientist, aristocrat and wayfaring outcast, he is ambitious, reckless, and naïve. Such is his state of mind when visitors arrive from New Orleans: a scandal-ridden physician and anatomist named Emile Gautreaux and his stunning wife, Myra. When Myra collapses and dies, the distraught Gautreaux believes she has been murdered. He asks the young tutor to sit with him through the long night, keeping watch over her body. The two men do not meet again for decades, until Audubon summons Gautreaux to his New York estate. The mystery of Myra's death has linked them inextricably over time, as each has harbored secrets and deceptions. Richly atmospheric, this mesmerizing tale reveals once again that "Brown's compassionate vision of human destiny is one that contains both suffering and the possibility of deliverance" (*New York Times*).

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HOW WELL CAN THE GENDER PAY GAP IN MISSISSIPPI BE EXPLAINED?

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ABSTRACT. Currently women in Mississippi who work full-time earn approximately 27% less than men who work full-time. The purpose of this study is to determine how much of Mississippi's wage gap can be attributed to measurable factors such as education and choice of occupation. The study also discusses some of the possible reasons a wage gap still persists after these measureable factors are taken into consideration. Using a Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition, this study finds a wage gap of approximately 18% in Mississippi after taking measurable factors into account. The factors taken into consideration include industry, occupation, education, age and race. A portion of the 18% wage gap that remains may be due to discrimination, however there are other unmeasurable factors that may cause a portion of the 18% wage gap as well.

Keywords: gender pay gap; gender discrimination; wage inequality; Mississippi

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Introduction

Although the gender pay gap has narrowed over the past thirty years, it still persists. Understanding why compensation is different between men and women can help businesses, governments and individuals tackle issues that can to be addressed and improve overall productivity in the economy.

The goal of this paper is to examine the gender pay gap in the state of Mississippi with the objective of finding a way to compare the wages of men and women in the fairest manner possible. This goal is complicated by the

fact that women tend to work part-time jobs more than men and that even on an hourly basis, part time jobs tend to pay less than full time jobs. Further complicating the matter is that men tend to work more overtime at hourly jobs and work more hours per week at salaried jobs. Women are also more likely to take breaks from their jobs for caretaking responsibilities, which may put them behind their peers in years of experience. In an attempt to overcome as many of these issues as possible, this study follows Blau and Kahn (forthcoming) by focusing on full-time workers, who worked at least twenty-six weeks in 2010 and worked at least thirty-five hours on average each week. The workers in this study participated in the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS). The survey asks questions on a wide range of issues for a nationally representative sample of individuals. For this paper, we focus only on those survey participants who selected Mississippi as their state of residence.

Data

This study follows Blau and Kahn (forthcoming) in both the selection of variables and methodology. However, this study uses the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) while Blau and Kahn use the Panel Survey of Income Dynamics (PSID). The PSID has a smaller nationwide sample that contains too few Mississippians to conduct a study on Mississippi alone. The ACS surveyed over 10,000 Mississippians in 2010. The individuals in the ACS were asked how many hours they worked per week on average as well as which weeks they worked in 2010 and how much they earned that year. The first step in examining equal pay is to put everyone's pay in the same format. To begin, the number of weeks worked is multiplied by the number of hours worked in an average week[1] to get the annual number of hours worked. Annual income is then divided by the annual number of hours worked. The final number is the hourly wage for the worker. Any workers earning an average of less than $3.00 per hour were dropped from the sample.

Blau and Kahn use education, experience, race, union membership, industry and occupation to help determine the wage gap for the US. Following their lead, this study uses the number of years of education reported and indicators for whether the person has an associates, bachelors, and/or advanced degree to gauge the effect of education on wages. The data set Blau and Kahn use provides information about work experience. The data set this study uses does not so age is used instead. Age is a flawed measure of work experience, but in general, older individuals are expected to have more work experience than younger individuals. Age squared is used in the model in addition to the age variable. This is common in economics research in order to account for any non-linear effect of age. The race variable used in this study is simply an

indicator for whether the person is non-white. No indicator for Hispanic origin is included. Also included are fourteen industry indicators and twenty-four occupation indicators based on Census classifications as well as a separate indicator for whether the person is a government employee. Blau and Kahn also include an indicator for whether the person is a member of a union; however the data set used for this paper does not include that information.

Table 1 offers a look at the data in the sample by gender. Males are overrepresented in the sample relative to the percentage of males between the ages of twenty-five and sixty-four in the 2010 Census. This overrepresentation has less to do with the number of males surveyed and more to do with the way the sample was chosen. Recall that everyone who didn't work at least twenty-six weeks for at least thirty-five hours per week was dropped from the sample. Approximately 29% of females were dropped, while only 27% of males were dropped. Table 2 shows the data by race. Note that whites are also overrepresented in the sample. In this case 28% of both whites and non-whites are dropped from the sample, so there may be some sampling error at play. Table 3 shows educational attainment by gender and indicates females have higher levels of educational attainment than males.

Model

The method used to determine the wage gap is the Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition. The goal of the decomposition is to determine how much of the wage gap can be explained by observable factors like education and experience. The portion of the gap not explained by observable characteristics is generally assumed to be due to discrimination, although as discussed later in the paper, it's not quite that simple.

To determine what part of the wage gap can be explained, the decomposition estimates two wage equations. One equation includes only men and the other only women. The model then asks what women's wages would be if women had the same observable characteristics as men. The increase in women's wages due to observable factors is the "explained" portion of the wage gap, while the remainder of the gap is considered "unexplained." Using the decomposition, we are also able to determine how much responsibility each factor has for explaining the wage gap.

Results

Using only the individuals who fit our criteria, we find the gender pay gap to be approximately 27%. After taking age, education, race, occupation and

industry into consideration, the gender pay gap falls to approximately 18%. The results of the decomposition are listed in Table 5. The largest contributor to the reduction of the wage gap is industry, which reduces the wage gap in Mississippi by approximately 8%. This result implies that if the distribution of females in each industry was the same as the distribution of males the wage gap would decrease by 8%. Occupation follows industry as a leader in explaining the wage gap accounting for 3% of the wage gap. Notice that education explains a *negative* 4% of the wage gap, which means that if women had the same distribution of education as men the wage gap would increase by 4%. This finding makes sense when one examines Table 3 which indicates a higher percentage of women have degrees than men. The final factor of significance is race which explains approximately 2% of the wage gap in Mississippi. If women in the workforce had the same racial make-up as men in the workforce, the gender pay gap would be 2% smaller. Table 4 shows the number and percentage of men and women by race. Figure 1 shows the unadjusted and adjusted gender wage gap in Mississippi compared it to the unadjusted and adjusted gender wage gap in the U.S.

Discussion

Several factors affecting the gender pay gap cannot be measured. For example, women may trade lower pay for more flexible schedules. If women are willing to take lower pay so that they can work hours more suitable to their family's needs, then discrimination is not at play. However, if employers assume all women are willing to take lower pay for more flexible hours and therefore do not offer women other options, discrimination could exist. We will use the section below to discuss what other researchers have learned about the gender pay gap and how their findings might affect the measurement of the gender pay gap in this paper.

Selection Bias

Economists often discuss selection bias, which is the idea that determining the effect of a particular factor is difficult in the presence of unknown/ unmeasurable factors. For example, suppose a high school offers free after-school tutoring and the students who attend tutoring increase their GPA by a full point. Does that mean that if the school required everyone to attend tutoring everyone's GPA would increase by one point? Probably not. There's probably something different about the teenager who's willing to attend after-school tutoring. A portion of the increase in GPA must be attributed to the student's unknown/unmeasurable characteristics. Many researchers apply the same logic to the gender pay gap. Those individuals included in this study are included because they made choices that caused them to fit the necessary

criteria (for this paper working at least thirty-five hours per week for at least twenty-sex weeks in 2010; other papers have various criteria). The question becomes how the gender wage gap would look if there was no selection bias. No selection bias would mean all women (and men) who can work do work at least 35 hours per week. Whether this would bring more high earning women or low earning women into the job market depends on the reason for the current selection of women into the job market. If the women currently working full-time "selected" into work because they are relatively high earners, the one would expect new women coming into the labor market to be lower earning and the wage gap to widen. However, if women who are currently "selected" into the market are relatively low earners we would expect the new women coming into the market to be higher earners and the wage gap to close. No clear answer exists as to whether high earners or low earners would have the largest impact on the wage gap if all women were forced to work full-time. Mulligan and Rubinstein (2008) and Jacobsen, Khamis and Yuksel (2014) suggest that women with higher earning potential are more likely to select into the labor market. Blau and Kahn (2006) find that women who opted into the labor force in the 1980s were more high skilled workers, while women who opted into the labor force in the 1990s were more low-skilled workers. The authors assert that this reversal in the women who select into the labor market can explain about 25% of the slowdown the gender pay gap conversion in the 1990s compared to the closing of the gap in the 1980s.

Another debate pertains to how much of women's selection into certain fields is based on selection and how much is based on discrimination. Women may attempt to find jobs in high-paying male-dominated fields but fail to receive any offers, or women as a group may have little interest in working in those fields.

Education

Goldin, Katz, and Kuziembo (2006) assert that men and women pursued undergraduate degrees at about the same rate from 1900 to 1930. Men began attending college more in the 1930s and 1940s in part due to the GI bill earned by those who fought in World War II. Goldin, Katz, and Kuziembo (2006) point to 1947 as the peak in male to female ratio of undergraduate attendance. After that point, more women began pursuing undergraduate degrees and 60 years later, women pursue more undergraduate degrees than men.

One idea that has been used to explain why women have surpassed men in higher education is that women may have a higher affinity for school. Goldin (1998) called this nonpecuniary cost. According to Goldin, girls exceeded boys in secondary school performance and attainment during most of the 1900s, even when the labor market barriers faced by women meant

substantially lower expected labor market returns to schooling for girls than boys. Goldin also shows that high school attendance and graduation rates in the early 1900s look very similar to the gender gap found in college today. Becker, Hubbard, and Murphy (2010) agree that girls may simply have a higher affinity for school, although they use the term non-cognitive skills. They find that not only do girls have more non-cognitive skills necessary to do well in school, there's less variance in the distribution of those non-cognitive skills in girls than in boys. Dougherty (2005) argues that affinity for school is not the driving factor for the difference in schooling among males and females, but instead it is the fact that the females get a higher return from graduating college than males.

Studies that look at geographical differences in school performance cast some doubt on innate ability playing a large role in the gender gap in education. Focusing exclusively on top scorers on standardized test, Pope and Sydnor (2010) find that disparities in test scores appears to be driven by geography. In the South and Mountain West, boys are more likely to be top scorers in math and science, while girls are more likely to be top scores in language and reading. However in the West, Southwest and Northeast there were much smaller, mostly insignificant gender disparities in all four subject areas. Research by Black et al. (2008) seems to support Pope and Sydnor. Black et al focus their research on individuals who have completed at least a Bachelor's degree. They find that most of the gender pay gap can be attributed to observable factors, however there are discrepancies by region particularly in the south where women earn substantially less than comparable white men.

Dougherty (2005) argues that affinity for school is not the driving factor for the difference in schooling among males and females, but instead it is the fact that the females get a higher return from graduating college than males.

Fringe Benefits

Generally, when wage studies are conducted, fringe benefits are ignored. This is true for this study as well. The available data does not include the cost of fringe benefits. Even if we did have the cost of the benefits to the employer, we still might not know the value of the benefits to the employee. For example, an insurance policy with a $0 deductible may cost an employer $2,500 a year, but could be valued at $5,000 a year to an employee who has a medical condition that requires expensive medication. It is possible that women seek out jobs with certain fringe benefits more than men because they find those benefits more valuable. It is also very likely that employers who provide fringe benefits must pay lower wages in order to afford to provide those benefits. Although, there doesn't appear to be research that examines the thought processes men and women follow when comparing job offers, there are some studies on fringe benefits and the gender pay gap. Examining

fringe benefits by industry, Perman and Stevens (1989) find that male-dominated industries have more fringe benefits than female-dominated industries. Controlling for fringe benefits at the individual level, Lowen and Sicilian (2009) find that fringe benefits increases the size of the gender pay gap. This implies that women are probably not simply chooses those benefits instead of greater compensation. This is contrary to Solberg and Laughlin (1995) who find that most occupations show a decrease in the gender pay gap after controlling for fringe benefits.

Risk Aversion

Risk aversion is the measure of how much risk a person is willing to take. If a person is very risk averse, he is not willing to take on much risk. If a person is not very risk averse, he is more willing to take on a great deal of risk. Choosing to pursue certain occupations can be very risky. For example, jobs that compensate based on performance are more risky than jobs that pay a set salary or hourly wage. Dohmen and Falk (2011) find that women are less likely to sort into jobs that pay for performance or are otherwise variable in their pay scheme when hourly pay or some other fixed pay scheme is available. They attribute this to women being more risk averse than men. Eckel and Grossman (2008) find that women and men behave differently but only when significant risks are involved in the decision making. Their study implies that when women behave differently, they behave in a more socially-oriented manner as oppose to an individually-oriented manner. Croson and Gneezy (2009) compile several studies and conclude that women are generally more risk averse than men. They also conclude that women's preference for competition is lower than men's. Le, Miller, Slutske and Martin (2011) find that those with higher earning tend to have more positive attitudes towards taking economic risk. However, attitudes towards risk only account for about one-eighth of the total gender pay gap.

Work Life Balance

The idea that women's lower pay could be due to their higher desire for flexibility has been widely studied as well. Researchers in this area examine whether women choose careers, jobs, and even particular firms based on flexibility and whether they are willing to take lower pay for such flexibility. Fortin (2008) finds that non-cognitive traits have a modest but significant role in accounting for the gender wage gap. The traits examined are self-esteem, external locus of control, the importance of money/work and the importance of people/family. Women tend to value people and family more than work and money and that preference explains a small part of the wage gap according to that paper.

Another work life balance is the art of balancing work duties with household duties. Researchers have examined the effect of housework on the gender pay gap. Hersch and Stratton (2002) find that adding housework to their model closed the gender pay gap by 14%. Albanesi and Olivetti (2009) find that because women earn less in the workplace they tend to do more housework which may be causing "a self-fulfilling feedback mechanism." The idea is that when women spend more time doing housework, they also tend to make choices that cause them to earn less in the workplace. Likewise when women earn less in the workplace, they spend more time doing housework.

Costa and Kahn (2000) find that 65% of the increase of college educated couples in metropolitan areas can be attributed to the couples' need to find a job for both spouses. This raises the question of whether women are more likely to put their careers second when they are in a relationship and move solely for their husband's career advancement. Compton and Pollak (2007) examine whether couples with two college educated spouses are more likely to migrate to large cities than couples with only one college educated spouse or college educated singles. They authors find that only the education of the husband affects whether these couples move to large metropolitan areas. Instead the authors credit higher rates of couple formation in large metropolitan areas for the large number of college educated couples living there. Benson (2014) supports the findings in Comption and Pollak (2007). Benson (2014) finds that the tendency for households to relocate for husbands' careers is better-explained by the segregation of women into jobs that are available in most geographical areas as oppose to men who tend to take jobs that require them to live in certain areas. This is supported by the data which shows that families are equally as likely to relocate for a job when the relocation is due to the wife holding a geographically-clustered job as when the relocation is due to the husband holding such a job.

A final work life balance issue is starting a family. Cooke, Boyle, and Couch (2009) find that women's earning fall at the time of childbirth and then slowly recover. This could be due to the time women take off and in some cases the return to part time instead of full time work. Correll, Benard, and Paik (2007) use a laboratory experiment to test for a parenting penalty. The laboratory experiment finds that mothers are penalized on a host of measures, including perceived competence and recommended starting salary. However, men are not penalized for, and sometimes benefit from, being a parent. Spivey (2005) finds that only a small portion of the gender pay gap can be attributed to breaks in work experience.

Conclusion

The gender pay gap has persisted in the United States for many years. It's difficult to know the exact role various factors play in maintaining the gender pay gap. A great deal of this difficulty arises because most research focuses only on the job market and not the discrimination girls and young women may face prior to entering the job market. Some of the factors that lead girls and young women to focus on less lucrative careers may have to do with cultural and regional norms and less to do with discrimination. However, women who attempt to go against those cultural norms may then face discrimination. Complicating this analysis is that cultural and regional norms are difficult to measure. This study attempts to show only measureable differences in the gender pay gap in the labor markets; however much more research needs to be conducted to understand why approximately 18% of the gender wage gap in Mississippi cannot be explained by the measurable factors used in this study.

NOTE

1. There was one small complication with this process. In the public use ACS data, the exact number of weeks worked is not given. Instead, the data is divided into six categories – less than 14 weeks, 14–26 weeks, 27–39 weeks, 40–47 weeks, 48–49 weeks and 50–52 weeks. I dropped the categories with less than 26 weeks, which left 4 categories. Because I don't know exactly how many hours each individual worked, I assigned 33 hours to the first group, 43 hours to the second group, 48 hours to the third group, and 52 hours to the fourth group.

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Table 1

	2010 Census		Sample	
	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Male	742,796	48.7	3,820	50.7
Female	783,705	51.3	3,721	49.3

This table shows both the population and the sample by gender for the 25–64 age group.

Table 2

	2010 Census		Sample	
	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
White	1,754,684	59.1	4,862	64.5
Non-White	1,212,613	40.9	2,679	35.5
Black	1,098,385	37.0	2,490	33.01

This table shows the number of people in MS according to the 2010 Census as well as the number of people in the survey by race.

Table 3

	Men		Women	
less than High School Diploma	451	11.8	223	6.0
High School Diploma/ GED	2,083	54.5	1,790	48.1
Associate's Degree	349	9.1	530	14.2
Bachelor's Degree	615	16.1	742	19.9
Advanced Degree	322	8.4	436	11.7

This table shows the educational breakdown of the sample by gender.

Table 4

	White	Non-White	Total
Male	2,675	1,145	3,820
Female	2,187	1,534	3,721
Total	4,862	2,679	7,541

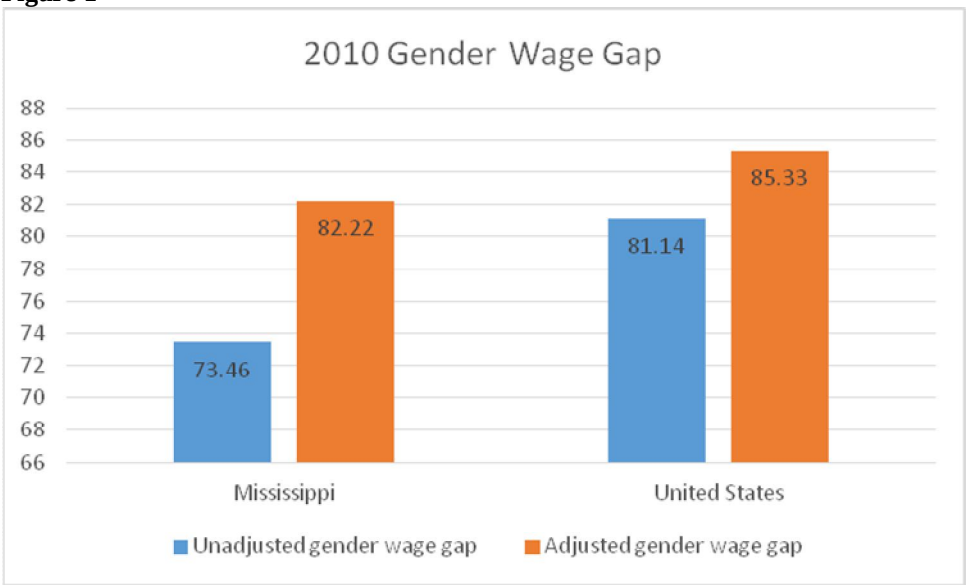
This table shows the number of Whites and Non-Whites by gender for the sample.

Table 5

MISSISSIPPI			**UNITED STATES**	
Gender Pay Gap			**Gender Pay Gap**	
Wage Gap	26.54		Wage Gap	18.86
Explained	8.76		Explained	4.19
Unexplained	17.78		Unexplained	14.67
Explained Breakdown			**Explained Breakdown**	
Age	-0.27		Age	-0.35
Race	2.33		Race	0.26
Education	-4.41		Education	-3.41
Government Employee	0.05		Government Employee	-0.24
Industry	8.12		Industry	5.06
Occupation	2.95		Occupation	2.71
			Region	0.16

This table shows the results of the Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition

Figure 1



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WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND INTRA-HOUSEHOLD DIETARY DIVERSITY IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT. Women empowerment entails access to both productive and non-productive resources with the motive of improving the value of individuals' orientation towards making decisions that affect both the individual and other related entities. This study used a nationally representative survey from the 2012–2013 World Bank's General Household Survey for Nigeria to examine the relationship between empowerment and dietary diversity. Empowerment measure was computed based on a modification of the Alkire et al. (2013) empowerment index. Accounting for potential endogeneity of empowerment, as well as using both the non-parametric regression and the traditional least square regression, we find that increases in empowerment are positively associated with household dietary diversity. In addition, a household that is female biased (in terms of share of female within the household and households that favor female leadership) tend to have higher significant improvement in their dietary intake with empowerment. On the contrary, empowerment generates a small proportion of male dietary diversity.

Keywords: agriculture; food diversity; food security; gender; household; Nigeria; rural development

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Introduction

Empowering women is one of the key objectives of development policy in Africa. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG5) emphasized on the need to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Achieving these goals has a broader economic development impact. For instance, Alkire et al. (2013) traces female empowerment to improving household productivity. Likewise, female empowerment[1] in the agricultural sector is seen as essential for achieving food security and reduce hunger, as well as enhancing the efficiency of policy interventions (FAO, 2011; World Bank, 2011). More so, gender equality can be achieved through women empowerment for poverty reduction, hunger eradication, fertility decisions, technical efficiency, and improvement in food security (Phan, 2013; Malapit et al., 2015; Sharaunga et al., 2015; Seymour, 2017). These outcomes from empowering women are hinged on the fact that women play important roles in household and care services, which affects a larger proportion of individuals within the society.

Like other developing countries, in Nigeria, one important role of women within households is their ability to ensure and enhance an efficient dietary intake among household members. Most women in Nigeria are largely involved in food production,[2] distribution and consumption. This implies that within households, women are primary decision makers in relation to food (Diego and Quentin, 2010; Efobi, 2016). Meanwhile, the growing demand for food has drastically increased, especially because of the growth of Nigeria's population from about 159 million in 2010 to 182.2 million in 2015. Nigeria is in food-deficit and depends on imports of grains, livestock products and even fish (IFAD, 2012). More so, the extent of nutrition[3] diversity shrinks as food cost becomes expensive, while consumption remains on the increase.

To tackle this situation, there is a renewed interest in furthering women's empowerment status through interventions and development programs.[4] Despite these actions, the need to develop scientific indicators for measuring empowerment and to examine the relationship between these measures and food related outcomes provides relevant policy options that can be used to monitor the interventions to empower women. This paper, therefore, investigates the linkage between empowerment and the nutritional diversity of households using the 2012–2013 World Bank's General Household Survey for Nigeria. The components of the empowerment variable were used to identify how specific domains and indicators are associated with nutrition diversity. Particular attention was directed at understanding how the estimated linkage differs across gender in the household and empowerment index that is similar to construction of a survey-based approach empowerment index of Alkire et al. (2013) was used. The Alkire et al. index assesses empowerment based on five domains such as agricultural production, access to and control

over productive resources, control over the use of income, leadership in the community and time allocation.

The modification of Alkire et al. (2013) measure of empowerment considers domains that pragmatically reflect empowerment indices within Nigeria, such as, access to and control over productive resources, leadership in the community, education, information and connection, and insurance. The inclusion of index such as, completion of a post-secondary education, ability to use and own technology that enhances information and connection, and the ability to own an insurance/savings scheme for measuring empowerment is motivated by three reasons. First, the consideration of this study goes beyond households in the agricultural sector and therefore, the need to develop an index that considers other measures of empowerment outcome that though relates to agriculture, but can fit beyond the agricultural sector. Second, some of the development programs that are initiated in Nigeria and directed at empowering women have considered outcomes such as ensuring educational attainment and human capacity development, as well as owning and using connection and information gadgets to enhance social connectivity (see Department for International Development, 2005; Aderinoye et al., 2007). Third, considering insurance as an important outcome for empowerment is receiving considerable attention since it reflects the individual's ability to invest in the future and escape the poverty trap – or out-of-pocket expenditure that weighs much on the household's income (Grown et al., 2006; World Health Organization, 2012; International Fund for Agricultural Development – IFAD, 2012; African Development Bank, 2015). This is particularly linked to countries with high-income inequality like Nigeria.

Studies have shown that this study is the first attempt to examine empowerment and dietary diversity for all household members (and females) in Nigeria, especially using a modified Alkire et al. (2013) empowerment index. This is important therefore, considering the ongoing policy interventions that are targeted at empowering different gender classifications in Nigeria. More so, the approach to this study adds to the scanty literature on measuring empowerment and advances the Alkire et al. (2013) methodology by including other components that directly define the extent of empowerment within the Nigerian context. This study uses an instrumental variable, alongside the local polynomial and the ordinary least square regression, to arrive at the following results: the empowerment index of all household members and across gender is significantly and positively associated with dietary diversities. The dietary intake of households that are female-biased[5] tends to respond positively and significantly to a change to the extent of empowerment. These results explain the different needs of individuals and household composition across gender. Thus, gender should be seriously taken into consideration when considering empowerment alongside improved dietary diversity as this paper suggests.

The sections of this paper are distributed as follows: the next section considers a background to the study that discusses women empowerment and stylized facts in Nigeria. The third section considers conceptual definitions and review of related literature on the relationship between empowerment and dietary diversity. The fourth section focuses on methodology-data, empirical specification, and variables. The results and discussion are presented in the fifth section, while the sixth section concludes with suggestions for further study.

Stylized Facts: Women in Nigeria

Apart from the important role of women in food production and quality of consumption, the need to study the impact of empowerment across gender and on dietary intake is motivated by the following stylized facts. First, challenges that confront women in patriarchal societies, like Nigeria,[6] are enormous. Beyond economic disadvantages, women face higher inequality in school enrolment than their male counterparts. Table 1 presents the primary, secondary and tertiary enrolment status across the gender of household members. There is a consistent gender dimension to the pattern of education enrolment across the years and at the different levels of education. The Table shows that the gender gap for education widens when considering tertiary education. The unequal enrolment of women in tertiary education is often associated with poverty (see Department for International Development, 2005) and cultural stereotypes, as most cultures in Nigeria do not support/encourage girl-child education. At the level of enrollment, decisions to further education almost entirely rest on the individual (and household's support) since the average age for this level of enrollment is 18 years. Individuals of this age are considered as adults and are therefore responsible for the outcome of their livelihood. Therefore the ability to advance in their education to the university (tertiary) level, despite the odds that confront the individual, can be traced to some level of empowerment as well as household effort that intrinsically motivates the individual for this level of achievement.

Table 1 School Enrolment Rate in Nigeria (2010–2013)

	Primary enroll.		Secondary enroll.		Tertiary enroll.	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
2010	45.715	54.285	45.341	54.659	41.106	58.894
2011	45.888	54.112	45.088	54.912	42.728	57.272
2012	47.770	52.230	44.278	55.722	42.555	57.445
2013	47.921	52.079	47.359	52.641	43.906	56.094

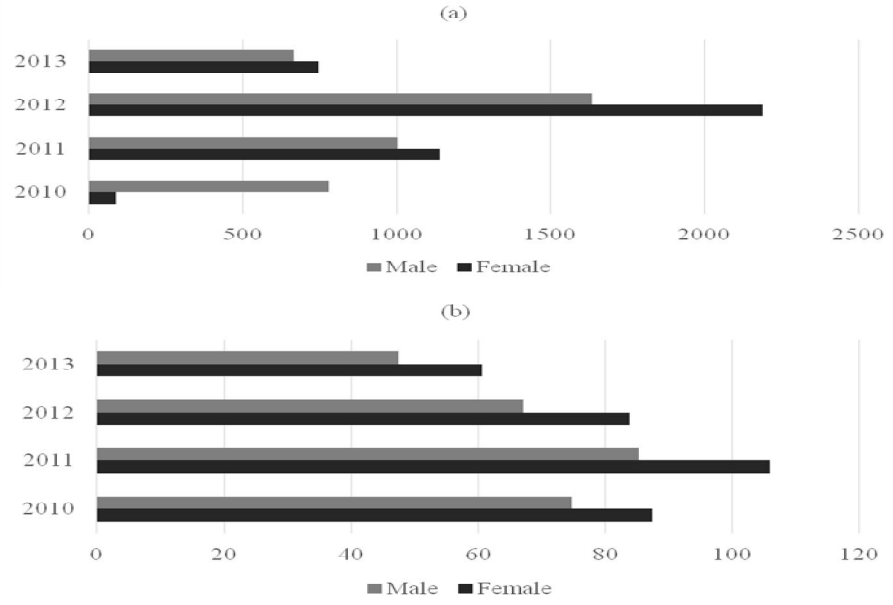
Source: Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (2014)

Secondly, the unequal representation of women and men in school enrolment in Nigeria may have some health effect on the household and children.

According to UNICEF (2011), the relationship between women's level of education and children's malnutrition rate is positive. Smith et al. (2003) and Von Grebmer et al. (2009) also observe that in South Asia, the low status of women in education (among others) contributes to chronic child malnutrition and food insecurity. Luchuo et al. (2013) associated the educational status of mothers in Sub-Saharan African countries to nutrition, sanitation and common disease prevention strategies that logically reduce malnutrition-related mortality and morbidity. Yet Asongu and De Moor (2015) and Asongu and Nwachukwu (2016a, b) note that the bulk of inclusiveness in development agenda must include women empowerment.

Figure 1 (Panel a) below, shows a trend of the common diseases across gender of individuals in Nigeria and as reported by the state ministries of health. Female individuals are more prone to diseases than male individuals. More so, females die from these diseases at a higher rate than their male counterparts, and this has been over the years (see Figure 1, Panel b). Among the causes of these deaths include the inability of some women to pay for health care cost and poor nutrition, compared to male individuals (see Olatinwo, 2017). Therefore, when considering health and wellbeing, male individuals in Nigeria outperform the females; these raises concern as to the intensity of the challenges that confront women.

Figure 1 Number of Common Diseases and Death from the Disease across Gender – 2010 to 2013 (, 000)

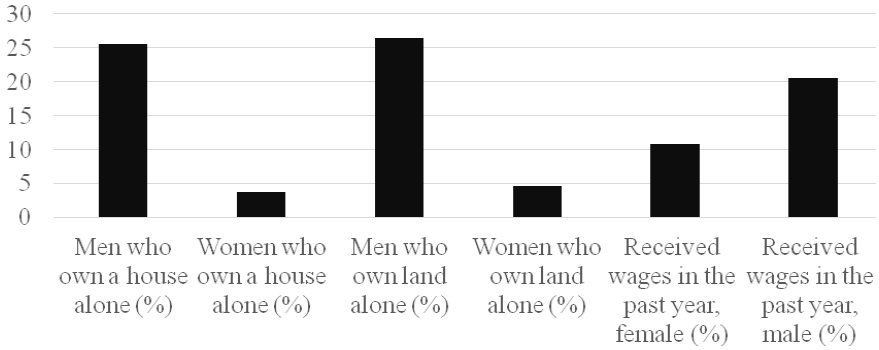


Note: The diseases include Cholera, Diarrhea, Hepatitis B, Malaria, Measles, Meningitis, Pneumonia, Tuberculosis.

Source: Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (2014)

Thirdly, women lack access to economic resources and basic wage earning opportunities compared to men. Figure 2 displays the percentage of men to women who own a house, land and even received wages in the past year. From the chart on Figure 2, men are about 7 times more likely to own a house than women. More so, the percentage of men who own land alone is about 6 times higher than that of women. In a similar trend, fewer women receive wages in the past year compared to men: men are twice more likely to receive wages compared to women. Evidently, this shows that fewer women have access to economic resources and job paying opportunities than men, which contributes substantially to the poverty rate across gender.[7]

Figure 2 Access to Economic Resources and Opportunity across Gender (2010)



Source: World Bank (2016)

Considering these trends and assertions across gender within the household, this study tends to find out the extent to which empowering women will improve dietary intake. Therefore this study provides a background to advocate for possible policy actions that should be directed at women, especially by providing empirical evidence on how empowerment (across gender) can improve intra-household dietary intake.

Conceptual Definitions and Review of Literature

Dietary diversity is important because of its positive health impact like the reduction of the vulnerability of individuals to certain health disorders (Drescher et al., 2007). The dietary diversity index has remained the common approach to the measurement of dietary intake within the household. The index is developed by counting the frequency and number of consumed food items and food groups by household individuals within a given period (see Thorne-Lyman et al., 2010; Taruvinga et al., 2013).

Women play an overwhelming role in ensuring dietary intake that supplies essential food vitamins and minerals within the household (see FAO, 2016).

FAO notes: "…despite their role as the backbone of food production and provision for family consumption in developing countries, women remain limited in their access to critical resources and services…" (FAO, 2016: 3). There is the need to ensure that women empowerment is given paramount attention in policy decisions especially in developing countries. Some of the instruments for empowerment that are identified by FAO (2016) include education, training and extension services, access to decision-making responsibility and credit facilities. Apart from the limitation of women's access to resources, considering empowerment of women matters, there are considerable data suggesting that household members act in diversity of manner when making decisions over household matters (including food consumption). For an instance, women within households may not have the same preferences as their male counterparts (Alderman et al., 1995; Haddad et al., 1997). Therefore, the choices of dietary composition will vary across gender and will be further enhanced for females, especially with empowerment (see e.g. Ibnouf, 2009; Sraboni et al., 2014).

Empowerment therefore entails access to both productive and non-productive resources with the motive of improving the value of individual's orientation towards making decisions that affect both the individual and other related entities. Kabeer (2001) have considered empowerment to be the expansion of an individual's ability to make strategic life choices, especially in contexts where such ability had been earlier denied. Bertelsen and Holland (2006) also describe empowerment as the capacity to make effective choices and then transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. These two definitions consider empowerment as making quality choices, especially pertaining to the betterment of the individual's life. However, measuring empowerment has remained difficult in scientific studies. Some measures identified by Alkire et al. (2013) that are popularly used, especially at the aggregate level include: the ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education; the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector; and the proportion of seats held by women in national parliament. These approaches have two main weaknesses. First, they do not capture heterogeneities that exist across individuals and, secondly they do not directly measure the empowerment that different individuals experience per time.

To circumvent the challenge of measuring empowerment, Alkire et al. (2013) developed an empowerment index that considers women in agriculture. The index is survey-based and it is designed to measure the empowerment, agency and inclusion of women in agriculture based on data collected by interviewing men and women within the same households. This index is classified into five domains: women's input in productive decision and their autonomy in production; women's decision over the ownership, purchase and sale of productive assets as well as access to and decision over credit;

control over the use of income; women's involvement in groups and ability to speak in the public; and women's decisions over time for leisure and work. This measure of empowerment has gained credence in some studies like Sraboni et al. (2014) and Malapit et al. (2015).

Despite the breakthrough of Alkire et al. (2013) standardized measure of empowerment, the authors acknowledge that empowerment is inherently context-specific and it is shaped by socioeconomic, cultural and political conditions of the specific country or region that is being studied. Thus using a single measure of empowerment for a broad comparison across countries may not be efficient in understanding its impact (see Malhotra and Schuler, 2005). In this current study, some components like women being able to decide on advancing their educational level, owning an/a insurance/savings scheme, and owning and using technology that can enhance information and connections were included in deriving the empowerment index. The approach adopted for this study to the modification of Alkire et al. (2013) is similar to studies like Mutua et al. (2014) who modified the Alkire et al. index to study social and economic empowerment in Kenya.

Studies (e.g. UNCTAD, 2014; Huh, 2016) have shown that indices such as completion of post-secondary school education, using and owning information and connectivity gadgets, and having an insurance/savings scheme are direct measures of the level of empowerment in some developing countries. For instance, patriarchal practices in developing countries like Nigeria, where families invest more in educating the male child (over female), makes considering a post-secondary education an act of quality decision by the female-child and her family, *ceteris paribus*. Taking up insurance and savings schemes is also considered as an important measure of empowerment in countries where there are incidences of inequality in access to finance (see Buvinic and Furst-Nichols, 2013). Waller (2014) also used savings outcome to measure the extent to which Malawian women are empowered, in terms of self-reliance and the need to improve their social and economic status.

In addition, having access to and using technological gadgets like mobile phones and other connection and information devices is another important indicator of empowerment in this study. Information and communication devices have spread rapidly over the last decade in Africa (Asongu, 2013).[8] Despite this increase, it is noted that not every person owns (or is able to use) a communication/information gadget. Since these gadgets are personal devices, that if owned and not shared, provide the owner with a degree of independence and autonomy, then it becomes necessary to include this variable as an indicator of empowerment. In essence, women owning mobile phones could arise as a result of their level of empowerment. See Buvinic and Furst-Nichols (2013) to further buttress information on how technology adoption and effective use of such technology can be a direct outcome of empowerment.

As a summary, this study assumes that empowering women will result in enhanced household dietary intake. Hence the testable hypothesis that underpins this study include: (i) there is a significant relationship between empowerment and dietary intake for female household members than their male counterpart; (ii) the impact between dietary intake and empowerment is higher for households that are female biased compared to those households that are male biased.

Research Methodology

Data

The data for this study was sourced from the World Bank's Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS)-Integrated Household Survey, conducted in collaboration with Nigeria's National Bureau of Statistics. The LSMS dataset[9] is a household type of microdata that contains variables that reflect household conditions across the different states of Nigeria. It also includes information on women's contribution to decision making process on land assets, buildings and income usage, data on savings and insurance schemes that are engaged by women (and other household members), as well as their access and usage of information and communication gadgets. Information such as household income, consumption distribution, gender (including that of the household head), count of household asset and infrastructure, are also contained in the dataset.

The latest LSMS_ISA wave (i.e. 2012/2013) household data was used for our analysis. The 2012/2013 LSMS_ISA data consist of 5,000 households and contain other additional data on agricultural activities, other household income activities, and household expenditure and consumption. Specifically, the second wave of the LSMS_ISA data was conducted in two visits (post-planting visit in September–November 2012 and post-harvest visit in February–April 2013). The post-harvest data was used for this analysis because it adjusts for households that have changed location after the post-planting visit.

Empirical Specification

The following equation was estimated to test the relationship of interest:

$$D.Di = \beta_i + \alpha_i empowerment + \theta_i x + \varepsilon_i$$

Where *D.Di* is a vector of dietary diversity of the individual, β, α and θ are unknown parameters that are to be estimated, x is a vector of the household-level characteristics, and ε is the error term.

The household dietary intake was measured using the count of food groups based on the 7-day recall household food consumption data in the LSMS_ISA

survey. The food groups used for this study are based on 11 food categories as identified in the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) guidelines for measuring dietary diversity. These categories include cereals, tubers, legumes, meat, egg, vegetables, fruits, oil, sweets, milk and fish. This measure is increasingly been used in computing dietary diversity (see Taruvinga et al., 2013). More so, Sraboni et al. (2014) admonish the use of our measure, other than the calorie availability indicators that would have been a suitable alternative measure. These authors criticized calorie intake measure because it does not reflect the quality of foods available to the household.

The empowerment index, which is the key independent variable for this study, is computed using the individual level data of household's male and female. This study presents the different domains of the empowerment index with their indicators in Table 2. Each of the domains has equal weights, as are the indicators within the domains. Individuals are defined as empowered when the index tilts towards a higher value closer to 1 and are disempowered in the situation when the index tilts away from 1 and towards 0. The different domains of empowerment are defined as follows:

(i.) *Education:* this domain concerns the individual's decision to pursue a post-secondary education.

(ii.) *Resources:* this domain concerns ownership, access, and decision-making over productive economic resources in the household such as land, wage income and building.

(iii.) *Insurance*: this domain considers the individual's ability to make decisions over owning a savings and/or an insurance scheme for future and contingent events.

(iv.) *Group activities*: this domain contains the individual's involvement in economic or social groups.

(v.) *Information/connection*: this domain is focused on the individual's ability to own and use information and technology equipment that can enhance information and connection with the immediate and distant environments.

Table 2 Empowerment Index: Domains, Indicators and Weights

Domain	Indicator	Weight
Education	Education	1/5
Resources	Right to sale of land owned	1/20
	Own income	1/20
	Decides on the income	1/20
	Own building	1/20
Savings/Insurance	Own savings/insurance	1/5
Group activities	Part of a finance group	1/10
	Part of a social group	1/10
Information/connection	Access to information	1/10
	Access to the connection	1/10

Source: Authors

The other control variables in the equation include average age of the household, the share of household members that are educated, household size, the share of females in the household, income per capita of the household, the share of adults in the household and household expenditure on electricity per capita. The summary statistics of the all the variable used are presented in Table 3. Likewise, the statistics for the share of the different domain of empowerment in the overall index is presented in Figure 3.

Estimation Strategy

The relationship between empowerment and dietary intake across households was first tested using the non-parametric regression based on the local polynomial regression approach. This type of regression fits the relationships between the variables of interest, such that separately fitted relationships are obtained at different values of the independent variable, so as to accurately predict the regression lines. This technique has its unique advantage, which includes: first and unlike the parametric linear regression technique, it allows for a relaxation of the linearity assumption and can predict estimators and inference procedures that are less dependent on functional form assumptions (Yatchew, 1998; Frolich, 2006). Second, different forms of relationships can easily be explored between variables of interest, which makes it useful for exploratory data analysis and for practical and policy-relevant analysis. Third, the non-parametric regressions permit, in many cases, an estimation of variables despite the endogeneity status (Frohlich, 2008).

The parametric regression approach (in the form of the Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression and the Instrumental Variable approach were also used in this study. The OLS is included to provide a baseline analysis of the estimated relationship. However, some household characteristics are affected by the same factors that influence dietary intake. This therefore makes the empowerment variable to be prone to endogeneity issues. This study applies the standard instrumental variable technique to correct for possible endogeneity bias. The following instruments at the household level were adopted: (i) the difference in ages between the primary male and female decision makers and (ii) the type of building in which the household currently resides. The first instrument is computed based on the age difference between male and female household members that are adults and who are capable of making decisions within the household. The motivation for this instrument is that it reflects the relative bargaining strength within the household (see Quisumbing and Hallman, 2005). The type of building the household resides in is indicative index of households' level of physical capital.

For evident reasons, the parametric estimations allow for the option of controlling for other important variables that affect intra-household dietary intake apart from the main explanatory variable (empowerment) for this study.

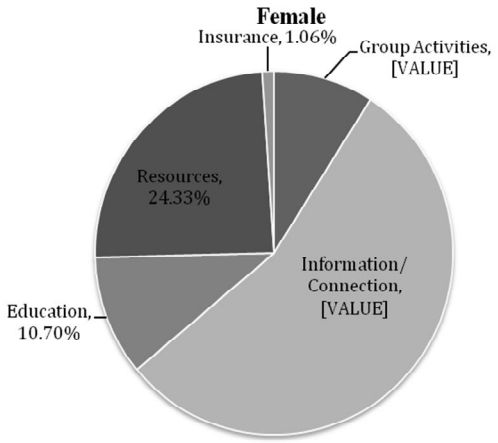
Assuming these variables are not controlled for, the regression analysis in this study tends to be confronted with omitted variable bias and the estimated relationships will not be rightly predicted. Another important advantage of the parametric estimation technique is the capacity to control for possible endogeneity issues that is vivid in our predictive relationships. The likely omitted variable bias is handled with both the OLS and the Instrumental Variable techniques, while the endogeneity issues are taken care of using the instrumental variable estimation techniques.

Results and Discussion

Descriptive and Summary Statistics

The pie chart in Figure 3 shows the size of the different domains of empowerment for our sampled male and female household members. There is no much difference across the domains of empowerment and across the gender of the household members. The connection and information domain had the highest contribution to empowerment. This is followed by control over the resource of the households, which contribute about 24 percent of the total empowerment. The education and group activities domain are the third and fourth important contributors to empowerment, while insurance scheme contributes only a marginal fraction of the pie. The different types of household members are better empowered in terms of information and connection. However, women are mostly disempowered in terms of access to insurance schemes.

Figure 3 Contribution of Each of the Five Domains to Gender Empowerment in Nigeria



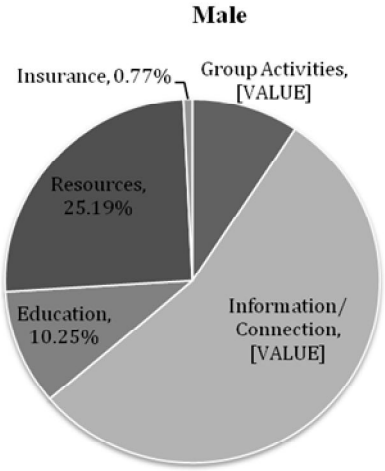


Figure 4 presents the descriptive statistics of the aggregate empowerment variable and dietary intake. On the average the different household types have similar empowerment index but male household members have a marginal higher bar than the female. The slight difference in the empowerment scores across gender of the household members (0.233 for female and 0.238 for male) connotes that on the average and generally, the empowerment scores are low. Household members sample used for this study have only 23 percent positive scores of the 10 indicators of empowerment. Focusing on the average dietary intake displayed in Figure 4.2, female household members' dietary intake is slightly higher than males. Despite that there is no much difference (in terms of evident contrast) across gender of the household members, however, the bar for female members exceed that of the male.

Figure 4 Descriptive Statistics of Main Variables



The mean and standard deviation for the entire variables in the econometric model are presented in Table 3. Some important highlights from the Table include: on the average, many of the households do not own an asset. This is

not different when considering the households across gender. On the average, the mean age of households is about 17 years, showing that the households mostly consist of younger individuals. About 1 person in the households have post-secondary school education, while 33 percent of the households have individuals that are 18 years and above. The average household size is 4 individuals. This statistics is similar across gender of the household. The income per capita of the household is higher for male than the female counterparts. Overall, the income per capita for the entire household is only 2604.59 local currency, which is equivalent to 16.5 US$, using the exchange rate as at the year of the survey. The empowerment index and the dietary intake are not different from the graphs presented in Figure 4.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics of Entire Variables

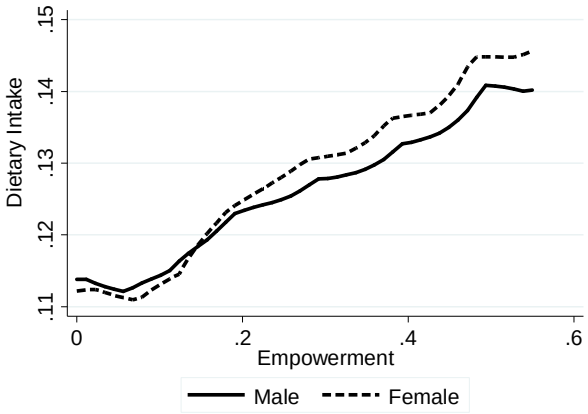
Variable	Total		Male Hh		Female Hh	
	Mean	S.dev	Mean	S.dev	Mean	S.dev
Age (Years)	16.78	20.59	16.27	19.61	17.38	21.60
Educ. per cap	0.13	0.32	0.13	0.33	0.12	0.32
Share adult	0.33	0.44	0.32	0.44	0.33	0.44
Share Female	0.51	0.47	0.09	0.19	0.97	0.12
Hh Size	4.16	13.02	3.53	3.81	3.84	3.20
Income per cap	2604.59	31728.93	3254.45	44179.22	2014.73	9881.47
Elect. per cap	16.44	49.23	15.14	29.19	17.75	63.14
Dietary Intake	0.13	0.34	0.13	0.34	0.12	0.34
Empowerment	0.23	0.14	0.24	0.14	0.23	0.13

Estimation Result

Non-Parametric Regression

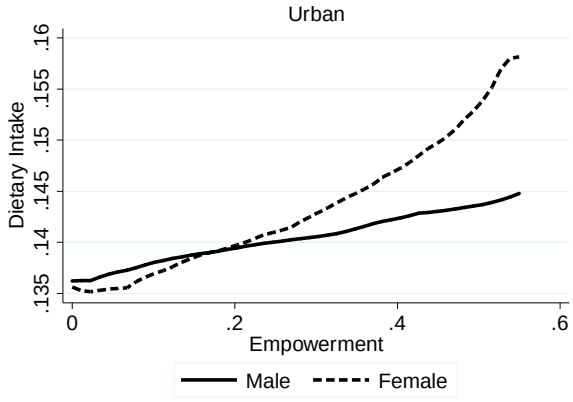
The estimation result begins with considering the non-parametric regression lines of dietary intake and empowerment across the gender of the household member. The local polynomial regression is used to estimate kernel-weighted regression lines of dietary intake and empowerment. This type of analysis presents a first-hand display of the regression lines between our variables of interest. The graph presented in Figure 5 reports that household members with low empowerment index have a lower dietary intake. The importance of individual dietary intake constantly increases with rising empowerment index. This evidence is consistent with the predictions that the proportion of individual dietary intake increases with the level of empowerment. FAO (2011) and World Bank (2011) likewise confirm this result that empowerment essentially increases food security and reduces household hunger – for which dietary intake is an important component.

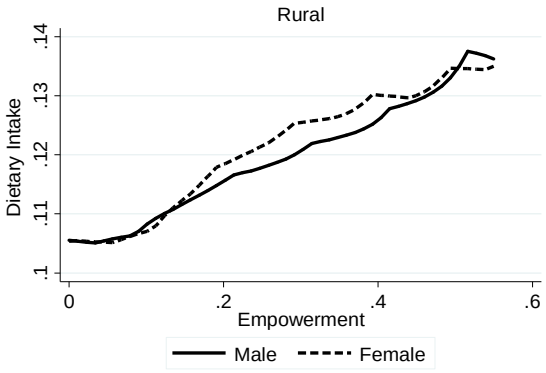
Figure 5 The local polynomial graph
(Dietary Intake and Empowerment)



The kernel-weighted local polynomial regression for the variables – dietary intake and empowerment – across the household location (i.e. rural vs. urban) was also presented in Figure 6. This study finds evidence of gender differences across different locations of the individuals. For the individuals in the urban area, it is evident that a unit increase in empowerment has a higher impact on dietary intake for female household member compared to their male counterparts. Evidently, the gap between male and female household member widens as the empowerment index increases. Thus, females are more likely to improve their dietary intake with an increase in empowerment, compared to their male counterparts. A similar trend is seen for the regression line between empowerment and dietary intake for households in the rural area, except for the fact that the gap between male and female shrinks. As the empowerment index increases, the dietary intake for female household member still maintains a marginal gap compared to their male counterparts.

Figure 6 The local polynomial graph
(Dietary Intake and Empowerment) across Hh Location





One important point to note is that; women improve their diet better than their male counterparts at similar levels of empowerment. This connotes that a higher impact can be achieved on improving the intra-household dietary intake if women are better empowered. More so, the household location does not really matter since a similar impact is achieved for dietary diversity with empowerment.

Parametric Regression

The standard OLS regression (with the household fixed effect) and the instrumental variable estimations are presented in Table 4. This study presents the parsimonious econometric estimates in Table 4, which contains the effect of the empowerment variable on household dietary intake for the entire households, the male and female household member. The OLS results across the three models suggest that generally, the empowerment variable is positively and significantly associated with dietary intake. The coefficient was larger for female household members than male counterparts. In essence, women dietary diversity will be better enhanced with empowerment compared to male individuals.

The instrumental variable (IV) estimations and its diagnostics are presented at bottom of Table 4. The endogeneity test for the IV estimations across the columns of Table 4 implies that the endogenous variables are relevant and are, in fact, endogenous. This supports the need for the IV estimation to handle the endogeneity problem. The over-identification and under-identification test confirm that the instruments are valid and the models are efficiently identified.

The signs and significant values of the coefficient show a similar pattern as in the OLS estimations. From the IV estimation results, it is evident that empowerment has a positive effect on dietary diversity. The magnitude of the coefficient is higher for female household member. In addition, the coefficients in the IV estimation are higher than those in the OLS regression, meaning that neglecting endogeneity of the empowerment measures may underestimate the impact of increasing empowerment on our outcome. In fact,

the coefficient for female household members is about nine times higher than that of male. Our finding agrees with studies in Bangladesh that have shown a positive impact of empowerment on dietary intake, with higher impact for females (Kumar and Quisumbing, 2010; Malapit et al., 2015).

A broader model that controls for other explanatory variables is computed and presented in Table 5. The estimations in Table 5 control for other variables that explain the dietary intake across households, but which were not included in the parsimonious estimations in Table 4. From the Table, the sign and significant values of the empowerment variable remained consistent throughout the models and even across the gender of the household members. More so, the coefficient for the empowerment variable for female household members show a higher effect of empowerment on dietary intake compared to the effect observed for male counterparts. Evidently, an increase in female empowerment will result in a significant improvement of about 39 percent of dietary intake. Males will only experience a 14 percent increase in dietary intake with an improved empowerment index.

Moving on to the individual indicators in Table 5, we find out that the share of females in households matters, but not consistent across different households. For male household member, the female share has a positive and significant impact on dietary intake. This is also similar to the size of the household. Household size and share of female do not play a significant role in the extent of dietary intake for female household members. Other variables like income, education and the cost of electricity have a consistent positive and significant role in defining the extent of dietary intake across the different household types. The signs and levels of significance of these variables are consistent with the results of studies like Sraboni et al. (2014) and Malapit et al. (2015). Thus, better human capital development, income and the amount per capita that are spent on electricity significantly increase household dietary intake. The share of adult and average age of the household shows both negative and positive effect; however, their levels of significance were inconsistent across the different columns of Table 5.

Table 4 Regression Results – Empowerment and Dietary Intake

	Total		Male Hh		Female Hh	
	OLS	IV	OLS	IV	OLS	IV
Empowerment	0.074***	0.326***	0.063***	0.322***	0.082***	3.081***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Constant	0.108***	0.201***	0.110***	0.200***	0.106***	-0.595***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
R-squared	0.009	0.100	0.006	0.100	0.001	0.022
F(1, 4813)	7.140	42.340	76.330	43.900	26.870	11.340
Prob.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001
Under ID test p, Ho: underidentified		0.000		0.000		0.000
Weak ID test stat (Cragg-Donald Wald F statistic)		5.530		5.530		6.600
		65.810		65.120		24.760
Endogeneity test p, Ho: exogenous		(0.000)		(0.000)		(0.000)

Note: The superscripts *, ** and *** imply 10, 5 and 1 percent levels of significance. The values in parenthesis are the probability values. The instruments used for the IV estimations are the type of building of the household and the difference in ages between the primary male and female decision-makers s. We used only individuals that are of the age 18 years and above to compute this variable.

Table 5 Regression Results – Empowerment and Dietary Intake

	Total		Male Hh		Female Hh	
	OLS	IV	OLS	IV	OLS	IV
Empowerment	0.026***	0.563***	0.023*	0.140***	0.077	0.391***
	(0.003)	(0.000)	(0.086)	(0.000)	(0.517)	(0.000)
Share Female	0.003	0.004**	0.002	0.013***	-0.002	-0.008
	(0.117)	(0.032)	(0.677)	(0.021)	(0.675)	(0.153)
Hh Size	0.185	0.058	0.215	0.004*	0.134	-0.005
	(0.225)	(0.747)	(0.258)	(0.066)	(0.489)	(0.180)
Income per cap	0.008***	0.007***	0.008***	0.006***	0.008***	0.007***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Educ. per cap	0.003	0.102***	0.003	0.236***	0.009**	0.074***
	(0.426)	(0.000)	(0.495)	(0.000)	(0.047)	(0.002)
Share adult	-0.011***	-0.025***	-0.011**	-0.036***	-0.005	-0.020***
	(0.002)	(0.000)	(0.026)	(0.000)	(0.269)	(0.000)
Age	0.019***	-0.029	0.019*	0.011***	0.012	0.109
	(0.010)	(0.723)	(0.097)	(0.000)	(0.151)	(0.174)
Elect. per cap	0.063***	0.050***	0.057*	0.024**	0.065***	0.056***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.055)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Constant	-0.806	-0.289	-0.941	-0.594**	-0.560	0.502
	(0.256)	(0.730)	(0.285)	(0.018)	(0.533)	(0.164)
R-squared	0.032	0.120	0.031	0.120	0.033	0.128
F-Stat	48.670	88.320	22.900	48.160	28.630	47.530
Prob.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Under ID test p, H_0: under-identified	----	0.000	----	0.000	----	0.000
Weak ID test stat (Cragg-Donald Wald F statistic)	----	7.250	----	8.750	----	5.530
	----	25.500	----	24.930	----	23.790
Endogeneity test p, H_0: exogenous	----	0.000	----	0.000	----	0.000

Note: The superscripts *, ** and *** imply 10, 5 and 1 percent levels of significance. The values in parenthesis are the probability values. The instruments used for the IV estimation are the type of building of the household and the difference in ages between the primary male and female decision-makers. We used only individuals that are of 18 years and above to compute this variable.

The relationship between dietary intake and empowerment is also examined at the household level. Two household groups were considered based on the gender of the household head and the proportion of female in the households.[10] Households with equal representation of female and male individuals are not included in this analysis for clarity of discussion.

From the report in Table 6, the empowerment variable remained consistently positive for households that have larger percentage of female. These households tend to have a positive and significant improvement in dietary intake with an increase in empowerment. Likewise, for households with female heads the empowerment variable remained positive and significant. An improvement in female empowerment will result in a further increase of about 36.5 and 43.2 percent of household dietary intake for households with more women and those with female heads. For the other categories of households (those with a smaller share of female members and male headed households), it is evident that the coefficient of the empowerment variable was not significant, despite that it was positive. This result confirms the earlier finding that when related to food consumption and intake, empowerment interventions that benefit a large proportion of women will be more impactful on the household than when excluding more women. The signs and significant values of the control variables were not discussed since they are not of interest for this study.

This paper also uses an alternative measure to capture the empowerment variable. This new measure consists of the gender parity gap in which the difference between male and female empowerment index are generated. The gender parity gap is equal to zero if the women empowerment score is equal or exceeds the value for males. The results of the regression analysis (both the OLS and IV estimation) are presented in Table 7. This Table indicates that not much difference is observed for the main explanatory variable – empowerment. The coefficient of this variable maintained a positive value across the different estimation technique. One important difference between these results and those reported in Table 5 is that in this new estimation, the empowerment variable lost its significance (based on the OLS estimation). Since this study do not base the inference on this estimation technique and the signs of the variable remained unchanged, it does not raise much concern. A more important point to note from this new estimation in Table 7 is that female empowerment still maintained a higher impact on household dietary diversity, unlike male empowerment.

Table 6 Regression Results – Empowerment and Dietary Intake across Different Household Types

	>50% Female		<50% Female		Female Head		Male Head	
	OLS	IV	OLS	IV	OLS	IV	OLS	IV
Empowerment	0.034*** (0.005)	0.365*** (0.001)	0.014 (0.262)	0.135 (0.158)	0.034* (0.059)	0.432*** (0.000)	0.023 (0.349)	-0.030 (0.710)
Share Female	0.011 (0.557)	0.013 (0.440)	0.053*** (0.008)	0.061 (0.000)	0.009 (0.912)	-0.003 (0.701)	0.003 (0.703)	0.003 (0.703)
Hh Size	0.118 (0.686)	0.021 (0.509)	0.180 (0.342)	0.002 (0.494)	0.200 (0.797)	-0.005 (0.966)	0.224 (0.142)	0.003 (0.300)
Income per cap	0.007*** (0.000)	0.007*** (0.000)	0.008*** (0.000)	0.008*** (0.000)	0.007*** (0.000)	0.008*** (0.000)	0.008*** (0.000)	0.090*** (0.000)
Educ. per cap	0.044 (0.414)	0.068*** (0.006)	0.009* (0.076)	0.156 (0.431)	0.005** (0.458)	0.082*** (0.002)	0.003 (0.734)	0.007 (0.653)
Share adult	-0.007 (0.140)	-0.021*** (0.000)	-0.014*** (0.006)	-0.017*** (0.000)	-0.007 (0.916)	-0.024*** (0.005)	0.014* (0.060)	-0.012 (0.112)
Age	0.017* (0.070)	0.016** (0.036)	0.003** (0.021)	0.002*** (0.133)	-0.003 (0.765)	0.003 (0.714)	0.016 (0.905)	0.035 (0.978)
Elect. per cap	0.067*** (0.000)	0.051*** (0.000)	0.007*** (0.000)	0.064 (0.000)	0.008*** (0.000)	0.007*** (0.000)	0.099*** (0.000)	0.095*** (0.000)
Constant	-0.422 (0.718)	0.237 (0.472)	-0.773 (0.379)	-0.119** (0.612)	0.998 (0.782)	0.056 (0.964)	-0.978 (0.167)	-0.175 (0.461)
R-squared	0.033	0.131	0.031	0.136	0.031	0.125	0.036	0.134
F-Stat	29.51	47.73	23.090	43.990	15.220	22.52	12.83	20.04
Prob.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	(0.000)	(0.000)
Under ID test p, H_0: under-identified	----	0.000	----	0.000	----	0.000	----	0.000
Weak ID test stat (Cragg-Donald Wald F statistic)	----	8.750	----	7.250	----	5.530	----	7.250
	----	8.190	----	1.999	----	10.990	----	25.18
Endogeneity test p, H_0: exogenous	----	0.004	----	0.159	----	0.000	----	0.000

Note: The superscripts *, ** and * imply 10, 5 and 1 percent levels of significance. The values in parenthesis are the probability values.

Table 7 Regression Results – Empowerment and Dietary Intake

	Total		Male Hh		Female Hh	
	OLS	IV	OLS	IV	OLS	IV
Empowerment	0.011	0.391*	0.016	0.099*	0.077	0.391*
	(0.371)	(0.000)	(0.169)	(0.000)	(0.517)	(0.000)
Share Female	-0.002	-0.008	0.005	0.017*	-0.002	-0.008
	(0.673)	(0.153)	(0.314)	(0.006)	(0.675)	(0.153)
Hh Size	0.121	-0.005	0.190	0.001*	0.134	-0.004
	(0.536)	(0.180)	(0.293)	(0.000)	(0.489)	(0.180)
Income per cap	0.009*	0.007*	0.008*	0.009*	0.008*	0.007*
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Educ. per cap	0.009	-0.074*	0.006	0.363*	0.009**	-0.074*
	(0.052)	(0.002)	(0.190)	(0.000)	(0.047)	(0.002)
Share adult	-0.005*	-0.020*	-0.015*	-0.072*	-0.005	-0.020*
	(0.255)	(0.000)	(0.002)	(0.000)	(0.269)	(0.000)
Age	0.015***	0.001	0.002**	0.001*	0.012	0.001
	(0.100)	(0.174)	(0.012)	(0.000)	(0.151)	(0.174)
Elect. per cap	0.007*	0.006*	0.006*	0.002***	0.065*	0.006*
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.229)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Constant	-0.493	0.501	-0.815	0.919*	-0.560	0.501
	(0.586)	(0.164)	(0.330)	(0.002)	(0.533)	(0.164)
R-squared	0.032	0.128	0.030	0.107	0.033	0.361
F-Stat	29.820	47.530	22.29	42.77	28.630	47.53
Prob.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Under ID test p, H_0: under-identified	----	0.000	----	0.000	----	0.000
Weak ID test stat (Cragg-Donald Wald F statistic)	----	5.530	----	7.250	----	6.66
	----	39.75	----	36.27	----	23.79
Endogeneity test p, H_0: exogenous	----	0.000	----	0.000	----	0.000
Nos. of Households	1128	1128	1109	1109	1128	1128

Note: The superscripts *, ** and *** imply 10, 5 and 1 percent levels of significance. The values in parenthesis are the probability values. The instruments used for the IV estimation are the type of building of the household and the difference in ages between the primary male and female decision-makers. We used only individuals that are of the age 18 years and above to compute this variable.

Conclusion

This paper investigates the linkage between empowerment and the nutritional intake of households using the 2012–2013 World Bank's General Household Survey for Nigerian households. This study also used the components of the empowerment variable to identify how specific domains and indicators are associated with nutritional intake in Nigeria. Particular interest was directed at the differences in the estimated impact across the gender of the household. An empowerment index that is similar in construction to the survey-based approach of Alkire et al. (2013) was used in this study. The testable hypothesis include (i) there is a significant relationship between empowerment and dietary intake for female household members than their male counterpart; (ii) the impact between dietary intake and empowerment is higher for households that have more female and that also have a female head compared to those households that are male dominant

The results from the regression analysis include: First, and as generally expected, average household empowerment is an important determinant of dietary intake. In addition, consistent with gender differences in dietary intake and across different levels of empowerment, the effect of empowering female household members differs considerably from those of male genders. Secondly, this study finds that the empowerment effect on dietary diversity differs across the extent to which households are female dominated. For households with higher proportion of female and as well as households with female head, shows a significant and higher dietary diversity impact, compared to those that are less biased towards female. Thirdly, more empowerment will result to an improved dietary intake, especially when empowerment is directed at females and households that are female dominant.

This result is not in any way suggesting that male empowerment is less important. However, the results suggest that any action taken towards improving female empowerment (compared to male counterparts) will result in a significant and higher impact on the dietary intake of the household. There are two important explanations for the result we have observed. The first is that with empowerment, women will have the capacity to make better choices on the quality and mix of diets that the household will be consuming. This is unlike males, whose main responsibilities in the household are not directly tied to diet or decision over the choice and mix of diets. Second, women play a significant role in household food consumption and production. This makes the female gender to be better acquainted with vast choices of meals that can be advantageous for the household consumption. Therefore when considering the household health through the diversity of diet, it is important to pay much attention and initiate programs and interventions that can empower women.

An important limitation of our study is that this study measured empowerment from a self-reported survey, where the opinion of the household mem-

bers (affirmatively or otherwise) – in terms of different indices to measure empowerment – was relied upon to determine the extent of their empowerment. Though this approach is widely used in literature, it is important to consider experimental kind of data, where actual observation of empowerment interventions is measured against the average household dietary intake. More so, measure of empowerment used for this study was not in full compliance with the Alkire et al. (2013) measure of empowerment. Two reasons motivate our approach: this study intended to create an empowerment index that reflects the socio-cultural condition of our sample; and due to data constraint, most of the indicators in Alkire et al. (2013) measure of empowerment were not available in the survey data used in our study. Hence, we are not able to adequately compare our result with that of Alkire et al. (2013). Therefore, future studies that will be making use of survey data (apart from the LSMS data) can consider including the empowerment indicators of Alkire et al. (2013) in their survey instruments. This will aid estimations that can be compared with other studies that have used similar empowerment measurement.

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NOTES

1. Here empowering women entails having access to productive resources with the motive of improving the value of individual's orientation towards making decisions that affect both the individual and other related entities.

2. Nigerian women contribute 70 percent of the total agricultural workforce, 50 percent of animal husbandry related activities and 60 percent of food processing activities (National Coalition on Affirmative Action, 2009).

3. Nutrition and dietary diversity will be used interchangeably. They mean the same thing for this study.

4. Such as National Gender Strategic Framework, Information, Communication and Value Re-orientation, Capacity Building and Skill Development, and some other Women Empowerment Programs that have been initiated by Federal Ministries that support women and agricultural development in Nigeria.

5. These are households that have more female members or where a female is the household head. Further discussions on this category of household are discussed in future sections.

6. Nigeria is a lower-middle-income country in West Africa with a per capita income of about 1280 US$ and a poverty rate of about 62.6 percent. In addition, the common feature across the major tribal groups in Nigeria is its patriarchal values. Most of the patriarchal practices demean and clearly deprive female gender of similar opportunity and resources that are accessible to male gender.

7. Poverty rate for women is about 70 percent as of 2013.

8. For example, the number of mobile phone and Internet users per 100 persons has risen from 12.0 and 2.0 in 2005 to 75.7 and 22.4 in 2015 (World Bank, 2016). Africa also has the fastest ICT growth rate, compared to other regions of the world (see Asongu and Nwachukwu, 2017).

9. The dataset, structured questionnaires, manuals and codebook are available online at World Bank Webpage (http://go.worldbank.org).

10. The group of households was divided across the sample according to the share of females that are living within the household (i.e. 1 if the proportion of female in the household is higher than 50 percent of the entire household member and 0 otherwise).

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THE ROLE OF GENDER AND MOTHERHOOD IDEOLOGIES IN PERPETUATING WORKPLACE INEQUALITY

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ABSTRACT. Drawing on 48 qualitative interviews, the authors study the relationship between gender ideologies and how women negotiate for family friendly work conditions and compensation. The authors find that although the women in their sample have widely diverging ideologies about the obligations and rights women have in the home and in the workforce, these ideologies did not influence discernibly their negotiations at work to obtain compensation and friendly work conditions. Instead, the women's beliefs about gender egalitarianism tended to be overshadowed by their beliefs that motherhood is intensive and all-involving and necessarily involves sacrifices in the workplace and at home. This gendered understanding of motherhood frequently limited the expectations of even the most-feminist identified women when they approached their employers about compensation and about accommodations that would facilitate better work and family balance. The authors conclude that family and work scholars who study the role of gender ideology should expand their definitions of gender ideology to incorporate the ways in which ideologies about motherhood may interact with, contradict or overshadow other gender egalitarian beliefs.

Keywords: gender; gender ideology; motherhood wage penalty; work and family balance; motherhood; gender roles

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Introduction

Although previous research has shown how gendered workplace structures and notions about what constitutes an ideal, committed employee have penalized women, and particularly mothers, at work (Acker, 1990; Blair-Loy, 2003; Correll et al., 2007; Cuddy et al., 2004; Fuegen et al., 2004; Hochschild, 1997), there is little research which looks at how women's own beliefs about gender factor into their workplace negotiations for compensation and benefits. While certainly gender discrimination against women in general, and mothers in particular, explains much of the gender gap in wages, in this paper, we turn our attention to how women's own agency and women's own gendered beliefs may also contribute to women's relatively disadvantaged position within the labor market.

Scholarship on gender and work has demonstrated that paying attention to how gender beliefs shape women's career objectives may help to explain the gender gap in wages. Gender beliefs may contribute to women selecting out of particular types of careers or career options, thus contributing to a lack of supply of women in certain types of fields or positions of high status (England, 2011; Reskin, 1993). Correll (2004), for example, demonstrated through an experimental study that women's lower self-evaluations of career-related skills depress their self-assessments of their career prospects and ultimately their career aspirations. In this paper, we explore the possibility that another mechanism through which women's gendered beliefs may affect their career paths is through the day-to-day interactions and negotiations that women have with their employers around compensation, work schedules, work flexibility, and family benefits.

In choosing to look at gender ideologies and women's negotiations with their employers, we borrowed from a long history of literature within the family field on how gender ideologies affect household labor distribution negotiations. In 1989, Hochschild described how individual-level differences in gender ideologies explained variations in the strategies women and men adopted at home to handle their household responsibilities. Since Hochschild initially published her book, many studies have been done on how gender ideology at the individual level affects the negotiations between heterosexual couples over how to distribute childrearing and housework (Artis and Pavalko, 2003; Bianchi et al., 2000; Bittman et al., 2003; Coltrane, 1996, 2000; Lavee and Katz, 2002). Other studies have considered how gendered beliefs and practices embedded at the state, community and individual level affect the negotiations that women and men have about how to distribute housework within families (Coltrane, 2010). On an individual level, most of these studies have shown that gender ideology has an effect on how women and men share their household obligations but that the money each partner brings to

the relationship and the relative time each partner has for housework may temper the effects of gender ideology. Longitudinal survey research has demonstrated that as women's gender ideologies over time have become more egalitarian, the relative share of housework that they do declines (Artis and Pavalko, 2003). Findings over the last two decades suggest that gender ideology matters in household labor distribution because individual level bargaining within families over household labor takes place within a gendered social context of state, community and family structures (Coltrane, 2010). Gender ideology is also an important indicator when looking at women's likelihood of employment over the long term (Cunningham, 2009) and the age at which they become mothers (Stewart, 2003). Gender affects how much housework both women and men do and whether they view the division of labor as fair or not (Davis and Greenstein, 2009).

As with housework, we anticipate that macro, meso and micro-level factors will matter in explaining the gender gap in wages. In other words, in conducting this study, we assumed that the gendered labor market system, and organizational level variables, are important both because they directly affect women's economic opportunities and because they help to create the gendered thinking that conditions how women go about their micro-level interactions with their employers in requesting (or not requesting) benefits, wages and family-friendly working conditions (for an excellent discussion of how gendered beliefs are formed in response to gender status structures see Rashotte and Webster Jr., 2005). To date, there has been noteworthy research on how macro-level gender variables, such as state policies on parental leave, have affected women and men's relative economic outcomes (see Pettit and Hook, 2009; Hegewisch and Gornick, 2011). There has also been meaningful research on how gendered organizational practices affect women's economic positions in general and mothers' wage penalties in particular (Brüderl et al., 1993). There has been less data collected on how gender ideology plays into individual face-to-face interactions in the workplace as a contributing factor in creating the gender gap in wages. Our study addresses the gap in the literature on gender ideology and interactions by looking at individual women's negotiations for compensation and family-friendly working conditions.

Just as the obligations of work create the need for couples in general, and couples with children in particular, to negotiate about how to accomplish their household responsibilities, a similar dance of negotiations is often required of employees who need to balance work and family demands. Many employers rely heavily on informal policies that are negotiated between individual employees and their companies (Wharton et al., 2008). In addition, many jobs require employees to negotiate for wages both at the time of hiring and later in their careers. While previous studies have suggested that women with and without children value work equally (McQuillian et al., 2008), there is

little data on whether there are differences in how women with and without children expect to be treated by their employers. We looked at women's negotiations at work because they showcase what women thought it was reasonable to ask of employers, thus providing a window into how gendered beliefs may affect women's expectations at work.

We should note that many elements of mothers and women's treatment at work are out of their control and are specific to their organization, to its policies and to their individual supervisors' attitudes. Women are also constrained by larger systemic, state policies that govern the availability and cost of child care and that establish minimum standards for parental leave (Pettit and Hook, 2009; Hegewisch and Gornick, 2011). Within the constraints of these structural contexts, however, women's own perspectives on their rights and obligations as women and as mothers are likely to affect how they interact with their employers to obtain workplace benefits such as time off, flexibility, compensation and benefits (for discussion of how flexibility/ scheduling policies impact work and family interfaces, see Carlson et al., 2009, and Haddock et al., 2006). To the degree that women hold gendered beliefs that limit their own expectations, as suggested in Correll's (2004) aforementioned experimental study on gender and career aspirations, we suspect that these negotiations may contribute to the wage penalty that women in general and mothers in particular experience at work (Budig and England, 2001; Correll et al., 2007). Moreover, as with housework research, by looking at individual level interactions, we are not ignoring the importance of these meso and macro level factors. Rather, we acknowledge these factors here as parts of the cultural system of gendered beliefs that contribute to how women engage in micro-level interactions in the workplace. Our argument is that as with housework studies, gender scholars of work can produce a stronger, more fully explanatory model of how gender affects the wages of women in general and mothers in particular if our analyses consider macro, meso and micro level factors. Our paper contributes to this scholarship effort by looking at micro-level interactions between women and their employers.

Our project looks at the effect that two different types of ideology have on women's lives. We look at the intersection between gender ideology and motherhood ideology whereas the literature generally looks at them separately to see how they impact work-family balance and workplace outcomes. Exploring mechanisms on the supply side of the labor force, we analyze how women juggle work and home life in ways that may contribute to their economic marginalization. We are not blaming women; rather, we are demonstrating how women respond in different ways to the constraints of motherhood ideology, gender ideology, family, and work situations in complex ways. Motherhood ideology can work in tandem with, modify, or even sometimes overpower gender ideology and vice versa.

Methods

In this study, we interviewed 48 women about their negotiations to obtain jobs, compensation, time off, family leave, and promotions. Although none of our interview guide questions were specifically about gender (although they did address motherhood), participants frequently discussed their attitudes towards gender egalitarianism and their gendered notions about motherhood to explain their own actions. As we interviewed, we observed that even women who believed that their gender should not be a barrier to career advancement or to equally shared responsibilities in the home typically believed that it was expected for motherhood to constrain them professionally. In the tradition of grounded theory (Strauss, 1987), we responded to the themes that emerged from our research and redirected our analysis towards how gender ideology, including gendered ideologies about motherhood, explained the actions that the women in our study took towards making their jobs more compatible with motherhood. Specifically, we wanted to know whether gender ideology, defined here as beliefs about what constitutes appropriate roles for men and women, played a consistent role in explaining what women negotiated for at work and what they expected of their employers in terms of family accommodations.

We interviewed 36 mothers and twelve women without children about their experiences in applying for jobs and, after they had obtained jobs, in negotiating for raises, promotions and access to family benefits. We selected two distinct communities in which to interview. The first community, Sagelands,[1] is a rural, socially moderate area. The second community, Stanton, is a large metropolitan area with a liberal social environment. The two communities are similar in that both communities have educated populations: more than 40% of the residents hold a college degree. Sagelands is 86% white while Stanton is 73% white and the remainder of the population in both areas is predominantly Asian American and Latino. The two communities differ, however, in patterns of family formation and childbearing. In Sagelands' county seat, only 21% of females aged 15 and over have never married while in Stanton 28% have never married. The greatest demographic difference between the communities is in their rates of childbearing. In Sagelands' county seat, there were 89 births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 50 years old while in Stanton, there were 30 births per 1,000 women (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011).

We intended our sampling frame to include all women in these geographic areas who were employed (not self-employed) and all women who were home caring for children. We deliberately sought to include women who are and are not parents and to include stay-at-home mothers because we were wary of sampling on the dependent variables. Women who are not parents,

for example, may have opted out of parenting because they perceive their workplace commitments as being incompatible with mothering. Mothers who have left the labor force may have also perceived workplace demands as being impossible to meet while mothering (Blair-Loy, 2003).

We recruited the majority of our sample through snowball sampling. We were open to interviewing women with any sort of family, including cohabiting women, married women, single women, divorced women and women in same-sex relationships. We made no effort to purposely sample from women from diverse family types, however, and 37 (77%) of the women we interviewed are in heterosexual marriages. Of the remaining women, four are divorced, four are in relationships (including same-sex relationships) but not married, and three are single. The women ranged in age from their 20s to their 60s, and have children of all ages, including babies and adult children. No woman had more than four children. Our study included women with minimum wage jobs as lunchroom cooks, fast food workers, and cafe baristas but we also had marketing directors and doctors in our study who earned over $100,000 a year. The sample was disproportionately composed of educated women. While only two women had stopped their schooling after high school, 17 (35%) of the women had a master's degree or a doctorate. Thirty-eight of the women in the study are white, four are Asian American, three are Latina, one did not identify her racial identity and two are bi-racial.

The interviews were taped, transcribed and coded using Atlas-ti qualitative analysis software. In coding our transcripts, we were attentive to ways in which mothers speak about the expectations of them at work and about how they feel about those expectations. We specifically looked for evidence of gendered belief structures in women's references to the following subjects: expectations of their partners; beliefs about women in the workforce; attitudes towards women engaging in traditionally masculine activities; the gender beliefs they attempted to impart to their children; beliefs about the obligations entailed by marriage and motherhood; and their opinion of feminism and the women's movement. Then, we constructed case studies in which we identified the gender ideologies that each woman had expressed and then looked at whether and how they approached the challenges of negotiating for a more family friendly work environment. Although we use the phrase negotiation as a short-hand way of describing how women engage with employers around the questions of hiring, promotions and benefits, the actual interactions that women described were sometimes less negotiation and more capitulation. In women's minds, they established expectations of their employers and for themselves and if their employer met those expectations, often by offering some level of scheduling flexibility, they did not negotiate. They simply made do with what they were offered.

Results

The women in the study expressed widely divergent perspectives on how gender should shape their lives. On one end, we interviewed women who were proud to be able to stay-at-home with their children because it meant that they "married well." At the opposite extreme, we interviewed women who were quite comfortable being the primary breadwinners or sharing equally in household responsibilities. Borrowing from Hochschild's initial gender ideologies categorizations (2003/1989), we refer to the former group as having traditional gender ideologies and the latter as having egalitarian gender ideologies. Even amongst women who occupy similar class positions and who have comparable human capital, as exemplified by the women described in the case studies below, there were large disparities in their gendered beliefs about the roles of wives, the importance of breadwinning and the rights of women at work.

Traditional Women and their Work and Family Balance Strategies

Particularly in our rural sample, some women were proud to categorize themselves as stay-at-home mothers and wives and they placed strong emphasis on the fact that they were the primary caregivers for their children. When we first met with Maria[2] and asked her if she stayed at home with her daughter, she proudly declared that she did, "I'm just old fashioned that way, I guess. My Mom always stayed home with us and you know, my job is to stay at home." Maria went on to compare her own parenting standards, which include an all fresh food diet for the family and learning activities for their daughter, with those of women she knows who are employed full-time, who, she reports to us, serve their children frozen tater tots and send their children to day cares with lice problems. Despite Maria's attitude towards day care and employed mothers, however, she is currently employed in a lucrative and demanding health care job. However, Maria has negotiated at work to be able to work only extra long shifts on weekends, when her husband is home, which allows her to maintain parenting standards that her colleagues at work, who work full-time, standard hours, cannot match. To Maria, the moral choice is to structure work around her daughter's schedule and her husband's schedule. Thus, while Maria identifies herself as traditional, and sees the housework and childrearing as her primary job, she has also been strategic and aggressive at work in negotiating for hours that suit her family's schedule and in pressing her employer to give her a schedule that will give her overtime pay for working extended shifts. She has made it clear to her employer that if she does not get the flexible schedule she needs, she will leave her job.

Annette is a preschool teacher in Sagelands who also adheres to a traditional gendered ideology. She holds an advanced degree in early childhood

education and has many years of experience yet her compensation is fairly low. Annette is unconcerned about her wages however, and is not seeking promotions at work. “I do have the opportunity to be promoted but I don’t think I would at this time. It doesn’t fit my schedule at home,” she explains. Her husband earns good wages in a professional job and Annette defines her job as being primarily “social.” She has not asked for promotions and does not expect promotions because they are automatic and because, as a “newly married” woman, she does not want to pursue additional education to increase her wages. She describes her workplace as being very family friendly and says that if teachers need to take care of family obligations, even the school director will step in for the day to make sure that they can take the day off. Although Annette wants children and does not yet have them, she has plenty of time for her spouse and she is able to be present for her nieces and nephews as needed. She is clearly satisfied with the family and work balance she currently has but she has achieved that balance by foregoing higher compensation.

Egalitarian Women and their Work and Family Balance Strategies

Cindy is a math professor in her 50s. As a female math professor, she was a pioneer in her field and she holds a distinguished rank in her department. Cindy wants to rectify gender discrimination and she goes out of her way to support her female colleagues and graduate students. She values her ability to provide for her family and to be independent of her spouse. She explains:

> My mother was a stay at home Mom. She had four children. And I think she did a really good job of raising us all but one thing, I always felt, and hated, was that my mother was dependent on my father economically. And, I vowed, never to be dependent on someone else and to never have anyone completely dependent on me. A spouse. I did not want to have that responsibility nor to not have the responsibility myself. So, in that sense, I think that being a working Mom was important to me, okay? Because I wanted to know that I could, you know, that I was not dependent on someone else to take care of my children or myself.

She is heartened by the increasing opportunities for women in her field but she is disturbed by the conditions her field creates for women and men who are also trying to raise families. She tells, with sadness, of graduate students who came to her ashamed because they had gotten pregnant during school and assumed she would be angry because a baby would distract from their careers. She observes that some of the most promising women in the field are abandoning it because work excludes time for everything else. She laments,

> We're losing a lot, we're losing a lot to you know, you know a lot of resources, you know, huge resources, because of this work life balance issue and I don't know – we've got to do something drastic. We've got to change things drastically because I see it happening. I just see people deserting because they don't see how it can be done.

Cindy clearly recognizes the challenges of balancing work and family as forms of discrimination that should be addressed in the work environment. Nevertheless, Cindy has generally not been able to make her work life flexible enough to meet her family needs. She regrets that as a parent, "There were many times and there are still times when I say I'm busy, I'm working, I can't do that." She had to cut corners whenever she could in order to be both a good mother and a good professional, whether that meant surreptitiously grading papers during her children's piano recitals or meeting with students in the hospital after she first gave birth to avoid falling behind. She deliberately avoids sleeping to stretch the hours in the day. The only significant family benefit that Cindy enjoys is the ability to leave during the day to take care of her children's needs and she counts herself as very lucky for having that flexibility. While Cindy has occasionally resisted the demands of her job through small acts, like refusing to travel without her children, she has never negotiated for more family friendly work conditions for herself, even though she has done so on behalf of less senior faculty and her graduate students.

Rachel, a mother of two sons, is also quite aware of gender discrimination. Rachel has a PhD in a specialized field and holds a high status job with a biotechnology firm. Recently, Rachel's husband was given a job offer in another city and she reported indignantly that some of her colleagues had assumed that they would automatically prioritize his career over hers. She recalls, "It's just amazing to me how often like people make these kind of gross assumptions that his job is more important than my job." Although Rachel believes her job is of equal importance to the household economy, she still pushed her employer to change her employment status at work after their second baby was born to have more time at home. Rachel's employer agreed reluctantly to allow her to move to an hourly rate, but did so only, Rachel thinks, because when they have advertised positions like Rachel's in the past, nobody else had her particular skill set and education. By switching into a non-salaried position, however, Rachel is still trying to handle the same number of responsibilities as she had full-time but she is allowed to do some of her work at home, after her baby has gone to bed. She has also made a commitment to being available constantly by phone and e-mail. This means that while Rachel gave up her health insurance, her paid vacation and other valuable benefits to be able to be physically in her home with her children, the time when she is at home is punctuated with interruptions from work.

Hedy has a PhD in a specialized scientific field. Before she had her children, she had a highly respected job in a prestigious research lab. She is strongly committed to gender equality and she made many references to the work she does to try to model for her children that women and men have equal abilities. She explained her gendered beliefs:

> I try hard to not have gender stereotypes too much. I mean clearly, there may be some things that men may be better suited for or women may be better suited for as individuals but I don't want [my children] to think that women can't do [some things] ... I'm very careful about my language, you know, we'll see a police car go by and I'll say, I wonder what the police officer is doing or the firefighter. I don't say fireman or policeman.

Hedy then gave examples of how she has tried to expose her children to women in non-traditional jobs, like letting them see women who are doctors or astronauts. Despite this commitment, Hedy eventually decided that it would be less stressful for her family if she stayed home with the children while her husband works. Staying home has been a struggle for her, even though she is glad to see her children benefitting from the time and emotional nourishment that we witnessed her giving them even over the our span of our interview. Still, she misses the respect she had in the workplace:

> [At work] I'm respected and my ideas are respected and when I ask someone to do something or when I give my opinion, nobody ever sticks their tongue out at me (laughs). Nobody everybody says, nah, nah, nah, you know? And then I would come home and I would say, please pick up your toys or it's time to brush your teeth and I would get ignored or you know, typical kid stuff ... but I would just get indignant. How dare you? You know, I have people who are smart and important who respect me and who think I'm smart and important and yet, here I've got this two year old who doesn't give me the time of day.

Moreover, by leaving the workplace to raise children, Hedy has rendered her own degree obsolete and has drastically curtained her career prospects. When we asked her whether she intended to return to work after her children got to be older, she explained, "Well, I've been out of it, as of today, I've been out of it for three years .... I mean to step into something on par with what I was doing before ... I think would be extremely difficult because the technology just moves."

Adding Motherhood Ideologies to the Mix

At first glance, the gendered ideologies of the women that we interviewed diverge on key points. For example, Maria is proud to point to her husband

as the breadwinner while Rachel is angry that people would assume she does not earn as much as her spouse. These belief systems, however, seemed to have little to do with the kinds of family-friendly working conditions and compensation that women were able to achieve or that they expected to have. As demonstrated by the examples we provide here, possessing a strong sense of women's rights to egalitarian treatment did not generally improve women's ability to negotiate at work to improve their working conditions. In fact, some of the women described in the case studies above did not even try to negotiate, which onto itself is telling.

Based on our data, we will argue that gender ideology, when measured by the ideas women have about appropriate roles for women and men, is not a salient factor in explaining mothers' negotiations at work because the participants' perspectives on motherhood overshadowed their other gendered beliefs. In one telling interview, Cara, a childless woman in her 20s, said that if she has children in the future, "I would definitely still have my career even though I had kids." Cara also complained about a former boss who questioned her ability to work as a sushi chef because she is a woman. Despite Cara's awareness of how gender bias had unfairly penalized her at work, she was quite outspoken in declaring that her employer would and should avoid hiring mothers because "You know if something came up with the child and that they couldn't show up to work, then ... somebody's gotta fill in that position for that day." She also thought mothers lack the physical strength to do her job:

> Because we do a lot of physical activities, we have to ... move heavy stuff so if that would like you know, kind of like having a kid or having to take care for it, like earlier and later in the day while she's not at work might like be too ... exhausting.

Interestingly, Cara has no problems with her male colleague who is a father. Thus while Cara expects to be treated as an equal to men at work, her sense of motherhood as an essentialized, physically incapacitating condition negated her overall gender egalitarian ideology.

Although Cara was unusually outspoken about her opposition to mothers in her workplace, the fact that her gender ideology about women in general does not match her gender ideology about mothers is telling. Overall, in this study, the gendered perspectives that the women held on motherhood were quite similar to those of one another, no matter their beliefs about gender egalitarianism. Implicit in Cara's concern about mothers as colleagues is that she thinks they are likely to be overly consumed, to the point of physical exhaustion, by the needs of their children. In this regard, she expressed similar ideas to the majority of the other women in the study. Nor were her beliefs surprising to us, given previous studies demonstrating that women

believe that ideal mothering is child-centric, intensive, and all-consuming (Hays, 1996). It is also noteworthy that many of the women in our study perceived that they could not be as successful as they wanted to be, at home or at work, if they combined full-time work and motherhood, even if to an outsider, they appeared to be quite successful as workers and as mothers. Jeannette, a college counselor and a mother of a toddler summarized and criticized the ideology of intensive motherhood in the United States to which she once subscribed:

> The idea is women should quit their job ... and they stay home all the time. Still in their own little nuclear cocoon somewhere, dis-associated with everyone else and so you're responsible for doing it all yourself and if you don't do it right, you've really screwed up as a woman and that if you're going to work, you're going to sacrifice, you know, somehow being a mother ... It makes me mad when people think if you're working, you're not being a good mother.

Most women were not as critical as Jeannette is of this ideology of intensive motherhood and instead automatically shaped their decisions and feelings about working and parenting in the context of the belief that mothers must provide time-intensive caregiving to their children. Bridget, a 40-year-old administrator explained why she and her partner of a decade do not have children:

> If I had children I would want to be there for them most of the day. I would not want to give them up to day care. Because I've worked in day care and then I think it's not as nice as I think most people believe ... I would want to be there for my child. I want to do the primary raising of my child cause I believe that's natural. So, I do believe my choices are either work or have children.

Lila, a married, childless, adjunct professor in her early 30s explained that she and her husband also cannot figure out a way to reconcile the demands of her career with their desire to have children. She explained, somewhat sadly, "We both had decided that we do want kids" but as she thought about how to fit children into her career she concluded, "Sometimes we even think that the right time [to have a baby] is never going to arrive." She is afraid that even taking six months off work would raise "red flags" with potential future employers but she also thinks that six months is the minimum possible maternity leave that she could consider.

Of those women who do have children, they see profound flaws in their ability to be good workers and mothers. Alyssa, a fast food worker and a mother of a toddler, explained, "I think when a woman has to work, it's not being a really, really good mother. Because you get tired. And you don't have

enough time to teach, to teach your child." Melissa, a health care worker with two adult children, talked about how her parenting responsibilities hurt her professionally, "I think it's still very difficult for a woman to give 100% to her job and her children. So things, my work life was probably not as, I couldn't focus maybe a lot because I'd be tired." At the same time, Melissa also thinks her children suffered from her work schedule, "If you worked the whole day and had problems at work, coming home you can't deal with your children's problems. So ... my children suffered from me working full time. They did."

Most of the women in the sample were also similar in that they expressed strong beliefs about how much work it takes to be a good mother and they had exacting standards for themselves around mothering. Annette's definition of poor parenting was typical, "A lot of women I've seen, you know, place priority on their job, their status, their title, and when they come home it's based upon mommy's needs and then look at the rest of the family of how does it fits in." Georgia, a cafe worker, thinks bad mothering is having "latchkey kids." As with other research studies, our analysis showed that the majority of the women believed in giving constant attention to their children, although some believed fathers could be an acceptable substitute (Hays, 1996; Lareau, 2002). For the upper middle class women, this might mean not leaving their children at day care, taking their children to swimming lessons and music classes, supplementing their children's education at home or banning them from "screen time." Even the women who were skeptical about the value of modern mothering standards still felt compelled to follow the lead of their friends. Rachel classified the exacting parenting standards of her community, "as totally insane, the stuff that we do." She recalled, sometimes laughing to the point where she could not speak, her sense of being obligated to send her toddler son to music class:

> Okay, so all my friends take their kids to Music Skills because it's so important for their development. And the music is so annoying and Alexander hated it. Like, he didn't like the music at all, you know. And I was like, but I just felt like I have to do this. Everybody goes to these things. I am a bad mother if I don't take my child to Music Skills... And it's expensive too, right? It's like 15 dollars an hour. To torture your child.

The less wealthy women in the sample worried more about having adequate time to take their children outdoors to play or about making sure their children did not get in trouble through constant monitoring. These standards of mothering were contributing factors in why mothers felt that they could not be good enough as mothers if they were away at work all day. Moreover, as Annette's comments demonstrate, these standards of mothering come with a

belief that mothering involves sacrifices, and many women interpreted their workplace sacrifices of income, benefits, and job conditions as part and parcel of motherhood.

When interpreted in this framework, the actions that women took to reconcile their work and family lives make sense. Hedy, a feminist former senior scientist and Emily, an equally feminist former retail clerk, solved this problem by leaving the workforce. Lila, an adjunct professor, Fiona, a highly paid marketing manager, and Bridget, an administrator, decided that perhaps it would be better not to have children at all. Women with specialized skills like Maria or Raisse, both health care professionals, negotiated at work, capitalizing on their job experience and education, to obtain part-time hours, or the right to flexible hours, but they often did so with the knowledge that they would have to rely on their spouse's incomes. Still others like Vivian and Alyssa took jobs in fields like fast food or at schools, which are compatible with children's schedules, even if those jobs paid poorly and offered hard working conditions. All of these women, however, and most of the other women in our study accepted losses and sacrifices as inevitable outgrowths of trying to combine work and motherhood.

Although when pressed, they had reservations with the concessions that they had to make at work to have the flexibility they felt they needed as mothers, the women in our study saw those concessions as inevitable and even fair reflections of their own personal choices. Melissa's advice to new mothers is "I just think that when you have children, you should put your life on hold. Number one, the ideal; you have to put your life on hold." One of the most striking things in our interviews was how rarely women complained about cuts in their compensation, problems with their work conditions and burdens they faced at home as a result of trying to balance motherhood and work. Instead, women pointed to the few concessions they did have. Rachel talked about how she got to take her children berry picking but then conceded that she spent the time at the berry farm handling e-mails for work. Still, since she is one of a handful of people in her office who have been allowed to switch to an hourly pay basis at work, which lets her eliminate the overtime hours that the culture typically demands, she is counting her blessings. Alyssa hates being cursed at by drunk customers on her midnight shift at the fast food restaurant but she thinks her job is a good deal for a mother who needs to be at home with her child while her husband is at his office. Rachel commented on how her employer daily pushes her to resume her old schedule and Alyssa clearly resented the drunks but neither they, nor the majority of the other women in our study, saw the challenges of balancing work and family as structural rather than personal (see Blair-Loy, 2003, for a discussion of how this attitude is consistent with media discussions of work and family balance).

Discussion

Even women like Rachel, who support women's rights, did not criticize workplace treatment of mothers as a form of gender discrimination. They generally treated their own challenges of balancing work and family as private challenges that required individualized solutions and negotiations with employers to obtain whatever they needed to be present for their children. England (2010) argued that there have been two interrelated trends in attitudes towards gender. She suggested that the aspect of the women's movement that has been most widely accepted is the idea that women should have the same legal rights to self-advancement through employment as men do. With the acceptance of this notion, however, has also come increasing belief in the idea of gender essentialism (England, 2010). Other research has established that mothers are likely to be particularly subject to essentialized beliefs about gender because motherhood is assumed to be a biologically created social role rather than a social construction (Walzer, 1998).

In our study, while many of the women did not assume that gender includes naturalized workplace roles, they did whole-heartedly espouse a naturalized, heavily gendered social construction of motherhood that assumes that mothers' constant involvement in the lives of their children is necessary to raise successful children. We find that the meaning of motherhood permeated the thinking of the mothers as they decided what they needed at work from their employers. The universality of the gendered social construction of motherhood led these women to very similar conclusions, despite having different gender ideologies. Therefore, even for women who diverge in how egalitarian or traditional they are, their shared gendered notions of motherhood limited their expectations of their conditions of employment.

Limitations

This study has limited generalizability particularly because we used a non-random, snowball sample to recruit women. It does not apply to all women as most of our study participants were white and educated. Additionally, our study mainly consisted of married and heterosexual women; it would be beneficial to focus studies on divorced and/or unmarried women and women who do not identify as heterosexual. Our study focused on work-family balance; however, we did not ask questions that would give us insights into marital stability or satisfaction – mostly we found how workplace stability was impacted by women's efforts to juggle family and work responsibilities. For example, scheduling work in certain ways, moving to part time, etc. Future research on how time use correlates with motherhood and gender ideologies would also be ideal.

Conclusions

Given Correll's (2004) findings about the role of gender in the formation of career aspirations and given the family literature about how gender ideology affects household labor distribution, we had anticipated that gender beliefs about appropriate roles for men and women would affect women's expectations of their employers. Instead, we found that in women's negotiations with their employers, broader beliefs about gender equality were overshadowed by the gendered beliefs that women hold about motherhood. Although this study uses a non-random sample and cannot be generalized, our study contains important theoretical implications for research on gender inequality in the workplace. Most previous work on gender ideologies has focused on how gender ideology predicts the distribution of household labor between couples at home but has not considered how egalitarian and traditional gender ideologies explain the expectations that women have of their employers. Since work and family balance typically involves both adjustments at home within the family and adjustments in the workplace, this study covers important ground by considering how both gender and motherhood ideologies affect women's efforts at work to obtain a better work and family balance.

Furthermore, this study calls into question the tendency in family research for gender ideology to be treated as a variable that can be reduced down to what men and women think is fair or equitable in the home or at work. As demonstrated here, the egalitarian values that women have about their roles at work and at home were overshadowed by their essentialized beliefs about the intensive nature of motherhood and by their expectation that motherhood necessarily involves sacrifices. These beliefs about motherhood are clearly embedded in a gendered social context but because motherhood is viewed as a natural, biological role, even the most outspoken, feminist-identified women that we interviewed did not identify their sense of obligations as mothers as being outgrowths of gender inequity. This study also supports England's (2011) and Correll's (2004) arguments that we need to pay attention to both supply and demand sides of labor market inequality in order to fully explain the gender wage gap. We are not arguing that women prefer to be compensated less because of their motherhood ideology. Nor are we arguing that structure does not have an effect: women's negotiations still take place through interactions and in institutions. This study has shown that sometimes women's negotiation for compensation or family friendly benefits may make sense to women in the context of their sense of maternal obligations but in aggregate, may also be contributing to the overall depression in women's earnings relative to those of men. Beyond this study's implications for our understanding of mothers' behaviors at work, it also suggests that the egalitarian/traditional gender roles analyses in other areas of family research

may need to be revisited with an awareness of how beliefs about motherhood interact with, contradict, or even overshadow other gender ideologies.

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Disclosure statement
The authors have no known financial interest or benefit from the application of their research.

NOTES

1. The names of the sites were changed to protect the confidentiality of the research participants. We do not include a description of the town because in a small community, it would be too easy to recognize individual participants.

2. We changed names and details about participants to conceal their identities.

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THE GENDERED PSYCHOLOGY OF POLITICAL REVOLUTION AND COUNTERCULTURAL DISSENT IN ANTONIONI'S *ZABRISKIE POINT*

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ABSTRACT. I rely on relevant literature (Chatman, 1985; Elder, 1991; Melbye, 2010; Niessen, 2012; and Fresko, 2014) to prove that *Zabriskie Point* integrates illustrative desertscape sequences with the intention of assessing contemporary lifestyle. *Zabriskie Point*'s conflicting compilation of cosmopolitan pictures and sounds generating perceptual bewilderment cumulatively designates the city as a ground of aggression. *Zabriskie Point*'s formal portrayal of the city as a structure of plastic gist discloses the misconceptions upon which a progressively incoherent society establishes.

Keywords: *Zabriskie Point*; gendered psychology; political revolution; dissent

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1. Introduction

The kind of montage carried out in *Zabriskie Point* (1970) enables analogous images to integrate in the typical depiction of capitalist disorder or liberatory negative reasoning (the arena of violence operates as the formal and confined stuff to be shaped). *Zabriskie Point* pursues an unquestionably disjunctive method to editing in its endeavor to re-imagine radical spectatorship. Its illustrations of Los Angeles and its pervious link with the bordering Death Valley display the worries of a newcomer inspecting a peculiar land (Flynn, 2016) and indicate a striving to sum up the attempts of individuals who counted on redesigning the framework of American society. (Fresko, 2014)

2. *Zabriskie Point*'s Conflicting Compilation of Cosmopolitan Pictures and Sounds

Zabriskie Point integrates illustrative desertscape sequences with the intention of assessing contemporary lifestyle (the desert is an exemplary area of unbounded space, as it is unreachable enough and the most abandoned, challenging, and unwelcoming of outdoor sceneries). The footage comprising an indecent love-in sequence with quite a few couples in the thick of the breathtaking, even though tremendously uninviting, Zabriskie Valley, is the prolonged flight of imagination, a kind of psychological evasion, that Daria Halprin gains from her concrete sexual encounter (Peters, 2015) there with Mark Frechette. Highlighted by settings antithetical to swarming oppidan existence, such diverting head trips or reveries are an indispensable survival approach in the current world, operating as provisional beguilements from the clamor, overcrowding, structure, and unbending framework of citified experience. The idea of diversion is distorted to the point where Mark's blatant utilization of a stolen plane appears self-defeating. Likewise, Daria's stunning chimeras of both the wasteland love-in (Ferguson, 2015) and the extended detonation of her manager's desert property are discordant with her superficial character. The vast void becomes the site of interminable space when Daria and Mark transfigure it into an original paradise. (Melbye, 2010)

In Antonioni's films, the cogency that is chiefly accountable for cutting edge is specialized. Technological culture is in conflict with that which individuals require to be entirely human. Technology exhibits such insensitive configurations as the vigor that advances its leading edges is the aspiration to circumvent the pervasive constraints of human existence. The protagonists who most effectively associate with the technological realm are to some extent inhuman. Technology reduces the human facet of existence (Nica, 2016a, b) and distorts and disestablishes nature. The sphere of nature represents a compass that is swiftly withdrawing from the novel realm of technology. The latter is a crannied area, one of discrete particulars. The consequence of the male's involvement in technological culture (Popescu, 2016a, b) is human degradation. Male awareness has discontinued too drastically the relation with the unconscious, being disintegrated in the process. Women have bordered on the unconscious origins of human reality (Monzo, 2016), being considerably impulsive, natural and unsophisticated. The women who have dodged widely the threatening repercussions of technologism have a connection with nature that substantiates their extemporaneity and cultivates their humanity. While several women struggle dreadfully to identify manners of repudiating their self-determination, a few women of noteworthy tenacity remain obstinately committed (Horowitz, 2015) to their humanity. (Elder, 1991)

Zabriskie Point's conflicting compilation of cosmopolitan pictures and sounds generating perceptual bewilderment cumulatively designates the city as a ground of aggression. In a society impregnated by intemperate images (Popescu and Ciurlău, 2016), social alteration is based on employing that rampage. An incoherent display of representations uncovers the preposterous unconscious of the American capitalism compelled to legitimize its argumentation via an operation of metaphorical intensity (aggressive advertising). The capacity for outrageous commitment shifts from the city to the arid region. These spaces are not inflexible contrapositions (Popescu et al., 2016), but they interpenetrate via the citified straggle. Antonioni weeds out the blending of sound and picture and deprives his images of narrational substance, supporting stunning audiovisual incentive, a praise to the thoroughly resourceful devastation elaborated upon this place of plastic abundance. (Fresko, 2014)

3. *Zabriskie Point*'s Formal Portrayal of the City as a Structure of Plastic Gist

Antonioni's montage creates a perspective of social change that assesses the damaging permeation of Los Angeles's citified topography, cataloged as a megalopolis of signs lacking meaning, into its bordering desert, portraying the metaphorical disorder brought about by a materialist (Malott, 2016) and unsound society. The sand dunes serve as the factual symbol of oblivion, a ferine rendering of any-space-whatever that expands as the zero-point for drastic restoration (Nica and Hurjui, 2016), arising as a setting inconstant to the hand of individual, and indicating the permeability between the confines that disunites civilization from nature. Antonioni's montage produces a representation of Los Angeles as a citified desert whose all-pervading and irrelevant billboards psychotically assault Mark (and by extension the viewer), as he drives across Los Angeles. (Fresko, 2014)

Daria and Mark are intimate as if recreating it for themselves and released from the assumption it will carry on, undulating over the sandy ground until their unclothed bodies are barely distinguishable from the wasteland, the short shots of their passionate tangle being interspersed with those of a psychedelic love-in (Vecsey, 2015) in which the lovers' bodies are depicted all over the desert. Their rampage for two generates a trace of optimism through which the whatever-space is reanimated, and thus converted into a place of transient sexual liberation (Hayes and Jeffries, 2016) and withdrawal from a stereotypical outside realm. This rehabilitated whatever-space may possibly stay fresh, in the human mind (Machan, 2016a, b, c), which by turning itself thoroughly may influence the emptied-out territories it hazards into, being a kind of plot-space that focuses on remodeling the whatever-space as a ground of capacity and concupiscence, both representing an extension and a falling-

out concerning the prior kinds of whatever-space, i.e. it transforms the latter's feature as a place of irrelevancy into a site of meeting and coupling. It is precisely this transience of love's representation (Fabrício, 2016) that the re-envisaged whatever-space displays discernible. While apparently signifying a place of detachment from social reality, it at the same time clarifies that the more capitalism fulfils its intrinsically imperialist propensities (Becerra Alonso et al., 2016), the harder concrete hiding sites become to identify. The whatever-space does not constitute an objective reality that lasts autonomous from perception, but one that is only composed by the concrete decoupling and estrangement that individuals undergo from the aggression or clichédness of the setting that shapes them as vagrants, as individuals deprived of connections. (Niessen, 2012) As technological society disarranged the established social order and conventional systems of morals (Carr et al., 2015), human behavior got away from the oppressive hegemony of ethical criteria. Individuals who repudiate their self-determination refute their humanity (Lăzăroiu, 2015), as they are unsuccessful in acting on those cravings via which they may become more completely human. Cravings misrepresented by subjugation frequently become blended with aggression. The alteration of one's sensual cravings demands a serious damage on one's inner self, the harm of personal self-immolation. Antonioni associates sexual adventurism with the nonperformance to exhibit oneself innovatively. (Elder, 1991)

4. *Zabriskie Point*'s Intricate Diminution of the Picture's Semiotic and Narrative Role

Antonioni's refinements of form (e.g. account by a type of visual simplicity, by an acute insistence on the utter presence of details, and a belittlement of descriptive discussion) make the subject matter appear more puzzling than it actually is. Antonioni underscores the complexities of personality (e.g. reasons, approaches, the fluctuations of the emotional life, etc.) by leaving to the spectator the responsibility of conjecturing them from signs. The striving expected of the viewers establishes a substantial psychological stress. Mark is neither a mediocre hippy nor an ordinary rebel, proving out as pretty featherbrained and insipid. The protagonist is identifiable as a paradigm whose features can be completed (Peters and Besley, 2016) by a well-informed audience. Mark is preoccupied by the urgency to take concealed and hazardous risks encompassing take-off to another place, assuming redemption awaits him there. The love-in at Zabriskie Point is incontestably engaging, inducing the sensual similarity between swarthy youth (Gillespie, 2015) and the idyllic hues of the desert and winding scenery. The organic likeness of sexual patterns to the ones of the landscape is strikingly eloquent. (Chatman, 1985)

The speeding up in pace of social alteration that contemporary mankind has undergone has annihilated people's sense of historical steadiness, and thus individuals have come to perceive their lives not only as confined within distinctly delimited lines of demarcation (Androniceanu and Ohanyan, 2016) and grasp their time as simply a concatenation of discrete stages within the latter. Individuals endure the harshness of time's pressures to reconstruct life's strength from scratch with every moment. Human beings are powerless in maintaining that relentless endeavor of determination (Davids, 2016) that the undertaking of incessant regeneration of one's self-definition requirements (life is deficient in the depth it could acquire and individuals are bad-tempered, disinterested, and without will). People's disastrous situation is in some measure an effect of the paradoxicality of the anthropomorphic design. Individuals are both a spectacle of nature with exigencies that result from that aspect and resourceful persons with practically human demands (Godlewski, 2015) that nature is unable of satisfying. (Elder, 1991)

By displaying the city as a marked scene of uncoordinated areas, the film dismantles itself of established causal correlations, and strips its pictures of predetermined signification (Cheng, 2016) with the purpose of generating meaning via conflictual association of images and sounds (Los Angeles acts as the archetype of plastic urbanism, lacking significance and reference). Notwithstanding *Zabriskie Point*'s intricate diminution of the picture's semiotic and narrative role (Life, 2016), unintended and underdetermined camera shifts and shot scales, and possibly sectional technique of montage, the city's bizarre distinctiveness radiates through. Antonioni concludes his sequence with the recondite representation of Los Angeles's industrial grounds. The lens's limited focal length disintegrates the location, depriving the picture of its referential performance, and conceptualizes the city as a genuine urban desert in which the gleam of industrial debris dissolving beneath a merciless sun prevails. (Fresko, 2014)

5. Conclusions

Zabriskie Point's formal portrayal of the city as a structure of plastic gist discloses the misconceptions upon which a progressively incoherent society establishes (Krivochen, 2016), and outlines Los Angeles as a scene of inexplicable disorder whose inhuman address (Peters, 2016) requires a correspondingly vicious redress. Its extension further functions as an all-pervading picturing of capital's self-importantly totalizing teleology. In its quest of an accurate depiction of radicality, *Zabriskie Point* eventually strengthens the indifference typical cinematic spectatorship requests from its subjects under the threatening sign of obliteration. (Fresko, 2014)

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HEALTH DETERMINANTS IN ITALIAN TYPE 2 DIABETES MELLITUS (T2DM) PATIENTS: A CRITICAL GENDER DIFFERENCES ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT. Different studies described the important role of wellbeing, self-care and self-efficacy (i.e. health determinants) to achieve best health outcomes in Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM) patients. However, literature has paid little attention to highlight the possible gender differences related to the T2DM perception of those health determinants. For these reason, the aim of this study was to describe T2DM patients' gender differences related to their wellbeing, self-care and self-efficacy. This study was performed by a secondary analysis of data from a cross-sectional research, conducted in an outpatient setting in Northern Italy. Data was collected from March 2014 and July 2016 in a cohort of 115 T2DM outpatients, aged from 60 to 91 years (mean = 69.78 ± 7.11). Our results showed that men perceived more general well-being than women, and more diabetes specific self-efficacy. No differences seemed to be related to self-care. Indeed, the stratification by gender of the bivariate analysis allowed to identify many peculiarities related to wellbeing domains and self-efficacy. This study had a pioneering nuance in Italian assessment of T2DM health determinants, and it could have a number of future implications. Further empirical researches should provide more information to deeply understand the T2DM patients' peculiarities, which could help nurses to improve a personalized care delivery.

Keywords: diabetes; gender differences; nursing; self-care; self-efficacy; well-being

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Introduction

World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that Type II Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM) is the third highest risk factor for premature mortality worldwide, preceded only by the high blood pressure and the tobacco use (WHO, 2009). According to the latest report of International Diabetes Federation (IDF), the T2DM prevalence increases every year. In fact, 415 million people worldwide (8.8% of adults aged between 20–79) have diabetes, estimating an increasing to 642 million people, where the ratio will be 1:10 among adult population within the 2040 (IDF, 2015). For this reason, T2DM is one of the largest global health challenge of the 21st century (IDF, 2015).

Considering the T2DM epidemiology, men present higher T2DM prevalence than women, in fact men with T2DM are 215.2 million, while the women are 199.5 million (IDF, 2015). The T2DM prevalence is also increasing by 2040, estimating that men will be 328.4 million, while women will be 313.3 million (IDF, 2015). Those epidemiological gender differences are also shown by the Italian population T2DM distribution, considering that

Italian men with T2DM are 6.6% of the overall population, while Italian women are 5.9% (ARNO, 2015). Despite these epidemiological differences, there are few evidence showing the possible gender differences among T2DM patients, especially related to their perceptions of the most common T2DM health determinants, such as wellbeing, self-care and self-efficacy (Ausili et al., 2016).

Health Determinants in T2DM Patients: Wellbeing, Self-care and Self-efficacy

T2DM burden is strongly associated to a worsen overall patients' wellbeing (Huang et al., 2007), where it is typically defined to be "a multidimensional construct that refers to an optimal psychological functioning and a healthy perceived feelings" (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Furthermore, findings from some studies showed a relationship between wellbeing and health, describing how wellbeing is a protective factor for the overall health (Ryff et al., 2004). Wellbeing is a very important health determinant, due to it also seems to reduce the insurgence risk of chronic diseases, such as cancers (Caruso et al., 2013) or cardiovascular morbidities (Magon et al., 2016).

Another key health determinant is given by the patients' self-care (Riegel et al., 2012). It is closely linked to every patients' health behaviors, influencing significantly the clinical trajectory of T2DM patients (Gao et al., 2013). According to Riegel et al. (2012), self-care was defined "as a natural process of maintaining health through health promoting practices and managing illness," and it could be performed by both healthy and illness patients. Many authors argued that self-care plays a strategic role even in developing the clinical standards for T2DM patients' management and education, from the national to the international levels (Arrigoni et al., 2012; Caruso et al., 2015; Haas et al., 2013). Indeed, the middle-range theory of self-care of chronic illness allows to develop theory-guided educational interventions for patients and their caregivers (Riegel et al., 2012). In this scenario, a recent meta-analysis showed how this kind of interventions has a positive effect on glycaemic control, knowledge and self-efficacy of T2DM patients (Zhao et al., 2017).

T2DM patients' behaviors, such as their self-care, is also predicted by their self-efficacy (Bohanny et al., 2013). Self-efficacy is defined as the perception of person's ability to successfully perform a task (Bandura, 1977), and it seems to mediate the relationship between knowledge and behavior, making a difference in people's actions and thoughts (Bandura, 1977; Caruso et al., 2016; Haas et al., 2013). Therefore, self-efficacy plays a paramount role in delivering a tailored care, considering that an improvement of patients' self-efficacy could enhance their answer to cope with their disease burden (Haas

et al., 2013). Moreover, empirical evidence among T2DM patients showed that self-efficacy positively predicts their glycaemic control, even in T2DM patients with cognitive impairment (Wykes et al., 2016). A similar evidence was also recently described within the heart failure population, where the self-efficacy (i.e. self-care confidence) totally mediated the relationship between patients' simple attention and their self-care, and between their working memory and their self-care (Vellone et al., 2016). For this reason, it could be argued that health interventions addressing self-efficacy could be more effective than interventions based on cognitive training to improve patients' behaviors.

Generally, different studies described the important role of health determinants to achieve the best health outcomes in T2DM patients, such as the role of wellbeing (Nicolucci et al., 2004), self-care and self-efficacy (King et al., 2010). Health determinants play a key role in predicting a better glycemic control and overall wellbeing (Zhao et al., 2017). Even considering the diverse T2DM epidemiology in its gender stratification, at a worldwide level, but also at an Italian level (ARNO, 2015), there are few evidence highlighting the possible gender differences in health determinants patients' perception.

Purpose

Despite the important role of health determinants to achieve the best health outcomes in T2DM patients, there is very few evidence highlighting the possible gender differences in health determinants patients' perception by patients. This lack of evidence could have an impact on the care delivery, due to clinicians have poor elements to personalize their care plans, considering the main gender differences, and to assess an evidence-based education. This scenario is also emphasized by the heterogeneity of the T2DM epidemiology in its gender stratification, at a worldwide level, but also at an Italian context (ARNO, 2015).

For this reason, the aim of this study is to describe the T2DM patients' gender differences related to their wellbeing, self-care and self-efficacy (i.e. their main health determinants). According to the empirical evidence (e.g., King et al., 2010; Vellone et al., 2016), and to best answer to this study research aim, the authors set the following hypotheses:

H1: Men perception of wellbeing is higher than in women
H2: Men have higher perception of self-efficacy than women
H3: There are no significant gender differences related to self-care
H4: There are gender differences, considering the bivariate relationships between wellbeing, self-care and self-efficacy.

Methods

Study Design and Sample

This study was performed by a secondary analysis of data from a cross-sectional study, conducted in an outpatient setting in Northern Italy (Caruso et al., 2015). The parental study details were published elsewhere, and it was aimed (a) to describe the relationship between self-care, self-efficacy, well-being and health perception in Italian patients with T2DM and (b) to describe the relations between T2DM patients' lifestyle and cognitive decline (Caruso et al., 2015). Moreover, the Institutional Review Board of the center approved the study before data collection (prot. PSD/n/822).

Considering the parental study, data collection took place during out-patients' visits to diabetes center. After that participants have signed a written informed consent document. All data collection was performed and monitored by two trained nurses, and all the enrolled patients in the parent study were over 60 years of age, with a confirmed diagnosis of T2DM. The period of data collection was between March 2014 and July 2015. In order to extract the patients for this study, the authors set the following exclusion criteria: (a) patients with a severe disease other than T2DM (e.g. advanced cancers, heart failure over than II NYHA, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, psychiatric disease, coronary event in the last three months); (b) recent diagnosis of T2DM (i.e. less than 6 months); (c) moderate or severe cognitive impairment, assessed using Mini Mental State Examination (MMSE), adjusted for age and literacy (Tombaugh & McIntyre, 1992). After the application of these exclusion criteria, a convenience sample of 150 T2DM patients was selected and assessed using a robust sensibility test (Ding & VanderWeele, 2016) to check and control possible confounding variables that may undermine the validity of inferences within this study. Those selected patients (n=150) represented the patients enrolled for this study.

Instruments

The following instruments were used by the research team to collect the data.

Sociodemographic domain. This section was designed by the research team, and it was in line with the sociodemographic collection of recent studies among T2DM patients (Ausili et al., 2016). The items collected were related to nationality, marital status, education, employment, tobacco use, age, Body Mass Index (BMI), years from diagnosis of T2DM and glycated hemoglobin (Hb1Ac).

WHO-Wellbeing questionnaire (WBQ). This self-report questionnaire was validated into Italian by Nicolucci et al. (2004). It provides an assessment of four domains related to the wellbeing, giving an *overall wellbeing score* (WBQ_Tot). WBQ domains are: *depression* (6 items), *anxiety* (6 items),

energy (4 items) and *positive wellbeing* (6 items). Each item is scored using Likert measurements from zero to three (0 = "not at all"; 3 = "all the time"). To compute WBQ total score, it is necessary to revise the items related to the anxiety and depression domains, and to sum each item (Nicolucci et al., 2004).

General self-efficacy (GSE). This questionnaire was validated into Italian by Scholz et al. (2002), and it is based on the general self-efficacy theorization of Schwarzer & Jerusalem (1995). While self-efficacy is commonly described to be situation-specific (Bandura, 1977), some authors conceptualize self-efficacy in a broader way (Caruso et al., 2016; Scholz et al., 2002), defining the general self-efficacy as "the one's confidence in coping with their daily hassles" as well as their adaptation after experiencing all kinds of stressful life events (Scholz et al., 2002; Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). Hence, GSE measures self-efficacy in its broader sense, and it was a self-report mono-dimensional scale (10 items), where each item had a response ranging from one (not at all true) to four (exactly true). To compute the GSE total score, the authors suggested to use the mean of the items (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995).

Diabetes specific Self-efficacy (SE_spec). Talbot et al. (1997) developed a multi-dimensional self-report scale (Multidimensional Diabetes Questionnaire) to assess different domains of T2DM patients, where one domain was specifically developed to measure diabetes specific self-efficacy (Talbot et al., 1997). An Italian validation is available, since 2009 (Lazzari et al., 2009). For this study, only the diabetes specific self-efficacy was taken into account (7 items), and it aims to explore the patients' confidence in coping with their daily diabetes specific activity (e.g., *how confident are you in your ability to test your blood sugar at the recommended frequency?*). The diabetes specific self-efficacy responses were rated on a zero (not at all confident) to 100 (very confident) rating scale, according to Bandura indication to develop self-efficacy scales (Bandura, 1977). To compute the diabetes specific self-efficacy total score, the authors suggested using the mean of these seven items.

Summary of Diabetes Self-Care Activities (SDSCA). SDSCA is a brief self-report scale, aimed to assess the self-care in diabetes patients (Toobert & Glasgow, 1994). It was recently validated into Italian (Ausili et al., 2015), and it consists in 11 items, measuring different self-care aspects (i.e., general diet, specific diet, exercise, medication taking, blood-glucose testing, foot care and smoking). Despite the solid evidence on SDSCA reliability (Toobert et al., 2000), there were few evidence related to its psychometric structure (i.e. construct validity). For this reason, in order to be more prudent considering SDSCA in this study analysis, the authors decided to use only the self-care total score and not the single self-care aspects of the scale. To compute the self-care total score, it was needed to sum the first ten items, but revising the

scoring of the item four, and subtracting one point for each declared smoked cigarette (Ausili et al., 2015).

Data analysis

This secondary analysis was carried out testing four hypotheses, following the main study aim. Previously, the data (each single included item) were checked using the frequency distribution to assess possible missing, errors or outliers. The computes to measure the different constructs from the questionnaires' items were performed according to the authors of references. Descriptive statistics was used to describe the sample characteristics, where categorical data were presented as frequencies, and continuous data were presented as means ± standard deviation (M±SD) for normally distributed variables, and as median ± interquartile range (25°–75° percentile) for continues data non-normally distributed.

The study of skewness was used to preliminary assess the normal distribution of the variables, followed by the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test. The missing data were managed by using a pairwise approach. The sample characteristics were compared between groups (male versus women) using (a) Pearson's X^2 tests for dichotomous variables in the univariate analysis, where Bonferroni multiple testing correction was used to control for error effects, and (b) using The Student's t-test for parametric values. Mann-Whitney U test was used to test H1, H2 and H3. The Spearman correlation study was used to test H4. All data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science version 22 (SPSS, Chicago, IL, USA) and Microsoft Excel, and the level of significance of each test was set at 0.05 and two-tailed.

Results

A total of 150 T2DM patients with an age range of 60 to 91 years (mean = 69.78 ± 7.11) were enrolled in this study. The majority of patients were males (*n* = 87; 58%), Italians (*n* = 147; 98%), married (*n* = 119; 79.3%), with a high school diploma (*n* = 50; 33.3%) and retired (*n* = 97; 64.7%). Moreover, 90% did not smoke (*n* = 135), their BMI was a mean of 27.61 *Kg/m2* (SD = 4.79), with 12.61 years from their T2DM diagnosis (SD = 9.05), and with a Hb1Ac mean of 55.98 mmol/mol (SD = 12.76). Considering these characteristics, stratified by gender (Table 1), the sample was homogenous (i.e., without significant differences) regarding nationality (p = 0.137), education (p = 0.100), smoking habit (p = 0.690), age (p = 0.328), BMI (p = 0.061), years from diagnosis of diabetes (p = 0.236), Hb1Ac (p = 0.384). The only significant differences were related to marital status (p = 0.000) and employment (p = 0.000).

H1: Men perception of wellbeing is higher than in women
The wellbeing domains were (a) depression (WBQ_D), (b) anxiety (WBQ_A), (c) energy (WBQ_E), (d) positive wellbeing (WBQ_P), (e) wellbeing total score (WBQ_Tot), and the descriptive statistics are shown in Table 2. WBQ_P ($p = 0.001$) and WBQ_Tot ($p = 0.001$) were higher in men (Table 2), while there were not significant differences considering the other well-being domains ($p > 0.05$) (Table2).

H2: Men have higher perception of self-efficacy than women
GSE was not significantly different among men and women ($p = 0.186$), while diabetes specific self-efficacy was higher in men ($p = 0.023$), as shown in Table 2.

H3: There are no significant gender differences related to self-care
Considering the comparison related to self-care, there were not significant differences related to the gender stratification ($p = 0.784$).

H4: There are gender differences, considering the bivariate relationships between wellbeing, self-care and self-efficacy
Considering the two matrixes of Spearman correlation (men and women) showed in Table 3, we found some differences. Firstly, only in women WBQ_A (anxiety) had a moderate positive relationship with WBQ_D (depression) ($r_s = +0.317$; $p < 0.05$). Secondly, WBQ_E (energy) presented a negative relationship with WBQ_A (anxiety) in both men ($r_s = -0.282$; $p < 0.01$) and women ($r_s = -0.498$; $p < 0.01$), but it showed a negative relation with WBQ_D (depression) only in women ($r_s = -0.308$; $p < 0.05$). Thirdly, WBQ_P (positive wellbeing) had a negative relationship with WBQ_D (depression) in both men ($r_s = -0.504$; $p < 0.01$) and women ($r_s = -0.520$; $p < 0.01$), but only among women it also had a positive relationship with WBQ_E (energy) ($r_s = +0.302$; $p < 0.05$). Fourthly, WBQ_Tot (wellbeing total score) had a negative relationship with WBQ_A (anxiety) in both men ($r_s = -0.447$; $p < 0.01$) and women ($r_s = -0.463$; $p < 0.01$) and a positive relationship with WBQ_P ($r_{s\ MAN} = +0.690$; $r_{s\ WOMEN} = +0.542$; $p < 0.01$), but only in men it showed a positive relation with WBQ_E (energy) ($r_s = + 0.397$; $p < 0.01$).

While, considering the GSE the only significant differences were related to the positive relationship between the same GSE and WBQ_E (energy) among men ($r_s = +0.241$; $p < 0.05$). Indeed, there were not significant gender differences related to diabetes specific self-efficacy, which was the unique construct in relationship with self-care ($r_{s\ MAN} = +0.460$; $r_{s\ WOMEN} = +0.472$; $p < 0.01$).

Discussion

To the best of our knowledge this is the first Italian study focusing on the gender differences' perception related to wellbeing, self-care and self-efficacy in T2DM patients, aged over sixty years. The study sample seems to reflect the over sixty Italian diabetic population, even considering the differences related to marital status and employment, where the women are widower with higher frequency than men, and the same women have higher frequency of unemployment (ARNO, 2015). Moreover, the authors tested four hypotheses, where H1 and H2 were only partially accepted, and H3 and H4 were accepted.

According to Nicolucci et al.'s (2004) findings, the authors hypothesize that men perceive more wellbeing than women (H1), and that hypothesis is partially confirmed by our study results. In a previous study, which is not focused on describing the T2DM patients' gender differences, but aimed to validate WBQ, it seemed that there were significant differences in all the WBQ domains, even considering that their sample ($n_{\text{patients aged over sixty}} = 151$) was comparable to our study sample ($n = 150$) (Nicolucci et al., 2004). Their results showed that men perceive less depression and anxiety than women ($p < 0.000$), while men had higher levels of energy, positive and total wellbeing ($p < 0.000$) (Nicolucci et al., 2004). Our results differed from that study, due to the differences were not related to the domains of anxiety, depression and energy, but were related only to the domain of positive and total wellbeing ($p = 0.001$). However, even considering the international literature, it seemed that T2DM men perceive less anxiety and depression than women (Chiu & Wray, 2011; Demmer et al., 2015). Indeed, some evidence coming from United States of America (USA), and tested using structural equation modeling, highlighted how T2DM women showed less functional coping strategies then men (Demmer et al., 2015). Those could be the reasons underpinning the gender differences, considering the level of anxiety and depression, which are higher in women.

Considering self-efficacy, H2 was partially accepted, due to there were not significant differences regarding the GSE. This could be explained considering the broad sense of GSE, which could be less specific to explain the relationship between disease-specific issues and patients' ability to cope with them. Although, GSE did not show differences, diabetes specific self-efficacy was in line with H2, where its scoring was higher in men ($p = 0.023$). That difference was also highlighted in international literature, where diabetes specific self-efficacy was described as follow: (a) as an indirect mediator of the relationship between gender and HbA1c, blood pressure, BMI, and early complications; (b) as a direct mediator of the relationship between gender and physical exercise (Chiu & Wray, 2011).

According to some evidence, the authors hypothesized that there were not significant gender differences related to self-care (H3) (Toljamo & Hentinen, 2001). H3 was accepted by our results, showing no gender differences related to self-care. Even if our results were in line with some studies (Toljamo & Hentinen, 2001; Toobert et al., 2000), the literature showed diverse results, highlighting some gender differences related to the self-care levels (Bai et al., 2009). Hence, there were no consensus related to this issue, even because the self-care behaviors in T2DM patients were not yet measurable using a theory-driven assessment tool, such as in other important chronic disease (i.e., hearth failure) (Riegel et al., 2012). In other words, it is reasonable that a theory-driven tool aimed to assess the self-care behaviors in T2DM patients should help the understanding of the self-care gender differences, giving some additional implication for clinical practice.

The study of bivariate correlations, stratifying the sample by gender (H4) should help the comprehension of which determinants could be useful to best describe the phenomena (i.e., gender differences among T2DM patients). Our highlighted correlations related to gender differences gave some hints for the development of future research frameworks. Hence, gender should be considered a control variable in studies aimed to describe the relationships between wellbeing, self-care and self-efficacy, whenever a multivariate model will be used.

This study had some limitations. The first is given by the study design, being a secondary analysis on a dataset of a previous study data collection. Then, the data collection was cross-sectional, and for this reason we could not have any information about stability of the investigated phenomena and strong inferences were not allowed. Moreover, the sample was referred to a single outpatient setting in Northern Italy, thus results should be generalizable with caution. Despite those limitations, the major study strengths are related to the pioneering description of the health determinates among T2DM Italian patients aged over sixty years, where the study sample well represented T2DM population, considering the broad variance of the investigated health determinants, and even of the glycemic control of those patients (Hb1Ac).

Conclusions

Nursing care delivery is mainly characterized by the understanding of patients' needs (Caruso & Lichosik, 2015; Caruso et al., 2013), and nursing competencies should answer to those needs, due to nurses' competence is performance-specific (Caruso et al., 2016). Within this scenario, the recognition of patients' peculiarities is paramount to determine what should be the results of nurses' performance, where the gender differences in T2DM patients could be important to achieve better outcomes, even considering the diverse gender

distribution in Italian context. Our results clarify how gender is important to assess a personalized planning for T2DM patients, aged over sixty years and it could have a number of future implications.

Firstly, it is useful to perform a comparison with the international literature as highlighted in the discussion section. Moreover, the authors find some issues related to the above-mentioned comparison, due to there are only few tools to measure T2DM health determinants used as a gold-standard in research and clinical settings, determining a diverse field of knowledge. Our results should help to guide the patients' education, considering some highlighted peculiarities in this study related to T2DM patients' gender differences perception of their wellbeing, self-care and self-efficacy.

Indeed, this study could be useful to hypothesize the mediator role of self-efficacy in the relationship between the characteristics of the T2DM patients (e.g., cognitive ability, age, education level) and their health determinants. For this reason, further empirical researches should provide more information to deeply understand the T2DM patients' peculiarities, which could help nurses to improve a personalized care delivery. The results of our study suggest a deeply understanding of the phenomena using longitudinal study designs, considering some diverse results coming from the literature, and giving many hints for the development of future research frameworks.

More generally, the field of gender differences studies in health promotion and community health should be more represented in empirical research, considering the current imbalance we often find in studies samples (Polit & Beck, 2013). The implication of the possible gap in knowledge arising from gender differences analysis could have an impact on the optimal management of the major chronic diseases. To best face with all those possible issues, it is recommended a paradigmatic shift when research designs are planned giving more emphasis in considering how gender could impact the research findings.

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Table 1 Sample characteristics, stratified by gender

		MEN		WOMEN		p§
		n	%	*n*	%	
Nationality	Italian	84	96.6	63	100	0.137[a]
	Other	3	3.4	0	0	
Marital Status	Unmarried	5	5.7	2	3.2	0.000[b]
	Married	79	90.8	40	63.5	
	Divorced	1	1.1	1	1.6	
	Widower	2	2.3	20	31.7	
Education	None	0	0	3	4.8	0.100[c]
	Primary school	22	25.3	19	30.2	
	Secondary school	23	26.4	21	33.3	
	High school	33	37.9	17	27	
	University	9	10.3	3	4.8	
Employment	Retired	61	70.1	36	57.1	0.000[d]
	Employed	21	24.1	3	4.8	
	Freelance	5	5.7	0	0	
	Unemployed	0	0	24	38.1	
Smoker	Yes	12	13.8	3	4.8	0.690[e]
	No	75	86.2	60	95.2	
		Mean	*St. Dev.*	*Mean*	*St. Dev.*	
Age		69.3	7.2	70.4	6.9	0.328[f]
BMI		27.0	4.2	28.5	5.4	0.061[g]
Years from diagnosis		13.3	10.5	11.7	6.6	0.236[h]
Hb1Ac (mmol/mol)		55.2	12.1	57.2	13.6	0.384[i]

Legend:

§ P-values estimated in relation to the nature of the variables, as follow:

[a] Pearson's X^2 test (2.217); d.f. = 1

[b] Pearson's X^2 test (25.610); d.f. = 3

[c] Pearson's X^2 test (7.790); d.f. = 4

[d] Pearson's X^2 test (46.288); d.f. = 3

[e] Pearson's X^2 test (3.311); d.f. = 1

[f] The Student's t-test (t=-0.981); d.f. = 138

[g] The Student's t-test (t=-1.895); d.f. = 114

[h] The Student's t-test (t=1.190); d.f. = 146

[I] The Student's t-test (t=-0.874); d.f. = 125

Bonferroni multiple testing correction was used to control for error effects for Pearson's X^2 test

All the statistics was performed setting the level of significance at 0.05

Table 2 T2DM Health Determinants: gender differences

	Male			**Women**			**p§**
	25° pct	*median*	*75° pct*	*25° pct*	*median*	*75° pct*	
WBQ_D	*1.67*	*1.83*	*2.00*	*1.50*	*1.83*	*2.17*	0.717
WBQ_A	0.83	1.00	1.33	0.83	1.33	1.50	0.274
WBQ_E	1.25	1.50	1.50	1.00	1.50	1.75	0.397
WBQ_P	2.00	2.33	3.00	1.50	2.00	2.33	**0.001**
WBQ_Tot	35.00	37.00	41.00	32.00	35.00	37.00	**0.001**
SE_Gen	2.70	3.00	3.30	2.60	2.90	3.30	0.186
SE_spec	60.00	71.43	82.86	47.14	64.29	75.71	**0.023**
Self-care	31.50	40.00	47.00	33.00	41.00	48.00	0.784

Legend:
§ P-values estimated using the Mann-Whitney U test, the level of significance was set at 0.05 (2-tailed)

WBQ_D = *Depression*; WBQ_A = *Anxiety*; WBQ_E = *Energy*; WBQ_P = *Positive Well-being*; WBQ_Tot = *Wellbeing Total score* GSE= *General Self-efficacy*; Self-care = *Self-care total score*; SE_spec = *Self-efficacy diabetes-specific*

Table 3 Spearman correlations, stratifying the sample by gender

Men								
Constructs	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
WBQ_D **(1)**	-							
WBQ_A **(2)**	-.068	-						
WBQ_E **(3)**	-.003	-.282**	-					
WBQ_P **(4)**	-.504**	-.166	.149	-				
WBQ_Tot **(5)**	.037	-.447**	.397**	.690**	-			
GSE **(6)**	-.335**	-.108	.241*	.413**	.374**	-		
Self-care **(7)**	.061	.191	.056	.064	.024	.136	-	
SE_spec **(8)**	.192	-.190	.042	.340**	.360**	.403**	.460**	-
Women								
Constructs	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
WBQ_D **(1)**	-							
WBQ_A **(2)**	.317*	-						
WBQ_E **(3)**	-.308*	-.498**	-					
WBQ_P **(4)**	-.520**	.167	.302*	-				
WBQ_Tot **(5)**	-.176	-.463**	.146	.542**	-			
GSE **(6)**	-.445**	-.024	.003	.540**	.311*	-		
Self-care **(7)**	.023	.011	.077	.242	.222	.205	-	
SE_spec **(8)**	.282*	.113	.157	.184	.000	.074	.472**	-

Legend:
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

WBQ_D = *Depression*; WBQ_A = *Anxiety*; WBQ_E = *Energy*; WBQ_P = *Positive Well-being*; WBQ_Tot = *Wellbeing Total score*
GSE = *General Self-efficacy*; Self-care = *Self-care total score*; SE_spec = *Self-efficacy diabetes-specific*

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EUROPEAN IDENTITY AND GENDER EQUALITY POLICIES: SHAPING THE PRACTICE OF GENDER EXPERTISE

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ABSTRACT. This paper explores the relationship between the European identity project and European Union gender equality policy in terms of the implications for the practice of gender expertise. In the first section of the paper I chart the development of gender equality policies over the last six decades, outlining pivotal shifts in EU governance models and policy instruments which define the incremental incorporation of "gender equality" into visions of European identity. This sheds light on a dynamic of reciprocity whereby claims about shared European concepts of gender equality serve to address EU democratic deficits, and EU frameworks discursively legitimate gender knowledge and expertise. In the second part of the article I explore the implications of said relationship for the practice of gender expertise in the EU. This includes discussions of Open Methods of Coordination in the form of mainstreaming, accession and integration, and the tensions of market driven equality work. This article sheds light on the challenges in the political economy of gender knowledge and gender expertise in the epistemological space of European identity and EU narratives of progress and civilizational supremacy.

Keywords: gender; equality; expertise; European identity; European Union

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1. Introduction

Since its inception, the collaboration and integration of European states of the current European Union have been cast as a powerful peace and prosperity framework, wherein member states are bound by a unique unifying thread (Laursen, 2012). The Solemn Declaration of the European Union signed in 1983 reads: "The Heads of State or Government, on the basis of an awareness of a common destiny and the wish to affirm the European identity, confirm their commitment to progress towards an ever closer union among the peoples and Member States of the European Community."

According to this statement the thread is a coherent and common European identity, but what exactly are the characteristics of this identity and the implications thereof? Shore (2000: 19) argues that the EU is engaged in a cultural project of identity building which is guided by the objective of engendering a transnational European public. The concretization of a European citizenship and identity is "a major priority for the EU in order to address the democratic deficit it is faced with and legitimize itself" (Tsaliki, 2007: 157). This can be seen in the flag and the anthem, in administrative documents such the European health card and European driving licenses, in cultural mega-events such as European cities of Culture and the Eurovision Song Contest, or more playful initiatives like the Euromyths blog. Tsaliki (2007: 160) argues that the 1998 In from the Margins report by the Council of Europe "posits the specificity of Europeans as bearers of the legacy of civilization and democracy – a common European cultural bond." This cultural bond is defined by shared values, and in this article I focus specifically on the value of gender equality.

Gender equality has been declared a fundamental European value in the 2009 Lisbon Treaty, gender equality policies represent one of the most substantive domains of European Social Policy (Jacquot, 2010: 128), and the current EU claims to offer the "most progressive gender regime in the world" (Abels & Mushaben, 2012: 1). Gender equality, and the promotion thereof, has an important place in the official self-description of the EU and is part of the purported European "cultural bond." In this paper I explore the shifting and shaping of gender equality policies over the timeline of the development of the EU. I outline an arc of increasing valorization of gender equality as a marker of European identity and, therefore, a tool for democratic legitimation. I then reflect on the implications of this relationship for the practice of gender expertise. I follow the development of gender equality strategies from the 1957 Rome Treaty, through equal pay and positive action initiatives, into the gender mainstreaming era and finally current "diversity management" strategies. I work with the terms of European identity and gender equality. In this paper I use "European identity" to refer the specific "self" constructed through

the representation of the EU as a normative power, a term in frequent use in official EU documents. This establishes the necessity for compliance with EU norms and polices the borders of "Europe" as a political and cultural space (see Diez, 2005). I do not use the term gender equality as fixed in meaning, but rather as signifier of the prevailing visions of the concept at a given time and in a given context. This meaning depends on the representation of the "problem" in policy (Bacchi, 1999), and the discursive construction thereof through policy texts, instruments and strategies (see Lombardo et al., 2009). Equality meanings can be schematically identified as transitions and debates between the conceptualization of equality as sameness, to that of equality as difference, and finally equality as transformation (Rees, 2005; Squires, 2005; Walby, 2005). I draw on examples from a constellation of research and writing around gender equality architecture and policy instruments, state feminism, equality institutions, key actors, integration and regulation and the discursive construction of equality policies. In the first section of the paper I lay out key moments in the incremental process of reciprocal legitimation between European identity and gender equality concepts through transitions in models of governance and equality visions. This section was guided by the question of how gender equality, as symbolized through gender equality policies, came to form a cornerstone of the EU claims of democratic legitimacy. Against this backdrop, the second section of the paper is dedicated to a series of reflections on practice of gender expertise in this environment. Here I was guided by the question of the implications of gender equality as a marker of European identity for the practice of gender expertise. Here I discuss examples of mainstreaming, accession and integration, state feminism, transnational collaboration and multidimensional models of gender relations.

A vast and growing body of research on gender equality policy and European Union integration exists. However, links between the European identity project and gender equality policies are mostly implicit. The contribution of this paper is to explicitly discuss this link, and elucidating some of the implications of this relationship for the practice of gender expertise in the European region. In analyzing the trajectory of EU gender equality policies over time I follow Hemming's (2011: 3) invitation to look at the stories that are told about Western feminism's recent past, applying a critical view of progress narratives which emphasize celebration of "newness, transformation and proliferation" (Hemmings, 2011: 56). I outline ways in which the gender equality architecture and agenda of the EU form a cornerstone of the EU claim for legitimacy as a custodian of transnational common European interest and how these dynamics both legitimate and constrain gender equality work. This discussion is particularly opportune given the current landscape of anti-gender and far right politics in Europe (Köttig et al., 2017).

2. From Equal Pay to Positive Action

The history of the European unification project runs six decades, from the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) to a Common Market to the European Economic Community (ECC), from European Communities to the European Union (EU). Over this time span gender related policies of the EU have changed, with the commitment to equality as an explicit objective only really emerging in the second half of the '90s. "Hard-law" legally binding directives and European Court of Justice rulings (Beveridge & Velluti, 2008; Gerhards et al., 2009) based on economic citizenship and labor market participation (Rossilli, 2000; Rees, 2005; Chiva, 2009), have evolved into "soft-law" approaches characterized by Commission initiated Programmes of Action, Recommendations and the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) (Beveridge & Velluti, 2008; Lombardo & Meier, 2008; Jacquot, 2010). Here I follow the trajectory of the project of unification itself, which has shifted from economic integration to "more recent concerns with integration as a cultural process" (Shore, 2000: 1).

The first appearance of gender related policies is the Article 119 of the Treaty of Rome which included a principle for equal pay for equal work (Mazey, 1995; Cichowski, 2001; Arribas & Carrasco, 2003). The Article was included in the Treaty to assuage the concern that some countries might use cheaper "female" labor to competitive advantage (Cichowski, 2001). Thus, equal pay for equal work legislation originated with the aim of regulating the internal market, a general and ongoing trend where gender equality objectives are a concern for EU bodies primarily when they intersect with economic priority areas such as employment (Rossilli, 2000; Ostner, 2000; Stratigaki, 2005; Roth, 2008; Chiva, 2009). Consequently, the implications of Article 119 were largely ignored by signatory states through the 1960s (Mazey, 1995; Cichowski, 2001).

Nonetheless, reforms on equal pay are significant in the conceptualization of gender equality as they embody some of the "very earliest reforms indicating the arrival of 'women's inequality' as a 'social problem'" (Bacchi, 1999: 75). European Court of Justice (ECJ) rulings on key litigation moments in favor of the supranational application of Article 119 (now Article 157 in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union) established equal pay as a judicially enforceable right and reified the regulatory power of the ECJ in equality law (Ostner, 2000; Cichowski, 2001; Chiva, 2009; Abels & Mushaben, 2012; Bego, 2015). A commonly referenced, and illustrative, example is that of the Defrenne vs. Sabena cases beginning 1976.

The Defrenne cases (1971, 1976, 1978) reached the European Court of Justice (ECJ) after being dismissed by the Belgium courts (Tribunal du Travail and Court du Travail) (Ostner, 2001; Cichowski, 2001). In short, the

cases were based on the fact that the Belgium national airline Sabena which gave a 15 year later retiring age, full pension benefits and higher wages to their male flight and not their female flight crew. Seeing this as an opportunity to establish "direct effect" of Article 119 (now article 141), that is the permission for individual litigants to bring their cases before the ECJ, lawyer Elaine Vogel-Polsky fought for, and eventually won, the application of Article 119 in the context of the Belgium national legal infrastructure (Cichowski, 2001; Evans Case & Givens, 2010).

Authors writing on sex discrimination law describe the ECJ rulemaking regarding Article 119 in the Defrenne cases in strong terms (Ellis, 2000; Cichowski, 2001; Stratigaki, 2004; Meehan, 1990). Cichowski (2001) states that the aforementioned rulings enabled Art. 119 to become the site for an expansive rights discourse, becoming the "driving force behind EC sex equality legislation in the 1970s and 1980s." Similarly, Ellis (2000: 1403) writes that the power of EU sex discrimination law is based in the "generous and purposive interpretation" of the equal pay principle by the EJC which begun with the Defrenne cases, without which "it is unlikely that the law would have been developed to its current scope and depth." It is widely acknowledged that the Court's jurisprudence, mobilized through individual legal actors with equality objectives, opened up the opportunity to push for stronger policy (Hoskyns, 1996; Ostner, 2000; Arribas & Carrasco, 2003, Rees, 2005; Chiva, 2009; Abels & Mushaben, 2012).

This ruling indicates one of the first instances of the establishment of the relationship between European identity and concepts of gender equality. The rulings transformed an article designed to keep market competitiveness into one on gender equality, envisioned at the time as a question of sameness between men and women. The Court (1976a: 470) statement reads "this provision forms part of the social objectives of the Community, which is not merely an economic union but is at the same time intended, by common action, to ensure social progress." These rulings establish the ECJ as a supranational arbiter in employment conditions disputes. A number of authors point to this transformation of Article 119 as the establishment of a link by EC political leaders between the enhancement of popular legitimacy through the expansion of social policy (Meehan, 1990; Mazey, 1998; Ostner, 2000; Cichowski, 2001). Thus, the first EU equality initiatives represent the binding of economic prosperity with ideas of social progress and gender equality as markers of European identity.

This impetus continued in the form of the 1975 Equal Pay Directive and the Equal Treatment Directive in 1976 expanded the principle to access, training, promotion and conditions of work. The attempts to promote de jure equality between men and women (Arribas & Carrasco, 2003: 22) indicate the centrality of negative integration principles, like the removal of market

barriers and common market regulation, in EEC equality logics (Ostner, 2000). In a broader theoretical sense these dynamics draw on theories of modernization, neoliberalism and neo-functionalist theories of integration which predict a spillover of gender equality from the economic to social domains (Rossilli, 2000; Shore, 2000; Chiva, 2009; Gerhards et al., 2009). The "hard law" approaches of this period involved the legal instruments and focused on labor force participation of women. According to this understanding, equality is a problem of the public sphere of employment (see Bacchi, 1999), attainable through having women reach male norms of productive labor by being treated the same (Rossilli, 2000; Rees, 2005; Chiva, 2009). These policies are "rooted in a conception of women as an actual or potential workforce in the market" (Pascall & Lewis, 2004: 383). For example, one of the first Europe wide surveys (see Sullerot, 1986) described an average calculation of 86% of women's active lifetime not spent in maternity as available to be dedicated to productive labor. Thus, the notion of a "working women" becomes one of the economic imperatives of the EU prosperity framework.

On the other side of this dynamic, European labor market regulation was both influenced by, and mobilized in service of, feminist and women's movement fight for labor market rights for women and women's economic autonomy (Hubert, 2012: 147). Writing in 1984 Warner talks about the catalytic role of the women's movement and feminist groups in the development of equal opportunities legislation during the 1970s; an influence widely acknowledged authors writing in subsequent decades (Lovenduski, 1986; Mazey, 1995, 1998; Bacchi, 1999; Holli, 2008; Ghodsee, 2004; Chiva, 2009; Abels & Mushaben, 2012). During this time there was an intensification of research on women and gender within the EU, including Vallance and Davies (1986) research on women in the European Parliament and Hoskyns's own Women's Equality and the European Community (1985).

This research complemented the influence of international trends around women's political participation and the recognition of the importance of gender-balance in decision making. For example, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) established in 1979 placed women in decision-making on the international agenda, providing significant initial institutional support for the notion of gender parity in political representation (Krook, 2001; Crèboval, 2004). On a more specifically European level, the German Green Party applied equal participation between men and women through a 50% quota and electoral lists from 1979 initiating a significant debate around mandatory political representation of women in national political parties (Meyer, 2008: 401). As these same parties participated in European parliamentary elections through the 1980s and 1990s the theme of parity was put on the agenda (MacRae, 2012). The

Council of Europe commissioned a study on parity democracy in 1979, linking gender equality and democracy, and reiterating the importance of women's participation in decision-making across political contexts (Hùbert, 2012; MacRae, 2012). These initiatives influenced EU actors to prioritize the political representation of women, influencing in turn the application of parity democracy strategies at national and local levels (Krook, 2001; Leijnaar, 2004).

The 1980s were characterized by positive action and political commitment to gender equality concerns precipitating the development of the EU equality architecture. In 1981 the Equal Opportunities Unit of the Directorate-General (DGV) was established; and in 1984 the European Parliament (EP) Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities and the first Equal Opportunities Action Programme (1982–1985) began (Arribas & Carrasco, 2003; Jacquot, 2005). This decade saw the implementation of equal opportunity positive action measures and budgetary instruments such as Community action programmes for equality and financial support from the European Social Fund (Jacquot, 2010; Rees, 2005). These changes represent a shift from a passive to more active equality policies from inclusion (Squires, 2005: 368), or tinkering which seeks gender neutrality (Rees, 2005), to attempted reversal of discrimination (Squires, 2005) by tailoring policies to the specific needs and disadvantages faced by women as a social group (Rees, 2005).

These strategies developed in response to a variety of factors. Firstly, major structural changes in the economy at this time: the growth of the service economy, shifting male bread-winner models, unemployment, job precarity, the effects of two oil shocks and the feminization of the labor market (Hùbert, 2012). The high increase in women's labor market participation in this period precipitated the emergence of the work-life balance debate as this challenged traditional family patterns and opened a debate around workplace segregation and family responsibilities centering gender as an explanatory factor in labor supply trends (Rossilli, 2000; Rees, 2005; Chiva, 2009; Hùbert, 2012: 153). Second, the ongoing struggle of developing an EU employment policy that takes into account both the factors of new market regulation, integration and "the diversity of historical, legal and institutional traditions of the member states" (Rhodes, 2005: 279). Thirdly, these factors coincided with international feminist demands for women's labor market participation, evident in the first UN Women's Conference in Mexico in 1975.

With the Third Medium-Term Action Programme (1991–1995) there was an explicit commitment to promoting women in political decision making, giving rise to funding for nine expert networks on equality policy. For example, the European Expert Network on "Women in Decision Making" which analyzed obstacles to the involvement of women in decision-making and proposed appropriate policies (MacRae, 2012: 308). During this time the

non-governmental organization European Women's Lobby was established, funded by the Commission, to represent women's interests at the European level. Krook (2001: 9) argues that this Action Programme significantly expanded the focus of the Action Programmes of the previous decade to "the socioeconomic context within which women operate as workers." This includes sections on the roles of different actors, the impact of legislation and, for the first time, the participation of women in political decision-making. This period also saw the Council generate a series of Resolutions, Recommendations and Communications on the political participation of women (Krook 2001; MacRae, 2012). The development of this architecture is part of the development of the gender acquis which is a precursor to gender equality policies becoming a formally declared pursuit of the EU.

This shift accompanied a change in the substance and form of the EU itself. Integration changed from a predominantly economic project into a more political project as the concept of "European citizenship" was introduced with the Maastricht Treaty ratified in 1992. However, the Treaty referenda in Denmark and France indicated resistance from citizens to the single market, which the EU responded to through a focus on employment promotion (Hùbert, 2012: 159). This is evident in the Amsterdam Treaty of 1997 which includes equal opportunities in the fourth pillar of employment policy and acted as the basis for the first European Employment Strategy (EES). Most significantly, with this strategy equal opportunities moves from "an issue of social justice, to an integral part of the changing employment map of Europe" (Rubery et al., 1999: 2), with gender equality and non-discrimination as "guiding legal principles of the union" (Locher, 2012: 69). As Krook (2012: 14) writes, the Amsterdam Treaty positions equality between men and women as "one of the major missions of the Community on par with economic development and cohesion." Collectively, the recommendations, "soft laws," women's networks, and the recognition of women's labor in the European market establish gender equality as an EU priority.

EU modes of governance have developed through legislated rights hard law approaches; to law through collective agreement in the form of dialogues, action programmes and structural funds financing; to non-binding soft law approaches based on benchmarking and peer review (Rhodes, 2005; Jacquot 2010). Rhodes (2005: 282–4) describes these as three pillars of policy making and governance. These are each still applied to different degrees and in different forms but there has been a decisive shift in focus from the first, to the second, to the third. For example, a key objective of the EES was to promote employment and social protection through the open method of coordination (OMC) (Hubert, 2012: 158). "European gender project" (MacRae, 2012: 308) policies and initiatives have been both representative of and instrumental in these transformations. The next significant shift in the relationship between

gender equality policies and European identity takes place through a change in modes of governance. In the following section I discuss the "soft law" new mode of governance (NMG), or Open Method of Coordination (OMC) of which gender mainstreaming is a quintessential example.

3. Mainstreaming from Gender to Diversity

The OMC originally developed through employment policy, specifically the EES which mandated the development of a coordination strategy between Member States' local employment policies. Some authors have argued that NMG approaches have been designed in response to the economic integration of the EU in the 1990s and member state resistance to the growing and unwelcome assertion of EU power in social policy (Mazey, 1995; Perron, 2005); others put greater emphasis on NMG as a response to the failure of traditional instruments such as ECJ rulings and legal instruments to substantively address inequality (Beveridge & Velluti, 2008; Bego, 2015). Despite 15 years of active equal treatment and positive action gender equality policies, major inequalities between men and women persisted in the workplace and the labor market. Research and critique from feminist and gender studies scholars (see Hoskyn, 1985; Vallance & Davies, 1986), expert networks, the gender equality policy community and the dissent of member states pushed a revisioning of the traditional regulatory and budgetary policy instruments (Rees, 2005; Squires, 2005; Jacquot, 2010). NMG is a term used to describe a transformation in EU policy making, from supranational authority through intergovernmental agreements enacted through law to harmonization through participatory horizontal governance which includes multiple actors from all sectors (Bego, 2015). Jacquot (2010: 122) describes NMG as typified by interaction and collaboration between public, private, and civil society actors in policy making processes, as well as by the "development of non-coercive processes based on participant agreement, by way of collective deliberation, on procedural norms, modes of regulation and common political objective."

OMC is the methodology through which NMG are practiced. It takes the form of political partnership and participatory democracy with shared language and pan-European guidelines combined with strong elements of multilateral surveillance through the EC (Beveridge & Velluti, 2008), cognitive and indirect in the supervision of public action by member states (Boussaguet & Jacquot, 2009; Jacquot, 2010); iterative policy processes and multi-actor debate (Mosher & Trubeck, 2003); and systematic dissemination of knowledge through benchmarking, mutual learning, and peer review (Jacobsson, 2004; Boussaguet & Jacquot, 2009). This outline of OMC processes serves to highlight an alignment between gender mainstreaming and OMC. Gender mainstreaming is a systematic approach based on a proactive

model, a transversal instrument, characteristically non-binding and flexible (Squires, 2005; Beveridge & Velluti, 2008; Abels & Mushaben, 2012). Beveridge (2005: 15) describes a process of "borrowing and mimicking of policy initiatives across the Commission as a whole" which results in an overlap between OMC and gender mainstreaming processes. To me this indicates the centrality of gender equality policies in the response to democratic illegitimacy.

A series of factors influenced adoption of gender mainstreaming. Firstly, there was a progressive shift from integration as economic, to integration as a cultural process (Shore, 2000: 1). This is evidenced in the Maastricht 1993 Treaty Social Policy Agreement. Arribas & Carrasco (2003: 22) describe this as a positive step which allowed the EU to promote "equal opportunities between men and women in the labour market." At a supranational level the agreement allowed for an increasing prioritization of equality policy reformatting. This was furthered by the accession of countries with a strong history of institutionalizing gender equality (Austria, Sweden, Finland) to the EU in the 1995 enlargement (Jacquot, 2010; Hantrais, 2008).

Secondly, these EU level institutional and political elements were complemented by the 1995 organizational and administrative influence of the Santer Commission which focused on the "managerial rationalization" of EC action (Dimier, 2003; Lombardo & Meier, 2006: 158), to professionalize equality policy and integrate it within other policy spheres. Futhermore, soft policy instruments, such as the EES, "provided a major catalyst for the integration of equal opportunities issues and gender mainstreaming into the employment framework" (Fagan et al., 2005: 569). Lastly, in the context of this greater institutional, political and administrative sensitivity the 1995 United Nations Conference on Women and the Beijing Platform for Action (PfA) acted as a strong influence for the adoption of gender mainstreaming as the formal EU gender equality policy (Rees, 2005; Jacquot, 2010; Abels & Mushaben, 2012). The PfA also formed a basis for the Fourth Medium Term Action Programme (1996–2000) which established mainstreaming as the principle strategy in EU equality policies (Krook, 2001). The appeal of gender mainstreaming can also be linked to its novelty and international legitimacy, "the rhetoric of innovation and of differentiation with past techniques also introduced a symbolic effect – an image make over for gender equality policy that attracted renewed political attention" (Jacquot, 2010: 122). The application of gender mainstreaming is an example of how EU gender equality strategies and policies evolved from a tool to regulate the market, to an emblematic feature of the EU as a geopolitically legitimate cultural space.

The paradigmatic shift represented by gender mainstreaming involves a move from "hard-law" individualized rights and corrective action (Beveridge & Velluti, 2008; Abels & Mushaben, 2012) to a focus on structural and

systemic causes of disadvantage. Also known as the displacement approach, gender mainstreaming it seeks to "challenge institutionalized sexism" (Rees, 2005: 560). The most commonly referenced definition of gender mainstreaming in European scholarship is: "the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy making" (Council of Europe, 1998: 15).

Gender mainstreaming embodies a decisive moment in the relationship of reciprocal legitimation between gender equality concepts and European identity. Firstly, this excerpt details the application of a gender perspective in all policies and processes, by all involved actors. This envisioned ubiquity represents a prioritization of gender equality as a marker of the shared European political, social and cultural space. Secondly, in line with the professionalization focus of NMG gender mainstreaming involves the development and implementation of "gender impact assessment guides, good practices series, general or sector-specific methodologies, control lists, follow up sheets, scoreboards for results and impact or formation programmes" (Jacquot, 2005: 124). A European subject is created through these actions of measurement and operationalization. Gender equality policy concepts become a defining feature of the consolidation of the EU citizenship and identity. For example, gender disaggregated labor force participation statistics on the EU population, have been used to analyze policy efficacy in terms of labor market involvement of women (Jaumotte, 2003; Del Boca et al., 2009; Del Boca & Sauer, 2009; Chipollone et al., 2014; Gehringer & Klasen, 2016). The element of cross-country comparison these texts replicates a shared space inhabited by a European female workforce, with reduction of the gender participation gap as a common goal. In practice, research over the last decade has revealed that there is a significant discursive and rhetorical commitment to gender mainstreaming across institutional contexts (Stratigaki, 2005; Lombardo & Meier, 2008; Gerhards et al., 2009; Jacquot, 2010; Avdeyeva, 2010; Abels & Mushaben, 2012). However, evaluations of the initial aims of gender mainstreaming, i.e. incorporating gendered analysis into all policies and processes to address inequalities, show poor and inconsistent results. Most actors on supranational and national levels see gender mainstreaming is a procedural instrument that they have to implement but not a resource as such (Mazey, 1998; Woodward, 2008; Pollack & Hafner-Burton, 2000). In Jacquot's (2010: 126) words "gender mainstreaming has become consensual. Open resistance cannot be found, but inertia and lip service are not uncommon."

Despite decidedly uneven results, mainstreaming has also become a best practices model for addressing multiple inequalities (Rees, 2005; Gerhards et al., 2009). In the reshaping and re-articulation accompanying the "uploading, downloading and lateral loading" policy processes of new modes of gover-

nance mainstreaming became a best practices model for addressing inequality (Squires, 2005; Jacqout, 2010). National and regional governments are attempting to implement diversity management and gender mainstreaming under a broad commitment to "equality and diversity" (Squires, 2005: 378). There is a growing focus on addressing multiple inequalities both in the context of an increasingly diverse EU, resulting from migration and enlargement (Fredman, 1992; Rees, 1999; Evans Case & Givens, 2010), and in response to concerns around how public policy addresses intersecting inequalities (Squires, 2008; Lombardo & Verloo, 2009). Intersectionality has long been a concern and focus in feminist theory and practice (Verloo, 2006; Verloo & Walby, 2012). Crenshaw (1989: 139) introduced the concept of intersectionality as a means to "denote the various ways in which race and gender intersect to shape the multiple dimensions of Black women's employment experiences." Essentially, intersectionality is about the interaction of categories of "difference."

The EU provides an interesting case for analyzing the possibilities of intersectional practice (Kriszan et al., 2012), as it shifts from a gender inequality focus to multiple inequalities (Verloo, 2007). This is evident in the expansion of the EU equality policy domain over the past decade: the Article 13 EC of the Treaty of Amsterdam (1996) applies to six different grounds of discrimination – sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, and sexual orientation; while the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (2000), Article 21(1) contains a list of seventeen grounds the new legal basis for multiple forms of equality and non-discrimination (Kriszan et al., 2012: 13). Initiatives such as the 2001–2006 For Diversity, Against Discrimination campaign, or the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All, evidence a new institutional approach that seeks to address multiple inequalities in integrated ways. The Commission clearly casts this framework as a tool to capture the complexity of inequalities and disadvantages (European Commission, 2007; Fredman, 2005). For example, the European Commission (2007: 6) text Tackling Multiple Discrimination – Practices, policies and laws reads: "it is vitally important for a cohesive European society that everyone enjoys equal opportunities and levels of protection […] whether experienced or perceived, Multiple Discrimination denies individuals their human dignity and right to equal treatment and opportunities."

4. Practicing Gender Expertise in the European Union

The foregoing section outlined how gender equality policy, as symbolic of visions of gender equality, came to be an attribute of the European identity through transformations in supranational policy-making and governance. Research from feminist and gender scholarship shows that the EU equality

agenda acts as a multilevel opportunity structure which can both curtail and facilitate equality work (Pollack & Hafner-Burton, 2000; Roth, 2008; Evans Case & Givens, 2010; Lombardo & Forest, 2011; Jacquot, 2010; Bego, 2015). On the one hand gender equality is irrefutably on the EU agenda (Abels & Mushaben, 2012), on the other hand the "European gender project" is not homogenous, complete or necessarily always oriented towards transformation of oppressive structures. In the following section I explore some of the implications of this framework for the practice of gender expertise in the EU.

4.1 Mainstreaming gender and diversity

Material from the first decade of gender mainstreaming was hopeful. Pollack and Hafner-Burton (2000: 453) stated that "gradual introduction of a gender perspective into existing policies has the potential to transform the discourse, procedures and participants of EU." Mazey (1998: 131) called mainstreaming a "potentially important development" which relies on policy-makers willingness to incorporate gender. However, in more recent literature, including writing from the same authors, the consensus is that gender mainstreaming has been disappointing, definitely "no revolution" (Hafner-Burton & Pollack, 2007). Most often these appraisals have come from critical feminist analysis and gender studies perspectives, which point to the emancipatory potential of gender mainstreaming that fails to manifest (Braithwaite, 2001; Lombardo and Meier, 2006; Rees, 2005; Schmidt, 2005; Stratigaki, 2005, 2008; Woodward, 2008). Thus, despite the expected diffusion of gender awareness associated with gender mainstreaming Woodward (2008: 297) states that "no one would argue that a gender reflex is a normal part of policy making." Mazey (1995; 1998) claims that the flexibility enjoyed by member states and institutions in the application of gender mainstreaming is as a result of the fact that it was adopted as a "soft" Open Method of Coordination (OMC) approach in response to the growing opposition to further EC legislation among employers and some national governments. Hafner-Burton & Pollack (2007) argue that this "soft law" approach has facilitated a disjuncture between discursive commitment and practical actions. The material reduction of inequalities remains elusive in part because in order for gender to be mainstreamed into all policies and processes it has to pass through a series of "needle's eyes" at supranational, intergovernmental and member state levels (Pollack & Hafner-Burton, 2000). Consequently, mainstreaming in application is predominantly integrationist, a simple add-on or incorporation into existing policies, as opposed to agenda setting which requires structural change (Jahan, 1995).

The transversal and "governance by insertion" character of OMC, and gender mainstreaming specifically, has resulted in a diversification and destabilization of gender equality policy processes. Legal action has become

more challenging for interest groups and the role of institutions in enforcing gender equality mandates has changed; but the perimeter of gender equality policy-making has opened (Jacquot, 2010: 126), allowing for the possibility for mobilization and input from outside of the Commission from multiple actors (Beveridge & Velluti, 2008; Bego, 2015). This has resulted in the emergence of new structures of opportunity for civil society actors who have been incentivized to utilize the mainstreaming agenda (Pollack & Hafner-Burton, 2000; Jacquot, 2010). In a "surge of advocacy" (Lang, 2009: 328), facilitated by more multilevel governance processes, women's transnational networks were able to widen their objectives to more issue areas on the gender mainstreaming premise that gender equality needs to be addressed in every policy domain. These transnational advocacy networks have become more professionalized and more active in a wider range of fields such as health and reproduction, environment, trade, and violence against women (Lang, 2009; Jacquot, 2010). The place of gender equality policies in the European identity project has facilitated increased funding and the possibility of political leverage through transnational activist networks, but it also draws borders around who may participate in the "European gender project" (MacRae, 2012: 308).

Despite the wholesale adoption of gender mainstreaming rhetoric across EU policy, the application thereof continues to disappoint (Pollack & Hafner-Burton, 2007). Gender experts are indispensable for the successful development and application of feminist policy (Woodward, 2001; McBride & Mazur, 2010; Sauer, 2010). However, the prevailing account emerging from the literature is that gender experts are caught in a paradox (Mazey, 1995; Ghodsee, 2004; Pascall & Lewis, 2004; Squires, 2008; Kantola & Squires, 2012; Ferguson, 2015). Pollack and Hafner-Burton (2000) analyzed the variation in application of gender mainstreaming across five directorate generals in the European Commission. These authors found that a key determinant of the application of gender mainstreaming was the ability of advocates for gender equality to frame gender mainstreaming strategically to meet with the least resistance. Although this has led to the widespread adoption of gender mainstreaming, it significantly compromises the transformatory potential thereof. This is exacerbated by the functionalization and bureaucratic reduction of gender mainstreaming (Lang, 2009) and fact that many individuals involved in policy making and civil service have been required to incorporate a gender perspective without the requisite depth of knowledge (Grabowska, 2014; Hoard, 2015).

This has also raised questions around the efficacy of the mainstreaming approach adopted in the recent EU focus on multiple inequalities, where the research investigating this approach is dappled and largely non-committal about the potential of this framework. Alongside the shift to integrated

equality institutions (Woodward, 2008; Squires, 2008; Kriszan et al., 2012), the policy changes following from the aforementioned Directives also brought an individualized and judicialized approach to combating discrimination (Fredman, 2005; Kantola & Nousianen, 2012; Chopin & Germain-Sahl, 2013). Multiple authors have argued that this may be emblematic of a retrogression from earlier more pro-active strategies such as positive action (Squires, 2005; Woodward, 2008; Lang, 2009; Kriszan et al., 2012; Kantola & Nousianen, 2012). In fact, although a legislative policy instrument may be designed to avoid discrimination, this does not mean that it promotes equality (Bell, 2005). Squires (2008) questions the efficacy of the integrated framework in research on the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) in the United Kingdom (UK) which was established in 2007 to bring together equality strands. In this study the problems of gender mainstreaming described above are reiterated. Namely, the tension between social justice, intersectionality focused, interventions and utility-based, market driven, "diversity management." The roles of gender experts in the integrated framework are unclear, although they are often asked to participate in "diversity management" initiatives (Bego, 2015; Hoard, 2015). Despite studies on the opportunities that an integrated approach may provide for intersectional practice (Kriszan et al., 2012; Lombardo & Forest, 2011; Bego, 2015), it remains unclear how gender experts may operate without becoming complicit in a system which not only objectifies "difference" but also monetizes the social realities of discrimination and prejudice (Squires, 2005: 376).

4.2 Europeanization, accession and integration

Thus far this paper has followed the journey of the "equality concept" in Europe by looking at the EU supranational level. The 6 founding members of the EU in 1957 were Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. Several other West European countries joined after 1973 (including several Nordic nations) followed by countries of Central and Eastern Europe between 2004 and 2007. The great diversity between and within member states results in a complex intersection of supranational governance and domestic politics and policy-making. Indeed, transformations in modes of governance have followed the diversity and resistance of member states as the EU has grown. The process that accompanies enlargement brings to light the challenges of practicing gender expertise in a changing Europe (Kriszan et al., 2012).

A central theoretical reference point in research on accession and enlargement is the much debated concept of Europeanization (see Richardson and Mazey, 2015). In response to this debate, Radaelli (2004: 3) advocates for Europeanization as a descriptor of processes of construction, diffusion and institutionalization. These include "formal and informal rules, procedures,

policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things' and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the EU policy process and then incorporated in the logic of domestic (national and subnational) discourse, political structures and public policies."

The typical language used to describe the increase in membership states that form part of the EU (enlargement, expansion, integration, accession) conveys the idea of power as weighted principally in the EU institutions and policymaking infrastructure.

While the role of the EU in setting equality norms is often underlined (Beveridge & Velluti, 2008; Bego, 2015), scholarship on, enlargement and accession processes relating to gender equality policy reveals a more complex reality (Fagan et al., 2005; Roth, 2008; Gerhards et al., 2009; Chiva, 2009; Avedeyeva, 2010; Bego, 2015). The dynamics of Europeanization are not simply top-down, they are reciprocal, in both vertical and horizontal senses, and there are many patterns of compliance and resistance through which discourses of equality in Europe and individual states vary (Fagan et al., 2005; Roth, 2008; Gerhards et al., 2009; Avedeyeva, 2010). Feminist and gender studies scholarship has provided research on state feminism and institutionalist comparative analyses of equality institutions (McBride & Mazur, 2010; Krook & Mackay, 2011; Outshoorn & Kantola, 2007); critical analyses of gender equality and equality policy discourses (Bacchi, 1999; Walby, 2004; Lombardo et al., 2009); and the role of feminist and women's movement actors in policy making (Mazey, 1995, 1998; Woodward, 2003; Van der Vleuten, 2007). This body of literature is characterized by theoretical perspectives and methodologies which rely on an interactive understanding of supranational governance and domestic equality policies; examples include the neo-institutionalist perspective put forward by Gerhards et al. (2009), and the combination of sociological institutionalist and discursive approaches applied by Lombardo & Forest (2012). Exogenous and endogenous variables are a shared vocabulary in these studies. This stands in contrast to the traditional Europeanization literature which traditionally measures degree of compliance with EU directives as a one-way phenomenon (Lombardo & Forest, 2012). This research also emphasizes how equality strategies differ, not only across states but also across policy sectors (Roth, 2008; Lombardo & Meier, 2008). This throws into question the claims of gender equality as a fundamental European value. To illustrate this point I provide a few examples among many. This provides a valuable insight into the skills practice of gender expertise between the recommendations of gender mainstreaming at the EU level and member state realities.

The EU enlargement of 2004, predominantly countries of Central and Eastern Europe, provided opportunities for research into the accession process within the context of new modes of governance. Research on this region

both highlights the diversity of member state contexts, and provides some interesting findings relating to the focus of this paper on the practice of gender expertise in the context of EU claims about a gender equality oriented European identity.

In her assessment of Polish equality policy Grabowska (2014: 8) describes the disappointing "soft" change that accompanied accession to the EU. This author found that the prioritization of gender equality remained confined to rhetoric and policy culture as a result of conservatism, Catholicism and traditionalism prevalent in Poland. This author found weak institutional support for gender equality policies, a lack of financial resources, strong resistance from government officials, and an almost excusive focus on the labor market in gender equality policies. Consequently, government responsibilities for equality promotion became the responsibility of Polish women's movements and organizations. These movements became "indispensable resources for knowledge and experience in the area of gender equality – resources that have been equally useful for national and transnational political actors" (Grabowska, 2014: 13). Grabowska (2014: 14) claims that this was achieved through a process of learning how to negotiate a changing financial, institutional and political environment; learning relationship-building strategies with organizations working on a transnational level (such as EWL); and learning how to leverage the EU equality. This "learning" phase is indicative of the formalization of gender expertise through OMC and gender mainstreaming, and flags this "adaptational" ability as a necessary competence of gender experts.

Other research on this region echoes these themes. Scholars writing on Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovenia (Roth, 2007); Czech Republic (Haškova & Križkova, 2008), and Bulgaria and Romania (Chiva, 2009) found significant resistance from "domestic policy hinterlands" (Mazey, 1998: 130). They argue that many of the reforms required for accession were imposed from the top down, and each new member state adopted gender equality legislation and strategies in different and incomplete ways. Avdeyeva (2010) suggests that the ideology of the governing party does not prohibit policy adoption per se (which occurs anyway on account of EU adaptational pressure) but has a significant effect on the implementation of policy. These authors note that despite the commitment to the EU equality agenda during accession, often people working in institutional gender units lacked the requisite competence and resources to make any impact with gender mainstreaming. Aside from collaboration between a few female politicians and NGOs, overall political actors demonstrated lack of knowledge and lack of interest (Roth, 2007; Haškova & Križkova, 2008; Chiva, 2009).

Avdeyeva's (2010) policy diffusion analysis of government compliance to EU equality policies in ten post-socialist states highlights mobilized domestic

political actors as determinants of government compliance. Legislative reform is facilitated by a strong women's movement and mobilized female parliamentarians. Institutional reform depends on the strength of the women's movement and its ability to form coalitions with political actors within government elites, most importantly governing parties. Finally, the effect of women's movements' actors on the institutional reform is moderated by the ideology of political parties in power (Avdeyeva, 2010: 203). By looking at the imbrications of public and private realms Chiva (2009) highlights the different trajectories of the development of gender equality legislation, policy and machinery in Romania and Bulgaria. In this analysis of the interaction between Europeanization and domestic determinants of change Chiva (2009: 205) concludes that "giving in to the adaptive pressures generated by the process of EU accession is not the same as acquiescing to a feminist agenda on gender equality."

However, the EU does exert a legitimizing power in terms of promoting gender equality, offering a political opportunity structure of institutional support and funding. In simple terms "the fact that gender mainstreaming and gender issues were seen as "European" improved their standing among those who were pro-EU" (Roth, 2003: 478). Women's and feminist civic groups were formalized and professionalized by the prescriptive nature of EU funding, becoming more project and reform oriented, and focusing on strategic partnerships at national and transnational levels (Roth, 2007; Haškova & Križkova, 2008; Chiva, 2009). Unfortunately, smaller local groups and women's NGOs also lost funding in this process.

These observations are not confined to new member states. Literature on older member states provides insights about the interaction between the legitimizing power of EU equality commitments and domestic socio-political factors. Donà (2011) argues that legislation intended to facilitate the reconciliation of family life and work in Italy was developed in response to EU equality agenda setting. However, these policy initiatives, such as that on parental leave, largely failed as a result of domestic political, institutional, legislative and cultural constraints. In contrast, Valiente (2008) argues that the Spanish case illustrates how support within the political realm can facilitate equality work and amplify the effect of the EU equality architecture. Valiente (2008) suggests that the openness to gender equality policy was facilitated by secularism and the critical support from within the key political Socialist and Conservative parties, in addition to the presence of women in civil society and the strength of the women's movement. Valiente (2008) explains that in parallel, the EU provided Spanish women's organizations with incentives for mobilization through the European Women's Lobby which further raised the legitimacy of equality initiatives and architecture and the work of gender experts. Applying implementation theory in the "least likely to be resistant to

gender equality measures" case of Denmark Sindbjerg Martinsen (2007: 544) illustrates that development of gender equality policy involves a complex series of "decision points" which are mediated by ideological or material interests of diverse actors.

Collectively this research sheds light on several key points. Firstly, the practice of gender expertise in the EU is conducted through what Holli (2008: 83) calls "women's co-operative constellations." This is the cooperation between individual actors, women's movements, feminist activism, feminist politicians, feminist civil servants, civil society organizations and research producing institutions (Halsaa, 1998; Vargas & Wieringa, 1998; Woodward, 2003). The organizations which followed internal restructuring processes in order to access EU funding, resources, and support continue to influence the development of gender expertise as they interface between women's policy networks and gender equality institutional architecture at transnational, national and local levels (Halsaa, 1998; Mazey, 1995; Holli, 2008; Chiva, 2009). Secondly, the adaptational pressure of the EU legitimizes and facilitates the practice of gender expertise in some ways, but also establishes in the process a prescriptive framework of who can participate in this work and the objectives thereof. Finally, across member states commitments to gender equality are upheld on the levels of rhetoric and discourse but material change is mediated by a complex series of social, political and cultural factors. This stands in contrast to portrayals of European identity as a "kind of moral success story" (Shore, 2000: 57), as it is more a messy puzzle. It also highlights the challenges of practicing gender expertise in between local histories and activism, transformatory objectives, and the gender equality concepts in the terms prescribed by EU institutional frameworks.

4.3 Paradoxes and tensions in practice

Gender experts face the challenge of getting gender "right," to develop messages on gender that successfully circumnavigate this resistance and appeal to institutions while promoting change within them (Ferguson, 2015; Lombardo & Meier, 2006). In the NMG context knowledge and activism around gender and equality has undergone a further process of rationalization, where the strategy for equality has become the application of a discrete set of gender awareness tools by all subjects at all points of policy-making processes. The focus on fundraising and budgeting skills, project and organizational management, has imbued gender expertise with a specific market value (Ghodsee, 2004; Pascall & Lewis, 2004; Squires, 2008; Kantola & Squires, 2012; Ferguson, 2015).

This instrumentalization of gender expertise can be linked to the larger socio-historical reality of the EU in which member states are encouraged to liberalization through the Europeanization processes (Mazey, 1998; Rossili,

2000; Ghodsee, 2004; Pascall & Lewis, 2004; Squires, 2008; Kantola & Squires, 2012). This is reflected in the "transversal" nature of NMG and OMC which has resulted in a new approach to public management (Pollack & Hafner-Burton, 2000; Jacquot, 2010). These approaches privilege competition, markets, customers and outcomes. Gender experts are expected to deploy these discourses of economic efficiency, becoming accountable to funders as opposed to communities who are discriminated against (Rossilli, 2000; Squires, 2008; Kantola & Squires, 2008; Ghodsee, 2004). Drawing on a rich history of research on state feminism in Europe (Lovenduski, 1986; Stetson & Mazur, 1995; Woodward, 2003; Holli, 2008), Kantola and Squires (2008) argue that "market feminism" is a more apt conceptual framework in the current political and economic climate. They point to the changes in practices and priorities that have accompanied gender mainstreaming, such as the transnational networks of gender experts adept at discourses of economic efficiency and the "offloading" of state responsibilities to civil society actors (Kantola & Squires, 2012: 394). Kantola and Nousiainen (2012: 48) echo this statement, stating that OMC achieves increased discursive presence through the work of gender experts while practically and materially delivering little.

In contrast, Ferguson (2015) resists the view that gender experts are thoughtlessly employing a purely neoliberal profit-oriented vision of gender equality. This author argues that this curtails the possibility for feminist action and progressive social change, obscuring the constant processes "of negotiation and renegotiation in which gender experts engage" (Ferguson, 2015: 392). In her reflexive piece on the politics of practicing gender expertise Ferguson (2015: 384) elucidates the very material reality of the "business case" for equality that currently proliferates (Mazey, 1995; Squires, 2008), namely the "tension between the financial dependency of needing to earn a living and the insider/outsider feminist position in the very institutions that one wants to criticise." In poignant agreement Squires (2005: 375) states "the 'business case' for mainstreaming is frequently the only case offered for why gender equality matters."

5. Conclusion

This paper began with a summary of gender equality policies in the EU, as these have been intertwined with more general shifts in models of governance, policy instruments and the configuration of the supranational polity. This section was guided by the question of how gender equality, as symbolized in gender equality policies, came to form a cornerstone of the EU claim for legitimacy as a custodian of a transnational European interest. Gender equality policies began with an article of the ECSC aimed at maintaining

market competitiveness which was transformed into a tool for equal pay though ECJ rulings. This was the first instance of the relationship between European identity, in EU terms, and concepts of gender equality as markers of social progress. This also established the economic thread of equality policies, which would continue to evolve in relation to women's labor market participation (Pascall & Lewis, 2004; Hubert, 2012). The subsequent development of the gender acquis and the gender equality architecture over the 1980s and 1990s saw an increased prioritization of women's labor market participation, focus on work-life reconciliation, and recognition of the issue of democratic parity in decision making. In this process the concept of "European citizenship" is increasingly tied to ideas of gender equality. Gender equality, as embodied by gender equality policies, is referenced as a indicator of social progress and supports the normative power of the EU. With the transition to new modes of governance and "soft law" approaches gender equality was, at least at the discursive level, integrated into every EU action in the form of gender mainstreaming. This process finds its culmination in the declaration of gender equality as a fundamental value in Article 2 of the 2009 TEU. Tracking these shifts over time elucidates a dynamic of reciprocity, whereby claims about shared European concepts of gender equality serve to address EU democratic deficits, and EU frameworks discursively legitimate visions of gender equality. It is also clear that establishing gender equality as a priority has not been solely a process internal to EU institutions, but rather a response to a constellation of factors, most notably feminist and women's movement activism and scholarship (Mazey, 1995, 1998; Woodward, 2003; Van der Vleuten, 2007). The progressive nature of this path is evidence of the EU foundational myth of gender equality as a part of the European identity project (MacRae, 2010). The valorization of gender knowledge and the practice of gender expertise in Europe take place in relation to this dynamic. In the second part of the paper I pursued the question of the implications of gender equality as a marker of European identity for the practice of gender expertise.

Evaluative research on gender mainstreaming illustrates that commitments to gender equality are predominantly discursive and that the integration of a gender perspective in all policy areas tends to be superficial and inconsistent, both at EU institutional level and member state level. This framework facilitates rhetoric instead of action, and the rationalization of mainstreaming in NMG incentivizes a checkbox approach in application. However, the transversal and consultative nature of these approaches has opened up possibilities for civil society actors in terms of funding and participation in policy development. This means that the practice of gender expertise necessitates the negotiation of funding requirements and political opportunity structures, thus establishing a tension between transformatory aims and strategic "busi-

ness case" arguments for equality work. Processes of integration and accession to the EU show the complexity of factors that make up domestic policy "hinterlands" which influence the implementation of accession requirements. The examples presented here illustrate that the EU prioritization of gender equality legitimates equality work in terms of funding and transnational networks. However, the practical success thereof is in great part determined by support from domestic political actors. EU integration has also resulted in a formalization of gender expertise and a restructuring of member state civil society organizations. Consequently, the practice of gender expertise acquires a particular market value, but this valorisation also means that gender experts are expected to work within particular boundaries. These boundaries refer to the issues that are addressed, the vocabulary that can be used, the kinds of approaches that can be applied and who can participate in this work (see Bustelo et al., 2016). The emphasis on evidence-based public management and policy making makes the "business-case" a prescriptive framework for equality work. Thus, the practice of gender expertise is much less the expression of a shared European value and much more a dance of resistance and complicity. Future research should focus directly on the nature and practice of gender expertise, on which there is little existing literature (see Hoard, 2016), in order to enrich current understandings of the transfer and translation of feminst and gender knowledges. This research should encompass in-depth analyses of the political economy of gender knowledge and how this is shaped within the geopolitical configuration of knowledge production and expertise.

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THE INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL EMPLOYMENT STATUS ON CHILDREN'S LABOR OUTCOMES. DOES THE GENDER OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN MATTER?

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ABSTRACT. This paper investigates the influence of parental employment status during adolescence on adult children's labour outcomes across European country groups, according to the gender of both parents and children. Our aim is to examine whether this influence is stronger within mother–daughter and father–son relationships or whether mothers play a role also for the employment outcomes of their sons and fathers for their daughters. Using EU-Silc data, we estimate the extent to which parents' employment during children's adolescence affects their employment status at around 30 years of age. Empirical findings show that having had a working mother reduces the likelihood of being NEET for both sons and daughters in all country groups, except in Nordic countries, with effects of similar magnitude. The effects of fathers' working condition are less widespread across countries. Where present, the influence of paternal employment on daughters' outcomes is much smaller than on sons' outcomes. From a policy perspective, in almost all countries, fostering mothers' employment, not only when children are young but also during their adolescence, might have important consequences for both their sons' and daughters' future employment prospects.

Keywords: youth; unemployment; family; generation; gender; Europe

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1. Introduction

In Europe, more than 12.1 million young people (aged 15–29 years; EU-27) were not in employment, education, or training (NEETs) in 2016. Being NEET has severe adverse consequences for the individual, society and the economy. For the individual, it can have a long-term scarring effect on labor force participation and future earnings, raising problems in old age in terms of securing a decent pension. But it can also lead to a wide range of other social and psychological disadvantages, such as lower levels of political interest and social engagement, mental and physical health problems, etc. The overall economic loss for the European Union (EU) due to the disengagement of young people from the labor market or education and training had been estimated to be about €153 billion in 2011, corresponding to 1.2% of EU GDP (Eurofound, 2012).

From a policy perspective, it is crucial to understand what the key risk factors are. In terms of individual characteristics, low education, belonging to certain ethnic minorities, and poor health conditions – all increase the probability of being NEET. These characteristics tend to be related to the family and its social background. The role of the family in shaping children's tastes for education and in developing their skills has been largely documented in the literature. But these effects can go beyond education, affecting directly young individuals' labor market outcomes. Various empirical analyses at the country level (mainly the US, the UK, Germany and few other European countries) have shown that children's unemployment or inactivity is closely related to their fathers' or mothers' employment status (see the next section for more details). But we know little about the extent to which these effects vary across European countries, and even less about the distinct role of fathers and mothers. Indeed, the literature on the intergenerational correlation between parents' and children's employment status usually focuses on the link either between fathers and sons or between mothers and daughters, and generally on single countries.

This paper analyses the extent to which parents' employment during children's adolescence (around 14 years of age) affect their children's probability of being NEET as young adults (around 30 years of age), across various European country groups. Our study exploits a harmonized dataset at the European level (the 2011 cross sectional data of the European Union Statistics on Living Conditions, EU-SILC), which contains specific information on parental educational and occupational characteristics for all individuals aged 25–60 when they were around 14. The contribution to the literature is threefold. First, we analyze the effect of mothers' and fathers' employment status on both their sons and daughters employment outcomes. This allows us to examine the father–daughter and mother–son relationships that have received little attention in the literature. Second, we show how these effects vary across

different European country groups, which are characterized by distinct labor market institutions and welfare systems. Third, we consider also the effect of the mother-in-law's employment condition on the labor participation of young women living in couple.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. Section 2 reviews the relevant literature. Section 3 presents the data and estimation methodology. Section 4 discusses the main empirical findings, and Section 5 concludes.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Previous evidence about the intergenerational transmission of worklessness

The evidence on the intergenerational link between mothers' and daughters' labor market participation is quite robust. Daughters of working women are more likely to be in paid employment than daughters who have grown up with non-working mothers (Del Boca et al., 2000, for Italy; Farré and Vella, 2013, for the US). Similarly, various authors have documented an effect of fathers' unemployment on their sons' worklessness (O'Neill and Sweetman, 1998, and Macmillan, 2010, for the UK; Mader et al., 2014, for Germany).[1] These studies, focused on a single country, do not provide information on the extent to which the magnitude of these effects is influenced by the set of institutions prevailing in the country. Therefore, they do not investigate whether some countries are more successful than others in reducing individual disadvantages linked to parental employment. In order to answer these questions, in this paper we use a harmonized dataset at the European level which allows us to compare the relative effect of parental employment status on children's probability of being NEET across different country groups.

Besides considering only single countries, the literature generally focuses on the link either between fathers and sons or between mothers and daughters. Only a few studies examine the influence of both parents on their sons and daughters. Ekhaugen (2009) considers the influence of parental unemployment on their children's unemployment in Norway, but does not distinguish between father's and mother's unemployment experience, nor between sons and daughters. Hérault and Kalb (2016), using Australian data, examine the effect of fathers' and mothers' unemployment on the time spent in unemployment by their sons and daughters. They find evidence of a positive correlation of labor market outcomes between fathers and sons and between mothers and daughters, but they find little evidence of other cross-gender intergenerational correlations. In this paper, we use a similar approach to investigate this type of effects in Europe. By accounting for the employment condition of both parents separately, we can examine the father–daughter and mother–son relationships that have received little attention in the literature.

Furthermore, we avoid the risk of attributing to either the father or the mother what is due to the other parent (especially where assortative mating in partnership is more pronounced).

2.2 Channels of influence

It is useful to consider the various channels through which parental employment condition can affect children's labor outcomes in order to decide how to group countries for the empirical analysis,[2] and to interpret the estimation results. Beside educational choices, which are not the focus of this paper,[3] parents' employment status can affect their children's labor market outcomes through four channels.

First, household income and wealth might affect children's employment status and their job-search process by ensuring a higher-quality education, by leading to different reservation wages or by making it easier to start an independent economic activity.[4]

Second, experiencing parental worklessness during adolescence may impact on offspring's preferences, values, and attitudes. We call this the "cultural channel." Specifically, parental work experience can affect young adults' aspirations and attitudes toward labor market participation. They include the evaluation of paid work and the individual conceptualization of gender roles, the sense of stigma associated with worklessness and the attitudes toward relying on welfare benefits (Fernandez, 2007; Eckhaugen, 2009; McMillan, 2010; Schoon et al., 2012; Zwysen, 2015). The effects of the transmission of gender role attitudes on labor market participation are different for men and women. In developed countries, the social norm is that all men in working age (after leaving education) enter the labor market, independently on their specific view about gender roles. This is not the case for women. Female labor force participation is favored by a more egalitarian view of gender roles (which is likely to characterize working mothers), and hampered by a more traditional view (more common among non-working mothers). Furthermore, there is quite a robust empirical evidence showing that the impact of mothers is somewhat stronger than that of fathers on the development of gender stereotypes and on the transmission of gender role attitudes (Tenenbaum and Leaper, 2002; Endendijk et al., 2013). These findings are in line with those studies that document the existence of a link between the labor market participation of young women and that of their mother-in-law via their sons/husbands' preferences (Fernandez et al., 2004; Kawaguchi and Miyazaky, 2009; Farré and Vella, 2013). Indeed, women married to men whose mother worked are also more likely to be employed.[5] In terms of sense of stigma or attitudes toward welfare dependency we are not aware of studies showing differentiated effects of mothers and fathers. Therefore, the cultural channel should generate a stronger effect between mothers and daughters than between mothers and sons, or between fathers and all their children.

Third, the inheritance and development of cognitive and non-cognitive skills (i.e. soft skills)[6] within the family have been acknowledged to influence children's educational and labor market outcomes, as well as career advancements (Bowles and Gintis, 2002; Carneiro and Heckman, 2002; Heckman et al., 2006). Parents play a role in both the genetic transmission and the development process of these skills. Indeed, Macmillan (2013) shows that non-cognitive skills and behavioral outcomes partly account for the intergenerational transmission of worklessness in the UK, and that these skills seem to matter more as unemployment rises. To the best of our knowledge, there are no studies that document how parental influence on the inheritance and development of soft skills varies according to the gender of parents and that of children. Thus, we have no a priori expectations about the relative role of mothers and fathers in the intergenerational transmission of worklessness due to the inheritance of soft skills.

Finally, parents' social networks are another important channel of influence for the intergenerational transmission of labor market outcomes within households. It is well known that family members' employment status can play a role through the social network that young individuals are able to rely on when searching for a job (Montgomery, 1991; Granovetter, 1995; Rees, 1996; Petersen et al., 2000; Topa, 2001). The effectiveness of social networks depends on the characteristics of the job seeker, his/her social ties, and the labour market institutions (Ioannides and Datched Loury, 2004). To our knowledge, there are no studies about the different effect related to maternal and paternal networks for their children.[7] In principle, both parents could provide support for sons and daughters alike. However, in contexts where the occupational structure is highly sex segregated, fathers might play a more important role than mothers for their sons, while mothers could play a role for their daughters. If fathers are more likely to hold a managerial position, their network could be important also for their daughters.[8]

These channels might work differently across European countries, depending on national-specific socioeconomic structures and institutional contexts. We expect a larger influence of parental employment on their children's labor outcomes in countries characterized by:

i) prevailing social norms based on traditional gender roles within families (i.e. women are expected to be the main family caregivers). The transmission of traditional gender-role attitudes should be stronger in these countries;

ii) high unemployment rates. Both parental social networks and the transmission of soft skills should be more relevant in this case;

iii) a less developed vocational, education and training (VET) system, less developed and less efficient public employment and youth support services (PES), and a low participation in activation-support policies. All these characteristics should increase the importance of parental social networks.

But we cannot predict the influence of parental employment on their children's labor market outcomes in countries characterized by very competitive labor markets as two opposing effects are at work: on the one hand, soft skills play an important role, increasing parental influence; on the other hand, social networks play a limited role, reducing parental influence.

The discussion on the possible channels of parental influence is used to identify five groups of countries, representative of the great heterogeneity of European labor market institutions and welfare regimes: Nordic (DK, FI, NO and SE), Continental (AT, BE, FR, DE, CH and NL), English-speaking (IE and UK), Mediterranean (CY, EL, IT, MT, ES and PT) and Eastern European (BG, CZ, EE, HU, HR, PL, RO and SK) countries. This grouping corresponds also to the classification adopted by Walther (2006), who defines different regimes of youth transitions. We add Eastern European countries as a separate group because, according to Fenger (2007), a half century of communist rule has left institutional legacies that set Eastern European countries apart from other welfare systems.

Based on the preceding discussion, we expect the effect of parental employment on their children's labor outcomes to be smaller in Nordic countries than in Mediterranean and Eastern European countries. These two country groups are characterized by higher unemployment rates,[9] a more familialistic welfare system where women are expected to provide care for frail family members, low participation in activation-support policies, a less developed education and training system, and, for Mediterranean countries also less efficient and/or developed PES. Continental countries have a more developed VET system, lower unemployment rates, but slightly more traditional gender roles. Therefore, we expect parental influence to be larger in Continental than in Nordic countries, but smaller than in Mediterranean and Eastern countries. English-speaking countries are characterized by more competitive labor markets and greater heterogeneity in terms of gender-role attitudes. Hence, it is more difficult to formulate a priori expectations on parental influence for this group of countries (see Berloffa et al., 2017, for more details).

3. Data and Estimation Methodology

This study is based on EU-SILC data which encompass extensive comparable cross-sectional and longitudinal microdata both at the household and individual level for all EU-27 countries. We exploit the 2011 wave because it provides substantial information on parental educational and occupational backgrounds through the ad hoc module on the intergenerational transmission of disadvantages. We select a sample of young people aged 25–34.[10] For all young individuals we model their employment status (employed, NEET, in

education)[11] as a function of individual characteristics at the time of the interview and family educational and occupational background characteristics, that refer to the period when the individual was around 14 years old. Unfortunately, our data provide information on parents' and children's employment status only at a single point in time. Therefore, we cannot distinguish between short- and long-term worklessness neither for parents nor for children.

The descriptive and econometric analyses are carried out separately for the five groups of European countries mentioned in the previous section: Nordic, Continental, English-speaking, Mediterranean and Eastern European. The five groups of countries are representative of the great heterogeneity of labor market institutions and welfare regimes.

Table 1 shows some descriptive statistics of our sample of analysis. Cross-country differences in individual characteristics are in line with what is expected from official statistics. Nordic and Continental countries exhibit the highest shares of employed young adults (aged 25–34): more than 80% of males and more than 70% of females are in employment. They also show the lowest shares of NEETs (Not in Employment, Education and Training). By contrast, Mediterranean and Eastern European countries record the highest shares of NEETs, about 20% of males and more than 30% of females, while English-speaking countries are somewhere in between, with high shares of employed young men and high shares of young women as NEETs. The five groups of countries are quite different in terms of youth educational attainments: Nordic and English-speaking countries record the highest shares of highly educated young people, whereas Mediterranean and Eastern countries show remarkably high shares of young individuals with low education. Generally, females are more educated than males.

Our main interest is to examine the way in which young adults' employment outcomes vary with their parents' working condition when they were about 14. We distinguish between dual-earner (or work-rich) families (where both parents were working), male breadwinner families (where only the father was working), female breadwinner families (where only the mother was working), and workless (or work-poor) families (where neither parent was working).[12] Table 1 confirms the findings of Anxo et al. (2007) and Van Dongen (2009), showing that the dual-earner model predominates in Nordic and Eastern countries, while the male breadwinner model predominates in Mediterranean countries.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics by country group and gender (young people aged 25–34 in 2011)

	Nordic Countries		English-speaking Countries		Continental Countries		Mediterranean counties		Eastern countries	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Employment status										
Employed	0.84	0.73	0.81	0.66	0.85	0.72	0.75	0.63	0.80	0.65
NEET	0.10	0.18	0.16	0.31	0.09	0.23	0.21	0.32	0.17	0.33
In education	0.07	0.09	0.07	0.03	0.05	0.04	0.05	0.05	0.02	0.02
Education										
Low	0.12	0.07	0.09	0.09	0.10	0.10	0.33	0.25	0.14	0.25
Medium	0.51	0.37	0.39	0.40	0.52	0.47	0.40	0.37	0.62	0.37
High	0.37	0.56	0.52	0.52	0.38	0.43	0.27	0.38	0.24	0.38
Cohabiting with parents (at the time of the interview)										
Yes	0.05	0.02	0.14	0.08	0.18	0.09	0.56	0.40	0.59	0.42
Household occupational structure (when the young person was around 14)										
Dual-earner households (both parents were employed)	0.80	0.80	0.58	0.56	0.59	0.62	0.43	0.45	0.82	0.81
Male breadwinner households (only the father was employed)	0.12	0.13	0.35	0.36	0.36	0.33	0.53	0.51	0.14	0.14
Female breadwinner households (only the mother was employed)	0.04	0.05	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.02
Workless households (Neither the father nor the mother were employed)	0.03	0.03	0.05	0.05	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.03

Legend: Nordic countries: DK, FI, NO, SE; Continental countries: AT, BE, FR, DE, CH, NL; English-speaking countries: IE, UK; Mediterranean countries: CY, EL, IT, MT, ES, PT; Eastern European countries: BG, CZ, EE, HU, HR, PL, RO, SK.
Source: Authors' calculation based on EU-Silc 2011 cross-sectional data.

Table 2 reports the key descriptive statistics for our subsequent empirical analysis: it shows the shares of young people employed, NEET, and in education, by gender, household employment structure during adolescence and group of countries. Young adults' labor market outcomes are considerably different according to the household employment structure. As expected, the share of NEETs increases, for both men and women, moving from dual-earner to workless households. In all country groups, the share of men who are NEETs is more than double among those grown up in workless households than among those coming from work-rich families, with a particularly large difference in English-speaking countries. Also women who grew up in workless families appear to be disadvantaged on the labor market compared to women grown up in dual-earner families, even though to a lesser extent than men.

In our econometric analysis, we model the individual choice with respect to employment status as a multinomial logit model. Given that fathers' and mothers' employment status during adolescence may impact differently on the labor market outcomes of their sons and daughters, we run separate analysis for young men and women. The set of control variables includes:

i) individual characteristics: age, educational attainment (at most lower secondary, at most upper secondary and tertiary education), citizenship (individuals from non-EU countries) and motherhood status[13] (young females with at least one child);

ii) partner's educational attainment (at most lower secondary, at most upper secondary and tertiary education);

iii) cohabitation with parents at the time of the interview;

iv) presence of parents when the young individual was 14 (both parents present, only one parent present or no parents present);

v) parents' characteristics when the young individual was 14: employment status (employed), occupation (in a high status occupation, i.e., manager, professional, technician or associate professional) and educational level (tertiary education);

vi) mother-in-law's employment status (employed) when the husband was around 14;[14]

vii) country and quarter of the interview dummies.[15]

Table 2 Youth employment status by household employment structure, country group and gender (2011)

	Nordic countries		English-speaking Countries		Continental countries		Mediterranean countries		Eastern countries	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Dual-earner households										
Employed	0.85	0.77	0.88	0.72	0.88	0.77	0.76	0.68	0.83	0.68
NEET	0.08	0.14	0.09	0.25	0.09	0.18	0.19	0.26	0.14	0.29
In education	0.07	0.09	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.06	0.06	0.02	0.02
Male breadwinner households										
Employed	0.87	0.63	0.76	0.64	0.85	0.67	0.76	0.61	0.75	0.55
NEET	0.09	0.27	0.21	0.34	0.10	0.29	0.21	0.36	0.23	0.44
In education	0.04	0.10	0.03	0.02	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.01
Female breadwinner households										
Employed	0.75	0.66	0.87	0.55	0.84	0.67	0.59	0.55	0.74	0.61
NEET	0.18	0.20	0.13	0.45	0.11	0.27	0.33	0.35	0.24	0.38
In education	0.07	0.14	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.06	0.09	0.09	0.02	0.01
Workless households										
Employed	0.77	0.61	0.57	0.42	0.68	0.59	0.58	0.52	0.66	0.45
NEET	0.18	0.31	0.40	0.50	0.23	0.37	0.38	0.43	0.32	0.51
In education	0.05	0.08	0.03	0.08	0.09	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.02	0.04

Legend (for country groups): see tab. 1.
Notes: Household employment structure refers to when young people were about 14.
Source: Authors' calculation based on EU-Silc 2011 cross-sectional data.

4. Results

The estimated marginal effects of the multinomial logit models for the five country groups are shown in tables A1–A5 (in the Appendix). Estimation results for parental employment are illustrated by considering marginal effects, predicted probabilities for "fictitious" individuals and odds-ratios. Marginal effects represent the (absolute) difference in the predicted probabilities for "fictitious" individuals who have all individual characteristics equal to the sample mean of their country group, except for the dummy variable representing either mothers' or fathers' employment status. They are reported in Table 3. Since marginal effects are computed by setting the value of the dummy associated to the other parent equal to the sample mean, we also computed predicted probabilities for specific household employment structures. We distinguish "fictitious" young adults who grew up in households where: i) both parents were employed (2P-2W, for whom we set both dummy variables capturing parental employment equal to one); ii) only the father was employed (2P-FW, for whom the dummy variable associated with paternal employment is equal to one, while that associated with maternal employment is equal to zero); iii) only the mother was employed (2P-MW; the opposite situation); iv) neither the father nor the mother were employed (2P-0W, for whom both dummy variables are set equal to zero.). These predicted probabilities are depicted in Figure 1. Finally, in Table 4 we show the ratio between these probabilities. These odds ratios show the percentage difference in the predicted NEET probability for individuals who grew up in families with different employment structures. Thus, odds ratios provide relevant information about the relative importance of having grown up in a specific household type compared to a different household type, coeteris paribus. In addition, with respect to the analysis of marginal effects, odds ratios allow us to measure the relative importance of mothers (fathers) across country groups and also across their children's gender.[16]

4.1 The role of individual characteristics

Individual characteristics have systematic effects on the employment status of young people (see tables A1–A5 in the Appendix). In all country groups, age increases females' employment probability and reduces their probability of being NEET, while it has only small effects on male employment outcomes. Educational attainments have, as expected, very large and significant effects in all country groups for both men and women: the higher the education level, the higher is the employment probability and the lower is the probability of being NEET. It is worth noting that the marginal effects are larger for females than for males, suggesting that education plays a more crucial role for women in avoiding poor labor market outcomes and accessing employment.[17] For females, living in a couple and having children generally

reduce the probability of being employed and increase that of being NEET. However, while the effects of motherhood are significant in all country groups, those associated with living in a couple are significant only in Mediterranean and Eastern countries.[18] For young men, living in a couple either has no effects on their employment outcomes or the effects go in the opposite direction than for women. English-speaking countries are the only exception: here young males living with a partner have a higher probability of being NEET. Young individuals who still live with their family of origin are less likely to be employed and more likely to be NEETs in all country groups, although the magnitude of the effect is smaller for men than for women.[19]

4.2 The role of parental background characteristics

The cultural and social capital of parents, captured by their educational level and type of occupation when their children were about 14, do not appear to have systematic effects on the employment status of young adults (see Tables A1–A5 in the Appendix).[20] By contrast, the working conditions of parents during adolescence seem to play a significant role, with noticeable differences between young women (daughters) and young men (sons) across Europe. As explained above, marginal effects of parents' working status on youth employment outcomes are reported in Table 3, predicted probabilities for different household employment structure are shown in Figure 1, while selected odds-ratios are reported in Table 4.

The discussion that follows presents the main results of the empirical analysis on the effects of maternal and paternal employment on the labor market outcomes of their daughters, and then of their sons. We provide some interpretation of the results in the light of the hypotheses advanced in section 2 on the various channels through which parental employment might affect children's labor market outcomes.

For daughters, having had a working mother increases the probability of being employed and reduces that of being NEET in all country groups, except in Nordic countries. The size of the marginal effect (i.e. the absolute effect expressed in percentage points) is very similar in all country groups (about -5pp), but almost double in Eastern countries (-10pp). In relative terms,[21] having had a working mother during adolescence reduces daughters' likelihood of being workless by about 18% in English-speaking and Mediterranean countries and by about 27% in Continental and Eastern countries (Table 4, col. 1 and 2). These results suggest that that the transmission of social norms on gender roles is stronger via the family (i.e. mother–daughter relationship) than via the labor market conditions (i.e. prevailing pattern of female participation). Indeed, we have larger effects in countries where the prevailing family model is that of one-and-a half earner (e.g. in Continental countries) than in countries where the prevailing model is that of the male breadwinner (e.g. in Mediterranean countries) (see Anxo et al., 2007). The lack of effects

in Nordic countries could be explained on the basis of the prevailing "adult worker model," supported by adequate family policies,[22] that results in very small gender gaps in participation rates.

The effects of fathers' working condition on their daughters' employment are less widespread. Again, the marginal effects are reported in Table 3, while the relative effects are shown in Table 4, columns 3 and 4. Relative effects are computed again using odds ratios. More precisely, we considered the ratio between the probability of being NEET of young women grown up in male breadwinner and in workless families (with all the other individual characteristics equal to the sample mean of their country group; Table 4, column 3), and the ratio between the probability of being NEET of young women grown up in female breadwinner households and in dual-earner families (Table 4, column 4). Fathers' employment influences daughters' employment outcomes only in English-speaking, Mediterranean and Eastern countries. In English-speaking countries, the effects associated with paternal employment are larger than those related to maternal employment: the marginal effect on the probability of being NEET is about -9pp for the father and -6pp for the mother, corresponding to a relative effect of about -25% for the father vs. -20% for the mother. In Mediterranean countries the effects of paternal and maternal employment are similar (about -15%), whereas in Eastern European countries fathers have a much more limited influence on their daughters' outcomes. The marginal effect of fathers' employment on their daughters' probability of being NEET is about half that of the mothers, corresponding to a relative effect of about -15% for the father vs. -28% for the mother.

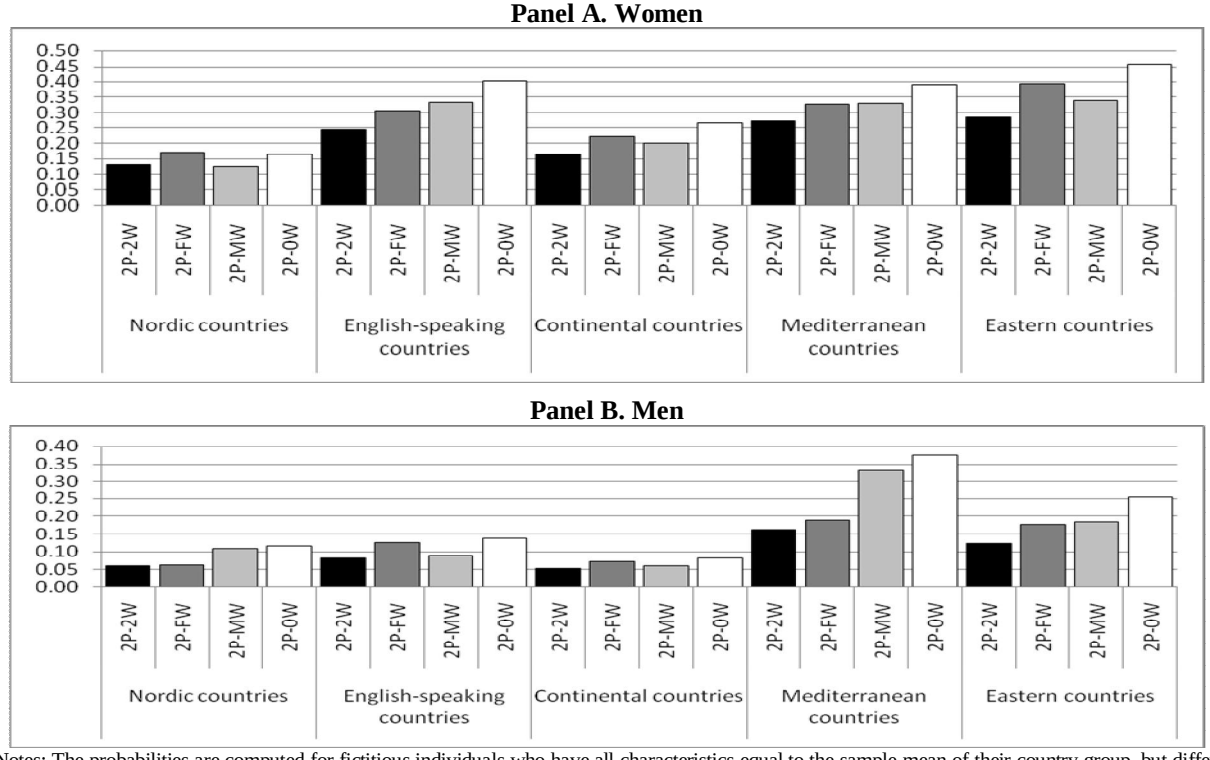
The less widespread effects of fathers' employment condition (with respect to that of mothers) on their daughters' probability of being NEET have to be interpreted taking into account the degree of gender segregation (by occupation and sector). The potential role of fathers on their daughters' labor market outcomes may be constrained by the overall high degree of gender segregation recorded in the majority of European countries.[23] The higher is gender segregation, the lower is the expected effect of fathers' employment condition through social networks and the development of soft skills. As is well known, a large share of young women in Europe are employed in the public sector where entry does not occur through social networks; in addition, the social skills transmitted by fathers play a minor role for typical female jobs. Not surprisingly, Nordic and Continental countries (characterized by, respectively, very high and high degree of segregation, above the EU average) do not record any effect of fathers' employment condition, while Mediterranean and Eastern countries (with very low and low degree of segregation, respectively, below the EU average) record not-negligible effects. The case of the English-speaking countries, recording a significant effect of fathers' employment condition on their daughters' labor market outcome, stands out as an exception to this interpretation.

Table 3 Predicted outcome probabilities (P) and marginal effects (M) for selected variables from the estimation of multinomial logit models (EU-Silc 2011 data for young people aged 25–34; see the text for details)

Country group	Estimate (E)	Women						Men					
		Employed		NEET		In education		Employed		NEET		In education	
		E	St. Err.	E	St. Err.	E	St. Err.	E	St. Err.	E	St. Err.	E	St. Err.
Nordic	P	0.798 ***	0.013	0.139 ***	0.011	0.063 ***	0.008	0.907 ***	0.009	0.066 ***	0.007	0.028 ***	0.005
	M: Working father	0.023	0.042	0.006	0.035	-0.029	0.025	0.059 **	0.023	-0.040 **	0.020	-0.019 *	0.011
	M: Working mother	0.027	0.033	-0.036	0.026	0.009	0.020	-0.003	0.022	-0.004	0.018	0.006	0.012
	M: Working lone mother	0.022	0.070	-0.031	0.051	0.009	0.046	0.049	0.041	-0.009	0.035	-0.040 **	0.020
	M: Working mother in-law	-		-		-		-		-		-	
English-speaking	P	0.710 ***	0.015	0.160 ***	0.015	0.022 ***	0.004	0.886 ***	0.012	0.110 ***	0.012	0.005 ***	0.002
	M: Working father	0.090 *	0.052	-0.086 *	0.052	-0.003	0.007	0.010	0.032	-0.009	0.032	0.000	0.004
	M: Working mother	0.061 *	0.035	-0.059 *	0.035	-0.002	0.006	0.047 *	0.027	-0.048 *	0.027	0.001	0.003
	M: Working lone mother	0.024	0.073	-0.014	0.072	-0.010	0.011	0.041	0.053	-0.036	0.052	-0.005	0.006
	M: Working mother in-law	0.039	0.036	-0.033	0.036	-0.006	0.007	-		-		-	
Continental	P	0.759 ***	0.006	0.187 ***	0.006	0.018 ***	0.002	0.921 ***	0.005	0.063 ***	0.004	0.016 ***	0.002
	M: Working father	0.031	0.029	-0.037	0.028	0.006	0.008	0.011	0.016	-0.008	0.015	-0.003	0.006
	M: Working mother	0.059 ***	0.013	-0.055 ***	0.013	-0.004	0.003	0.024 ***	0.008	-0.018 **	0.008	-0.005 *	0.003
	M: Working lone mother	-0.033	0.033	0.026	0.032	0.007	0.009	-0.028	0.018	0.015	0.017	0.013 *	0.007
	M: Working mother in-law	0.032 **	0.013	-0.034 ***	0.013	0.002	0.004	-		-		-	
Mediterranean	P	0.682 ***	0.006	0.306 ***	0.006	0.012 ***	0.002	0.808 ***	0.006	0.184 ***	0.006	0.009 ***	0.002
	M: Working father	0.069 **	0.030	-0.060 **	0.030	-0.010 ***	0.004	0.144 ***	0.025	-0.140 ***	0.024	-0.004	0.003
	M: Working mother	0.056 ***	0.014	-0.056 ***	0.014	0.000	0.002	0.031 ***	0.012	-0.028 **	0.012	-0.003 *	0.002
	M: Working lone mother	0.008	0.045	-0.010	0.045	0.002	0.006	0.023	0.041	-0.022	0.041	-0.001	0.004
	M: Working mother in-law	0.099 ***	0.018	-0.089 ***	0.017	-0.011 *	0.006	-		-		-	
Eastern	P	0.691 ***	0.005	0.307 ***	0.005	0.002 ***	0.000	0.859 ***	0.004	0.139 ***	0.004	0.002 ***	0.000
	M: Working father	0.053 *	0.027	-0.055 **	0.027	0.002	0.002	0.057 ***	0.017	-0.057 ***	0.017	-0.001	0.001
	M: Working mother	0.104 ***	0.015	-0.104 ***	0.015	0.000	0.001	0.050 ***	0.010	-0.049 ***	0.010	0.000	0.000
	M: Working lone mother	-0.056	0.038	0.053	0.038	0.003 *	0.001	0.002	0.024	-0.003	0.024	0.001	0.001
	M: Working mother in-law	0.033 **	0.015	-0.033 **	0.015	0.000	0.001	-		-		-	

Notes: The full set of regressors can be seen in tables A1-A5 in the Appendix. (-) means not controlled for. Marginal effects are computed at the sample mean of the variables. *** means statistically significant at 1 percent level; ** means statistically significant at 5 percent level; * means statistically significant at 10 percent level.

Figure 1 Predicted NEET probabilities by household employment structure and country group



Notes: The probabilities are computed for fictitious individuals who have all characteristics equal to the sample mean of their country group, but differ for the values taken by the dummy variables representing mothers' and fathers' working conditions when young people were about 14. 2P-2W means that both parents were working (i.e. the dummy variables capturing paternal and maternal employment are both equal to one); 2P-FW means that only the father was working (the dummy variable capturing paternal employment is equal to one, while the dummy variable associated with maternal employment is equal to zero); similarly, 2P-MW means that only the mother was working; 2P-0W means that neither the father nor the mother were working.

*** means statistically significant at 1% level; ** means statistically significant at 5% level; * means statistically significant at 1.

Source: Authors' calculation based on EU-silc 2011 cross-sectional data.

Table 4 NEET odds ratios by household employment structure, gender and country groups

	The role of maternal employment		The role of paternal employment	
	P(N|2P-2W) / P(N|2P-FW)	P(N|2P-MW) / P(N|2P-0W)	P(N|2P-FW) / P(N|2P-0W)	P(N|2P-2W) / P(N|2P-MW)
Women				
Nordic countries	0.77	0.78	1.05	1.05
English-speaking countries	0.81**	0.83	0.76*	0.74*
Continental countries	0.75***	0.75*	0.83	0.82
Mediterranean countries	0.83***	0.85*	0.84**	0.83**
Eastern countries	0.72***	0.75***	0.86*	0.84**
Men:				
Nordic countries	0.93	0.94	0.55*	0.55*
English-speaking countries	0.65**	0.65	0.92	0.92
Continental countries	0.75**	0.75	0.88	0.88
Mediterranean countries	0.85***	0.88	0.51***	0.49***
Eastern countries	0.70***	0.72**	0.69***	0.67***

Legend (for country groups): see tab. 1.

Notes: The underlying probabilities are computed for fictitious individuals who have all characteristics equal to the sample mean of their country group, but differ for the values taken by the dummy variables representing mothers' and fathers' working conditions when young people were about 14. 2P-2W means that both parents were working (i.e. the dummy variables capturing paternal and maternal employment are both equal to one); 2P-FW means that only the father was working (the dummy variable capturing paternal employment is equal to one, while the dummy variable associated with maternal employment is equal to zero); similarly, 2P-MW means that only the mother was working; 2P-0W means that neither the father nor the mother were working.

*** statistically significant at 1% level; ** statistically significant at 5% level; * statistically significant at 10% level. The significance levels are based on a series of one-sided tests, because the direction of the difference between two probabilities is relevant for the analysis.

Source: Authors' calculation based on EU-Silc 2011 cross-sectional data.

For sons, having had a working father during adolescence matters in Nordic, Mediterranean and Eastern countries, where it increases the probability of being employed and decreases that of being NEET, but not in English-speaking and Continental countries. The size of the marginal effect is largest in Mediterranean countries (-14pp), and similar in Nordic and Eastern countries (-5pp). However, in relative terms, the percentage change in the NEET probability associated with fathers' employment is larger in Nordic than in Eastern countries (about -45% vs. -31%). Mediterranean countries record the highest effect even in relative terms (about -50%). In Mediterranean and, possibly, in Eastern countries this could be due to the importance of fathers' labor market networks and soft-skills transmission. These results are coherent with the hypothesis that social networks play a minor role in countries with a very competitive labor market (English-speaking countries) and/or more developed VET systems (Continental countries). The "surprising" result for Nordic countries could be related to the fact that soft skills (transmitted to sons via their father, in a labor market with a high sex segregation) matter more as unemployment rises. And this was the case in 2011. Results for English-speaking countries (i.e. no father–sons effects) are more difficult to explain. In particular, it is difficult to explain why we do not observe any significant effect in competitive labor markets where soft skills (transmitted by fathers to their sons) should matter.

For sons, similarly to what we observe for daughters, having had a working mother positively affects their labor market outcomes in all country groups, except in Nordic countries. The size of the marginal effects is quite small (between -2pp and -5pp), but in relative terms these percentage points correspond to a reduction of about 15% in the NEET probability in Mediterranean countries, 25% in Continental countries, 30% in Eastern countries and 35% in English-speaking countries. Thus, mothers matter not only for daughters but also for their sons. More precisely, mothers are actually more important than fathers for their sons in English-speaking and Continental countries, play a similar role in Eastern countries, whereas their role is much more limited in Nordic and Mediterranean countries. These results are coherent with the hypothesis that the employment status of the mother during adolescence plays a crucial role for the transmission of gender stereotypes and gender roles. But this cannot be the end of the story, given that we observe that mothers have a lager effect than fathers for their sons in two country groups: English-speaking and Continental countries. This outcome can be interpreted as a signal of the existence of a strong cultural transmission of attitudes towards paid work, welfare dependency and individual responsibility. And this cultural transmission may be stronger in countries with more generous welfare provisions (i.e. Continental, English-speaking).[24] In short, these findings support what has been acknowledged in the literature: the impact of mothers on the development of gender stereotypes and soft skills to both their daughters

and sons is somehow stronger than that of fathers (Tenenbaum and Leaper, 2002; Endendijk et al., 2013).

Interestingly, we find evidence of a significant "mother-in-law effect" for women in Continental, Mediterranean and Eastern countries. Being married to a partner whose mother was working during his adolescence is associated with a higher probability of being employed and a lower probability of being NEET, with larger effects in Mediterranean countries. Once more, this outcome confirms the crucial role of mothers on the development of gender stereotypes and soft skills to their sons (not only to their daughters), therefore favoring a more balanced division of unpaid work within their son's family, thereby also promoting gender equality in the labor market.

5. Conclusions

This paper has examined how the influence of parental employment status during adolescence on adult children's labor outcomes varies according to the gender of parents and the gender of their children in different groups of European countries, characterized by distinct labor market institutions and welfare regimes. To this end, we have used a sample of young males and females aged 25–34 from the EU-SILC cross-sectional data (2011), and information about the working condition of their parents, when young people were about 14, from the ad-hoc module on the intergenerational transmission of disadvantages.

Considering the two types of relationship that received more attention in the literature (between mothers and daughters and between fathers and sons), our results show that the influence of maternal employment on their daughters' probability of being NEET is similar in all country groups (except Nordic), slightly larger in Eastern and Continental countries and lower in Mediterranean countries. This evidence suggests that the transmission of social norms on gender roles is stronger via the family (i.e. mother–daughter relationship) than via the labor market conditions (i.e. prevailing pattern of female participation). The influence of paternal employment on their sons' probability of being NEET, instead, is more differentiated: null in English speaking and Continental countries, higher in Mediterranean and, rather unexpectedly, in Nordic countries. These results are coherent with the hypothesis that social networks play a minor role in countries with a very competitive labor market (English-speaking countries) and/or more developed VET systems (Continental countries). However, English-speaking countries are characterized also by competitive labor markets where soft skills (transmitted by fathers to their sons) should matter. Therefore, the absence of a father-sons effect in English-speaking countries is more difficult to explain. The "surprising" result for Nordic countries could be related to the fact that soft skills (transmitted

to sons via their father, in a labor market with a high sex segregation) matter more as unemployment rises.

Our analysis shed some light also on the types of relationship less analyzed in the literature. Interestingly, maternal employment reduces their sons' probability of being NEET in all country groups (except Nordic), producing effects of similar magnitude than the one between mothers and daughters (in relative terms). Mothers are actually more important than fathers for their sons in English-speaking and Continental countries, play a similar role in Eastern countries, whereas their role is much more limited in Nordic and Mediterranean countries. These results suggest that, on the one hand, the impact of mothers on the development of gender stereotypes and soft skills to both their daughters and sons is somehow stronger than that of fathers. On the other hand, the cultural transmission of attitudes towards paid work, welfare dependency and individual responsibility may be stronger in countries with more generous welfare provisions (i.e. Continental and English-speaking).

Fathers' employment influences daughters' employment outcomes only in English-speaking, Mediterranean and Eastern countries. In these countries, these effects are smaller, in relative terms, than those observed between fathers and sons. The limited role of fathers on their daughters' labor market outcomes might be related to the degree of gender segregation in the various country groups. The higher is gender segregation (e.g. in Nordic and Continental countries), the lower is the effect of fathers' employment condition through social networks and the development of soft skills. The case of the English-speaking countries, recording a significant effect of fathers' employment condition on their daughters' labor market outcome, stands out as an exception to this interpretation.

These results suggest that a key challenge for policy makers is that policies should not be limited to enhance the employment probability of disadvantaged youth, but they should consider in parallel the difficulties faced by parents of young children. As a matter of fact, the adolescents having grown up in the years of the Great Recession with workless parents, in particular workless mothers, might suffer in the future when they will start their working life. Perhaps the strongest policy implication that can be drawn from our analysis is that policy makers should pay attention to mothers' employment, not only when their children are in their early years of life, but also during their adolescence. Helping mothers to remain or re-enter into the labor market might have important consequences for their children future employment prospects.

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NOTES

1. See Black and Devereux (2011) for a survey.

2. In many cases, the sample size at the country level is too small to allow the estimation of a different model for each country.

3. For the influence of the family of origin on education see, for example, Mooi-Reci and Bakker (2015) and Niknami (2016). However, there is evidence in the literature of a direct impact of the family of origin on offspring employment status and earnings, over and above the influence that works through education (Raitano and Vona, 2015; Hérault and Kalb, 2016).

4. In our empirical analysis, we partly control for the effect of this channel. Indeed, we control for parents' occupation and/or education, which should be a proxy for households' economic resources. Unfortunately, our dataset does not include a measure of family income and wealth when the individual was 14.

5. Fernandez et al. (2004) identify two possible explanations: growing up with a working mother may either shape men's preferences for a working wife or provide men with a set of household skills and attitudes towards housework that make them better partners for working women.

6. These non-cognitive skills are personal characteristics (motivation, self-discipline, communication skill, energy, impulse control, perseverance, sociability, confidence, self-esteem, decisiveness, etc.) by and large genetically inherited or developed within the family. They are acknowledged to play a role for labor market outcomes (Joshi, 2014).

7. O'Neill and Sweetman (1998) and Corak and Piraino (2010) focus on fathers and sons and show that sons of nonworking parents are more disadvantaged in the labor market as compared with men whose fathers are working and maintain a network. Gregg et al. (2012) and Zwysen (2015) analyze the consequences of fathers' job loss or worklessness for their children's employment status in the UK, but they do not distinguish between sons and daughters.

8. A qualitative study of Hennig and Jardim (1977) shows that successful women have a close relationship with their fathers, who were professionals or businessman. They argue that fathers are able to encourage their daughters to be leaders and to involve them in their activities.

9. Both the total unemployment rate and the youth unemployment rate were higher than the average (EU27) in both groups of countries in 2011, with the only exception of the Check Republic (Eurostat database [une_rt_a]).

10. Our sample does not include individuals younger than 25 because all variables about family characteristics, that refer to the period when the individual was around 14 years old, are collected only for individuals aged between 25 and 60 at the time of the interview.

11. Information about the individual employment condition is based on the self-reported current status.

12. In the literature, two main methods are adopted to classify households according to the employment status of household members: the first distinguishes between workless and non-workless households (as in our approach); the second classifies households according to a work-intensity indicator. This indicator is defined as the ratio between the total number of months in employment for all working-age

members during the income reference year, and the total number of months that the same members could theoretically have worked in the same period (Cantillon and Vandenbroucke, 2014), allowing compensations between months worked by different members. We cannot use the work intensity indicator in our analysis because retrospective information on hours and months worked is not available. But also from a theoretical perspective the classification of households according to the occupational status of family members is more appropriate. Indeed, the type of compensation allowed by the work-intensity indicator is not relevant in our approach because it is the labor market experience of each parent as such (not the quantity of hours/months worked in a year) that may play a role in influencing children's attitudes towards unemployment and the availability of family networks to be used in their job searches. For this reason, we use a classification based on the employment condition (irrespectively of hours/months of work) of parents.

13. We do not control for fatherhood status because of the very low percentage of young fathers in education and NEET.

14. The information is not available for Nordic countries because only the respondent reports parental background information.

15. We control for the quarter of the interview because how people self-declare their economic status, especially in the summer, differs slightly across country groups. In Mediterranean countries undergraduate students tend to report themselves as in education also during the summer, though some may take up seasonal jobs. In Nordic and Continental countries, young people enrolled in education are much more likely to declare themselves employed during the summer.

16. The analysis of marginal effects allows us to compare the relative role of maternal and paternal employment for daughters (sons) in a particular country group, but not the relative importance of mothers (fathers) across country groups or for daughters and sons within a country group. The reason is that sons and daughters have different average probabilities of being NEET both within and across countries, and similar marginal effects can have very different implications in terms of changes in the underlying risk.

17. For women, we find an additional positive effect on the probability of being still in education in Mediterranean and Eastern countries, probably linked to the longer duration of tertiary education in these countries. This effect is observed also for men in all country groups, except for English-speaking countries.

18. In Continental, Mediterranean and Eastern countries, motherhood also reduces the probability of being in education.

19. Generally, young people still living with their parents are also more likely to be in education.

20. When results are significant, they generally increase the probability that the young person is still in education.

21. The relative importance of mothers' employment status can be measured by two different ratios. First, we can consider the ratio between the probability of being NEET for "fictitious" individuals who grew up in a dual-earner household (i.e. where both parents were working) and in a male breadwinner family (i.e. with a working father and a non-working mother). Second, we can consider the ratio between the probability of being NEET for "fictitious" individuals who grew up in a female breadwinner household (i.e. with a working mother and a non-working father) and in

a workless family (i.e. where both parents were non-working). These two ratios are reported in Table 4, columns 1 and 2, and are of similar magnitude. Differences in the significance levels of these two ratios are due to the larger variance of the probability of being workless for individuals who grew up in workless and female breadwinner families, because of the much smaller number of observations.

22. See Thévenon (2011) and Sarceno and Keck (2011) for detailed comparative analyses on family policies in European countries.

23. See the annual reports produced by the European Commission on gender equality that includes an index on gender segregation in occupations and in sectors for all 28 EU Member States. http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/

24. See Stovicek and Turrini (2012) on unemployment benefits in EU Member States.

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Appendix

Table A1 Predicted outcome probability (Pr) and marginal effects (Mfx) in Nordic countries by gender

	Women						Men					
	Employed		NEET		In education		Employed		NEET		In education	
	Pr	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.
Predicted outcome probability	0.798 ***	0.013	0.139 ***	0.011	0.063 ***	0.008	0.907 ***	0.009	0.066 ***	0.007	0.028 ***	0.005
	Mfx	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**
Individual characteristics at the time of the interview:												
Age	0.027 ***	0.004	-0.011 ***	0.003	-0.016 ***	0.002	0.009 ***	0.003	0.000	0.002	-0.010 ***	0.001
Own education: medium	0.158 ***	0.041	-0.147 ***	0.035	-0.012	0.023	0.060 ***	0.021	-0.088 ***	0.015	0.028 **	0.014
Own education: high	0.217 ***	0.043	-0.180 ***	0.036	-0.037	0.024	0.072 ***	0.022	-0.106 ***	0.016	0.034 **	0.015
Partner's education: medium	0.059	0.041	-0.055 *	0.033	-0.005	0.026	0.021	0.036	-0.050 **	0.023	0.029	0.028
Partner's education: high	0.036	0.042	-0.034	0.034	-0.002	0.027	0.021	0.037	-0.048 **	0.024	0.028	0.029
Citizenship	-0.298 ***	0.067	0.189 ***	0.054	0.109 ***	0.030	-0.052	0.051	0.081 **	0.040	-0.029	0.028
Living with parents	-0.167 ***	0.057	0.162 ***	0.047	0.005	0.032	-0.017	0.024	0.039 **	0.020	-0.022	0.014
Living in couple	-0.024	0.044	0.056	0.037	-0.033	0.026	0.075 **	0.035	-0.026	0.021	-0.049 *	0.028
Motherhood	-0.129 ***	0.024	0.140 ***	0.021	-0.010	0.013	-	-		-		
Presence of parents when the young was 14:												
Lone parent family	-0.005	0.069	0.039	0.049	-0.034	0.046	-0.035	0.037	-0.003	0.030	0.039 *	0.021
Parentless	0.050	0.066	-0.023	0.050	-0.027	0.043	0.028	0.037	-0.004	0.031	-0.023	0.019
Family background information:												
Working father	0.023	0.042	0.006	0.035	-0.029	0.025	0.059 **	0.023	-0.040 **	0.020	-0.019 *	0.011
Working mother	0.027	0.033	-0.036	0.026	0.009	0.020	-0.003	0.022	-0.004	0.018	0.006	0.012
Working lone mother	0.022	0.070	-0.031	0.051	0.009	0.046	0.049	0.041	-0.009	0.035	-0.040 **	0.020
Working mother in-law	-		-		-		-		-		-	
Father's occupation	-0.036	0.032	0.038	0.028	-0.002	0.017	0.006	0.021	-0.022	0.019	0.016 *	0.008
Mother's occupation	0.058 *	0.031	-0.053 *	0.027	-0.005	0.015	-0.019	0.021	0.012	0.019	0.008	0.009
Father's education	-0.016	0.029	0.001	0.026	0.015	0.016	-0.005	0.019	0.006	0.018	-0.001	0.008
Mother's education	-0.071 ***	0.027	0.038	0.024	0.033 **	0.014	-0.003	0.019	-0.010	0.017	0.013	0.008

Notes: Dummies for country, quarter of interview and missing information about parents' working status and educational level are introduced. (-) means not controlled for. Marginal effects are computed at the sample mean of the variables. *** means statistically significant at 1 percent level; ** means statistically significant at 5% level; * means statistically significant at 10% level.

Table A2 Predicted outcome probability (Pr) and marginal effects (Mfx) in English-speaking countries by gender

	Women						Men					
	Employed		NEET		In education		Employed		NEET		In education	
	Pr	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.
Predicted outcome probability	0.710 ***	0.015	0.160 ***	0.015	0.022 ***	0.004	0.886 ***	0.012	0.110 ***	0.012	0.005 ***	0.002
	Mfx	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**
Individual characteristics at the time of the interview:												
Age	0.016 ***	0.006	-0.013 **	0.006	-0.003 **	0.001	0.001	0.004	0.000	0.004	-0.001 *	0.001
Own education: medium	0.187 ***	0.055	-0.189 ***	0.053	0.002	0.008	0.120 ***	0.035	-0.123 ***	0.034	0.003	0.006
Own education: high	0.386 **	0.058	-0.384 ***	0.056	-0.001	0.009	0.156 ***	0.034	-0.157 ***	0.033	0.001	0.005
Partner's education: medium	0.104 **	0.052	-0.080	0.051	-0.024 ***	0.009	0.110 *	0.065	-0.160 ***	0.058	0.051 *	0.030
Partner's education: high	0.065	0.054	-0.050	0.053	-0.015	0.010	0.188 ***	0.067	-0.241 ***	0.060	0.053 *	0.029
Citizenship	-0.206 ***	0.065	0.186 ***	0.064	0.020 **	0.009	-0.110 **	0.055	0.097 *	0.054	0.014 **	0.007
Living with parents	-0.049	0.064	0.056	0.063	-0.007	0.007	-0.049 *	0.029	0.048 *	0.029	0.001	0.002
Living in couple	-0.035	0.053	0.039	0.052	-0.004	0.008	-0.083	0.065	0.144 **	0.057	-0.061 *	0.032
Motherhood	-0.320 ***	0.037	0.314 ***	0.037	0.006	0.005	-		-		-	
Presence of parents when the young was 14:												
Lone parent family	0.003	0.054	-0.006	0.053	0.003	0.008	-0.086 **	0.040	0.083 **	0.039	0.002	0.005
Parentless	0.565	0.404	-0.411	0.389	-0.155 ***	0.052	-0.240 **	0.101	0.299 ***	0.095	-0.058 *	0.032
Family background information:												
Working father	0.090 *	0.052	-0.086 *	0.052	-0.003	0.007	0.010	0.032	-0.009	0.032	0.000	0.004
Working mother	0.061 *	0.035	-0.059 *	0.035	-0.002	0.006	0.047 *	0.027	-0.048 *	0.027	0.001	0.003
Working lone mother	0.024	0.073	-0.014	0.072	-0.010	0.011	0.041	0.053	-0.036	0.052	-0.005	0.006
Working mother in-law	0.039	0.036	-0.033	0.036	-0.006	0.007	-		-		-	
Father's occupation	-0.017	0.035	0.013	0.034	0.004	0.006	0.075 ***	0.029	-0.076 ***	0.028	0.001	0.002
Mother's occupation	0.008	0.045	-0.015	0.045	0.007	0.007	-0.001	0.033	-0.002	0.032	0.002	0.003
Father's education	-0.025	0.045	0.022	0.045	0.003	0.008	-0.035	0.033	0.037	0.032	-0.003	0.003
Mother's education	-0.017	0.049	0.028	0.049	-0.011	0.009	-0.069 **	0.030	0.064 **	0.029	0.005	0.003

Notes: Dummies for country, quarter of interview and missing information about parents' working status and educational level are introduced. (-) means not controlled for. Marginal effects are computed at the sample mean of the variables. *** means statistically significant at 1 percent level; ** means statistically significant at 5% level; * means statistically significant at 10% level.

Table A3 Predicted outcome probability (Pr) and marginal effects (Mfx) in Continental countries by gender

	Women						Men					
	Employed		NEET		In education		Employed		NEET		In education	
	Pr	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.
Predicted outcome probability	0.759 ***	0.006	0.187 ***	0.006	0.018 ***	0.002	0.921 ***	0.005	0.063 ***	0.004	0.016 ***	0.002
	Mfx	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**
Individual characteristics at the time of the interview:												
Age	0.011***	0.002	-0.006***	0.002	-0.005***	0.001	0.004***	0.001	0.001	0.001	-0.005***	0.001
Own education: medium	0.119***	0.020	-0.136***	0.019	0.017**	0.008	0.035***	0.011	-0.060***	0.009	0.026***	0.007
Own education: high	0.192***	0.022	-0.203***	0.021	0.011	0.008	0.061***	0.013	-0.081***	0.010	0.020***	0.008
Partner's education: medium	0.063***	0.022	-0.057***	0.020	-0.007	0.008	0.037**	0.017	-0.048***	0.013	0.011	0.012
Partner's education: high	0.020	0.023	-0.027	0.022	0.007	0.008	0.043**	0.018	-0.060***	0.015	0.017	0.011
Citizenship	-0.189***	0.026	0.170***	0.025	0.020***	0.006	-0.076***	0.014	0.048***	0.013	0.028***	0.006
Living with parents	-0.063***	0.024	0.054**	0.024	0.010***	0.004	-0.031***	0.009	0.025***	0.008	0.007***	0.003
Living in couple	-0.036	0.025	0.052**	0.024	-0.016*	0.008	0.055***	0.016	-0.023*	0.013	-0.032***	0.011
Motherhood	-0.254***	0.014	0.263***	0.013	-0.009**	0.004	-		-		-	
Presence of parents when the young was 14:												
Lone parent family	0.023	0.029	-0.022	0.028	-0.002	0.008	0.006	0.016	0.005	0.014	-0.011*	0.007
Parentless	-0.096*	0.050	0.084*	0.048	0.012	0.013	-0.024	0.031	0.006	0.028	0.018*	0.010
Family background information:												
Working father	0.031	0.029	-0.037	0.028	0.006	0.008	0.011	0.016	-0.008	0.015	-0.003	0.006
Working mother	0.059***	0.013	-0.055***	0.013	-0.004	0.003	0.024***	0.008	-0.018**	0.008	-0.005*	0.003
Working lone mother	-0.033	0.033	0.026	0.032	0.007	0.009	-0.028	0.018	0.015	0.017	0.013*	0.007
Working mother in-law	0.032**	0.013	-0.034***	0.013	0.002	0.004	-		-		-	
Father's occupation	0.003	0.014	-0.007	0.014	0.004	0.003	0.001	0.009	-0.007	0.008	0.006**	0.003
Mother's occupation	-0.002	0.018	-0.001	0.018	0.003	0.003	-0.006	0.010	0.005	0.010	0.002	0.003
Father's education	-0.021	0.017	0.012	0.017	0.009***	0.004	-0.010	0.010	0.002	0.010	0.008**	0.003
Mother's education	0.017	0.020	-0.022	0.020	0.005	0.003	-0.004	0.011	-0.004	0.010	0.008***	0.003

Notes: Dummies for country, quarter of interview and missing information about parents' working status and educational level are introduced. (-) means not controlled for. Marginal effects are computed at the sample mean of the variables. *** means statistically significant at 1% level; ** means statistically significant at 5% level; * means statistically significant at 10% level.

Table A4 Predicted outcome probability (Pr) and marginal effects (Mfx) in Mediterranean countries by gender

	Women						Men					
	Employed		NEET		In education		Employed		NEET		In education	
	Pr	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.
Predicted outcome probability	0.682 ***	0.006	0.306 ***	0.006	0.012 ***	0.002	0.808 ***	0.006	0.184 ***	0.006	0.009 ***	0.002
	Mfx	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**
Individual characteristics at the time of the interview:												
Age	0.014 ***	0.002	-0.011 ***	0.002	-0.003 ***	0.001	0.010 ***	0.002	-0.007 ***	0.002	-0.003 ***	0.001
Own education: medium	0.088 ***	0.016	-0.106 ***	0.016	0.018 ***	0.004	0.076 ***	0.012	-0.089 ***	0.012	0.014 ***	0.003
Own education: high	0.181 ***	0.018	-0.190 ***	0.017	0.009 ***	0.003	0.104 ***	0.015	-0.116 ***	0.014	0.012 ***	0.003
Partner's education: medium	0.049 ***	0.019	-0.053 ***	0.018	0.004	0.006	0.074 ***	0.023	-0.074 ***	0.022	-0.001	0.010
Partner's education: high	0.062 ***	0.024	-0.071 ***	0.024	0.009	0.007	0.149 ***	0.030	-0.147 ***	0.029	-0.001	0.010
Citizenship	-0.095 ***	0.022	0.104 ***	0.022	-0.009 *	0.005	-0.044 **	0.023	0.061 ***	0.022	-0.017 *	0.009
Living with parents	-0.141 ***	0.018	0.128 ***	0.018	0.013 ***	0.004	-0.097	0.014	0.088 ***	0.014	0.009 ***	0.003
Living in couple	-0.110 ***	0.022	0.119 ***	0.022	-0.009 *	0.005	0.034	0.021	-0.018	0.020	-0.016 *	0.009
Motherhood	-0.175 ***	0.016	0.187 ***	0.016	-0.012 ***	0.003						
Presence of parents when the young was 14:												
Lone parent family	-0.012	0.038	0.021	0.037	-0.009	0.006	0.028	0.032	-0.029	0.032	0.001	0.003
Parentless	0.047	0.048	-0.053	0.047	0.006	0.006	0.098 ***	0.037	-0.095 ***	0.037	-0.003	0.005
Family background information:												
Working father	0.069 **	0.030	-0.060 **	0.030	-0.010 ***	0.004	0.144 ***	0.025	-0.140 ***	0.024	-0.004	0.003
Working mother	0.056 ***	0.014	-0.056 ***	0.014	0.000	0.002	0.031 ***	0.012	-0.028 **	0.012	-0.003 *	0.002
Working lone mother	0.008	0.045	-0.010	0.045	0.002	0.006	0.023	0.041	-0.022	0.041	-0.001	0.004
Working mother in-law	0.099 ***	0.018	-0.089 ***	0.017	-0.011 *	0.006	-		-		-	
Father's occupation	0.022	0.018	-0.028	0.018	0.006 ***	0.002	-0.029 **	0.014	0.026 **	0.013	0.003 *	0.002
Mother's occupation	-0.009	0.026	0.002	0.026	0.008 ***	0.003	-0.009	0.020	0.003	0.020	0.006 **	0.002
Father's education	-0.034	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.006 **	0.003	-0.028	0.020	0.020	0.020	0.008 ***	0.002
Mother's education	-0.039	0.031	0.041	0.031	-0.001	0.003	0.000	0.024	-0.001	0.024	0.001	0.002

Notes: Dummies for country, quarter of interview and missing information about parents' working status and educational level are introduced. (-) means not controlled for. Marginal effects are computed at the sample mean of the variables. *** means statistically significant at 1 percent level; ** means statistically significant at 5% level; * means statistically significant at 10% level.

Table A5 Predicted outcome probability (Pr) and marginal effects (Mfx) in Eastern countries by gender

	Women						Men					
	Employed		NEET		In education		Employed		NEET		In education	
	Pr	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.	P	St. Err.
Predicted outcome probability	0.691 ***	0.005	0.307 ***	0.005	0.002 ***	0.000	0.859 ***	0.004	0.139 ***	0.004	0.002 ***	0.000
	Mfx	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**	**Mfx**	**St. Err.**
Individual characteristics at the time of the interview:												
Age	0.019 ***	0.002	-0.018 ***	0.002	-0.001 ***	0.000	0.002	0.001	-0.001	0.001	-0.001 ***	0.000
Own education: medium	0.219 ***	0.018	-0.222 ***	0.018	0.003 ***	0.001	0.125 ***	0.009	-0.127 ***	0.009	0.002 ***	0.001
Own education: high	0.310 ***	0.020	-0.313 ***	0.020	0.002 *	0.001	0.198 ***	0.013	-0.200 ***	0.013	0.002 **	0.001
Partner's education: medium	0.008	0.021	-0.037 *	0.020	0.029 ***	0.005	0.053 ***	0.015	-0.070 ***	0.015	0.017 ***	0.004
Partner's education: high	0.002	0.025	-0.033	0.025	0.030 ***	0.005	0.098 ***	0.020	-0.118 ***	0.019	0.020 ***	0.004
Citizenship	-0.076 *	0.045	0.078 *	0.045	-0.002	0.002	-0.063 ***	0.021	0.062 ***	0.021	0.001	0.001
Living with parents	-0.056 ***	0.012	0.055 ***	0.012	0.001 **	0.000	-0.039 ***	0.010	0.038 ***	0.009	0.001 ***	0.000
Living in couple	-0.053 **	0.025	0.084 ***	0.025	-0.031 ***	0.005	0.026 *	0.015	-0.005	0.015	-0.020 ***	0.005
Motherhood	-0.265 ***	0.014	0.267 ***	0.014	-0.001 **	0.000						
Presence of parents when the young was 14:												
Lone parent family	0.073 **	0.034	-0.070 **	0.034	-0.004 ***	0.001	-0.027	0.023	0.027	0.023	0.000	0.001
Parentless	0.002	0.035	-0.007	0.035	0.004 ***	0.002	0.054 **	0.022	-0.054 **	0.022	0.000	0.001
Family background information:												
Working father	0.053 *	0.027	-0.055 **	0.027	0.002	0.002	0.057 ***	0.017	-0.057 ***	0.017	-0.001	0.001
Working mother	0.104 ***	0.015	-0.104 ***	0.015	0.000	0.001	0.050 ***	0.010	-0.049 ***	0.010	0.000	0.000
Working lone mother	-0.056	0.038	0.053	0.038	0.003 *	0.001	0.002	0.024	-0.003	0.024	0.001	0.001
Working mother in-law	0.033 **	0.015	-0.033 **	0.015	0.000	0.001	-		-		-	
Father's occupation	-0.008	0.017	0.007	0.017	0.001	0.001	0.012	0.012	-0.013	0.012	0.001 ***	0.000
Mother's occupation	0.005	0.015	-0.006	0.015	0.000	0.000	0.009	0.011	-0.009	0.011	0.001 *	0.000
Father's education	-0.008	0.021	0.007	0.021	0.001	0.001	0.010	0.015	-0.011	0.015	0.000	0.000
Mother's education	0.005	0.021	-0.006	0.021	0.001 *	0.000	-0.026 *	0.014	0.025 *	0.014	0.001 *	0.000

Notes: Dummies for country, quarter of interview and missing information about parents' working status and educational level are introduced. (-) means not controlled for. Marginal effects are computed at the sample mean of the variables. *** means statistically significant at 1 percent level; ** means statistically significant at 5% level; * means statistically significant at 10% level.

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GENDER DIFFERENCES IN PRINTED PERSONAL ADVERTISEMENTS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT. This paper examines, from both an evolutionary and sociocultural perspective, gender differences in 276 printed personal advertisements in *Sunday Vanguard*, a leading and widely circulating newspaper in Nigeria. A content analysis of the advertisements confirmed some gender differences noted in the personal advertisements literature, including more women offering younger ages and seeking older men and more men offering older ages and seeking younger women. It confirmed the view that more men offer and more women seek place of residence. The study disconfirmed the view that women offer physical attractiveness in exchange for financial security. Rather, the study showed that more women than men now offer and seek financial security. In addition, more men than women seek sugar mummy/daddy relations because they provide both financial security and maternal care. The paper provides evidence of possible female gender exclusive personal qualities, and indicates that this is an area, among others, in which further research is desirable. Overall, the paper reveals new insights arising from examining the genre of printed personal advertisements in a cultural setting such as Nigeria.

Keywords: gender differences; gender stereotypes; Nigeria; printed personal advertisements

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1. Introduction

Printed personal advertisements (ads), also labeled *lonely hearts*, *companion*, and *partner-wanted ads*, and *profiles*, are now an acknowledged "means of meeting other people and establishing relationships" (e.g., Lynn & Bolig,

1985, p. 377). Thiessen et al. (1993) refer to the ads as "highly popular means of meeting potential short- or long-term mating partners." In Nigeria, the context of this study, *mating partners* refers to heterosexual relationships. Other relationships, such as gay (male–male) and lesbian (female–female), which have been criminalized in many parts of the world, including Nigeria (Haborahy & Zhu, 2014), are not part of this study which is concerned with male–female relationships for which data exists.

In general, heterosexual (mating) relationships have been studied from a variety of perspectives of which the evolutionary and sociocultural, usually not mutually exclusive (Feingold, 1992), are two of the most important (Campbell & Wilbur, 2009; Abramova et al., 2016). Evolutionary theorists contend that sex differences in mate selection relate to reproductive strategies (Buss, 1988; Feingold, 1992), with both men and women striving to achieve the best result in the mate selection domain (Abramova et al., 2016). One of the main models of evolutionary theory, differential parental investment and sexual selection (Buunk et al., 2002; Trivers, 1972), shows that those (mostly females) "who are expected to bear a higher parental investment in terms of nurturing and caring for potential offspring are likely to be more selective with respect to their mating targets" (Abramova et al., 2016, p. 3859) and that those (mostly men) who are expected to invest less are likely to be less selective (Abramova et al., 2016; Buss, 1988, 1989). Overall, the literature, to be reviewed, presently, shows ample empirical evidence for evolutionary-driven differences between males and females. In particular, women are more selective (Abramova et al., 2016) while men who employ an "open net" policy are less so (Goode, 1996) in their mates search.

Sprecher et al. (1994) note that while sex differences can be explained, evolutionarily, in terms of reproductive strategies, they can also be explained, socioculturally, in terms of traditional role socialization processes. This implies that sex differences relate to how advertisers conform to or deviate from traditional (and, in recent times, modern) gender role expectations and ideologies, especially societal beliefs about how men and women should comport themselves. As Zevallo (2014) explains, gender roles are behaviors and attitudes expected of male and female members of a society by that society. In the Nigerian context, for example, women and men are expected to marry. This expectation is reflected in the many proverbs that approve of women and men who are married and disapprove of those who are not. One such proverb, widely used in the Igbo speaking world, relates to women: *Ugwu nwanyi bu di ya*, translated, using an equivalent English proverb, as "A husband is a woman's crowning glory." This proverb implies that a woman has respect and dignity and is, thus, more acceptable to the society when she is married. Indeed, among the Urhobo of Nigeria, an unmarried woman is perceived as a prostitute (Otite, 2006). Another Igbo proverb which relates to

men is cited in Uchendu (2007): *Okokporo n'enweghi nwunye bu ofeke* (p. 286) translated as "a man without a wife is irresponsible" or worthless. *Okokporo*, as Opata (2008) has noted, is a derogatory word which literally translates as *empty male* (p. 36). Certainly, the Igbo, as do the Yoruba and other ethnic nationalities in Nigeria, as Omadjohwoefe (2011) has shown, place a great premium on marriage or heterosexual relationships. It is in the light of the foregoing that this study explores, from both an evolutionary and sociocultural perspective, gender differences in printed personal ads in Nigeria. Rudy et al.'s (2010) survey of studies on gender differences and preferences reveals that only one study originated from Africa (Kenya). This neglect needs to be redressed.

2. Overview of Research on Personal Ads

As Muikku-Werner (2009) cited in Mäntymäki (2010) shows, the traditional 3–4 lines long printed personal ads "date back to the 17th century England and 18th century Germany" (p. 187). However, very few researchers considered research on gender differences arising from the genre worthwhile. The import of Lynn & Bolig's (1985) article, therefore, has been to convince more linguists and social scientists to utilize personal ads as an interesting and valuable resource for studying sociolinguistics and sociology. They note that personal ads data, which relates to naturalistic (real) rather than laboratory behavior, is representative of the populations in which they are used, and thus provides insights, among others, into "implicit theories of attraction and impression management," "the effectiveness of various self-presentation strategies," "determinants of initial interpersonal attraction" and "the cultural and sociological influences on various interpersonal relationships" (p. 4). The research on personal ads flared in the decade following Lynn & Bolig's (1985) publication. And the success of the authors' attempt at popularizing the study of the genre is seen in the many scholars (e.g., Koestner & Wheeler, 1988; Coupland, 1996; Marley, 2000; Strassberg & Holty, 2003; Muikku-Werner, 2009; Peters et al., 2013) who have since researched the genre, and in the process, further clarified and popularized it, and shaped its direction.

It is pertinent at this point to state that not all scholars consider personal ads worth researching. Rajecki & Rasmussen (1992) consider them deviant and unsatisfactory. As Waynforth & Dunbar (1995) report, such scholars believe that the advertisers are people "who have been unsuccessful in the more conventional mating arena and are thus not representative of the population at large" (p. 774). Subsequent research, they further report, shows that "only a very small proportion of couples meet through dating services of this kind" (p. 774). Although the argument that the advertisers are atypical

cannot be dismissed, Kenrick & Keefer (1992) rightly argue that the fact that advertisers generally achieve what they asked for dilutes if not entirely counters this argument. In addition, there have been very few complaints that respondents to such adverts are social misfits (Pearce, 1982; Waynforth & Dunbar, 1995). Waynforth & Dunbar (1995) also rightly assert that personal adverts are becoming increasingly valuable as a way of "finding potential mates for those whose social world has been artificially constrained by contemporary urban life and the demands of modern employment practices" (p. 775). This reiterates Lynn & Bolig's (1985) assertion that personal ads not only comprise naturalistic data, but are representative of the populations in which they are used.

Coupland (1996) characterizes printed personal ads as a genre with a generic four-part structure. Mäntymäki (2010) summarizes the parts to include the advertiser's particulars and attributes (age, sex, marital status, personal attributes/characteristics, profession and so on), the desired attributes of the potential partner, the goals of the potential relationship (marriage, friendship, etc.) and the contact information of the advertiser, especially a phone number. This basic structure has subsisted even in the personal ads found on the electronic media (Peters et al., 2013).

The research hypotheses and findings on personal ads have been remarkably similar across cultures (Buss, 1989; Davis, 1990). Some of the hypotheses listed in Waynforth & Dunbar (1995), which have been tested from both the evolutionary and sociocultural perspectives, are that men prefer younger women and women prefer older men; that women seek men with resources while men advertise resources; that men seek physical attractiveness more often than women do; and that women seek more qualities in their partners than men do, while men advertise more qualities than women do. Many of these hypotheses, with minor variations, have been confirmed in a great variety of studies (Abramova et al., 2016; Peters et al., 2013). For example, according to Butler-Smith et al. (1998) and Jagger (1998), more men sought younger and attractive partners and offered financial security, when compared to women. More women, on the other hand, specified that men should have financial security and they offered their physical attractiveness in return. Additionally, Jagger (1998) found that both genders marketed their bodies as primary selling points in the personal ads more than their other resources. The researcher points out that this may be because lifestyle choices are displacing financial resources as identity markers in today's world. However, as Peter et al.'s (2013) review of the literature on the subject reveals, more recent studies examining newspaper personal ads have continued to reinforce the notion that the content of personal ads follows typical gender stereotypes.

There is reason to expect that in the Nigerian context some of the hypotheses listed above may or may not be confirmed. Asiyanbola (2005) reports on a study about, among other things, who makes the decision regarding place of residence in heterosexual relationships, especially marriage. He shows that, in all instances, overwhelmingly more men, described by Omadjohwoefe (2011) as *the ultimate decision makers*, than women decided the place of residence (state or city), defined the search space and chose the particular house or land location. This finding, which resonates with the view that location is important in studies of mate preferences and selection (Morgan et al., 2010), is in agreement with the Nigerian traditional view of a woman as a bird of passage, and so "has to leave her parents' home and join that of her husband's" (Agbogu & Igbokwe, 2015, p. 6). It is therefore expected that in the personal ads more men than women would offer place of residence and more women than men would seek it.

Asiyanbola (2005), as do Nwosu (2012) and Omadjohwoefe (2011), shows that the economic status of women in Nigeria has improved significantly, thereby affecting positively what Jagger (1998), as already indicated, refers to as *lifestyle choices*. The improvement in socioeconomic status is related to the factors of education and length of training, occupation and income, all of which have been shown to have implications for mate selection (Caro et al., 2009; Hitsch et al., 2010a, b; Skopek et al., 2010; & Skopek et al., 2011). Accordingly, it is expected that while men would offer and not seek financial security, women would, contrary to the findings in the literature, offer and seek the same.

In addition to place of residence and economic status, other socioculturally determined variables are age, body type or shape, ethnicity, religious affiliation and motivation of the advertisers (Morgan et al., 2010). All of these variables, which have been examined in both offline and online media in other contexts (Abramova et al., 2016; Glasser et al., 2009; Peters et al., 2013), are examined in this study to determine the gender differences in female and male mate preferences in Nigeria.

3. Method

The data for this study consists of 276 printed personal ads, 140 male and 136 female. The difference in number between male and female is consistent with the fact that, as with the online format, more men than women advertise in the printed personal ads media (Waynforth & Dunbar, 1991; Rajecki et al., 1991). They not only placed more ads than women, their ads were also slightly longer (Helenkauskaite & Herring, 2008) (see representative sample on p. 170). However, an attempt has been made in this study to collect an "equal amount of data" for both genders.

The data was collected over a six month period – from July 2016 to December 2016 from *Sunday Vanguard*. The paper, alongside its counterpart, *Vanguard*, is, arguably, one of the leading and most widely circulating newspapers with a print run of 130,000 copies, the largest in Nigeria. As part of its people-centered function, *Sunday Vanguard* is consistent in publishing its personal ads page. It was, therefore, fairly easy to choose it as the paper from which to collect data for the study. The data is representative of the population of Nigeria. The country is a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual society with over 250 indigenous languages. For this reason, English is its official language and national lingual franca although pidgin plays a greater role with respect to the latter. Not only are the personal advertisers from this multi-ethnic background, they also have various professions and profess different faiths, including Christianity and Islam. Here is a representative sample of the ads from the newspaper:

Female: Kate, 28, needs a God-fearing, decent, caring, employed, and understanding man, aged 32–34, ready for marriage (Telephone number) (18 September 2016)

Male: Tunde, 42, tall, educated, self-employed, humble, a Christian and resides in Lagos, needs a decent, educated, pretty, Christian, sexy lady who is romantic, a good cook, employed, resides in Lagos and ready to settle down for a relationship. (Telephone number) (24 July 2016)

Content analysis, which has had a long history and is now used in such diverse fields as political science, literature, business, psychology and communication (Rudy et al., 2010), is the method used in analyzing the data for this study. The particular approach adopted is what Morgan (1993) has referred to as the quantitative approach to qualitative data. It is a "systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics" (Nuendorf, 2002, p. 1). As Hsieh and Shannon (2005) further explain, it is an approach in which "text data is coded into explicit categories and then described using statistics" (p. 1278). In particular, quantitative content analysis "examines profile characteristics selected from predetermined lists" and then compares these characteristics based on participants' gender or sexual orientation" (Peters et al., 2013). In brief, Peters et al. (2013) rightly claim that the method "provides a well-accepted, objective, systematic and scientific process for analyzing communication" (p. 83).

For this study, Coupland's (1996) categories have been adopted and modified. The categories are divided into five, each of which has subcategories, as shown below:

Biodata or demographics: age, marital status, religious affiliation, place of residence and ethnicity.
Appearance or physical attractiveness: beauty/handsomeness (beautiful (or pretty), handsome), height (tall, short, average), complexion (fair, dark (including chocolate)) and shape (busty (including curvy), slim).
Financial security: educational status (educated, not educated), employment status (employed, not employed).
Character or personal qualities: adventurous, caring, charming, decent, friendly, and many others (see Table 5).
Goal or reason for the advert: friendship, lovers (including sexual relationship), marriage, sponsorship, sugar mommy/daddy relationships.

There are a number of observations regarding the categories listed above. First, contact details, the last feature in Coupland's template, have been omitted, as no follow up activities with the advertisers have been designed for the study. Second, financial security consists of employment and educational status, which in the original Coupland format are part of the advertisers' biodata. However, the literature shows that they are aspects of advertisers' *wealth* or *financial security* and, therefore, should constitute a main category. This is especially so because an examination of the data shows that the word *wealth* or its synonyms, which can show the advertisers' economic well-being, are not found in the data. Nevertheless, there appears to be some overlap between *sponsorship* (in the goal category) and *financial security*. Attention is paid to this overlap in the discussion section. As with many studies of this nature, gender differences, in terms of what the advertisers offer prospective partners and what they demand from them, are examined for each of these main and sub-categories.

Rajecki et al. (1991) rightly note that the problem of "missing data" (p. 462) makes it difficult to compute the statistical significance of the observed differences in mate selection traits. In this study, for example, the number of advertisers selecting particular traits varies widely from low to high across variables. For this reason, many studies (e.g., Zelenkaukaite & Herring, 2008) use descriptive statistics, mainly percentages, in reporting and discussing their results. In general, the percentages of either gender offering particular details or qualities to and seeking similar or different details and qualities from prospective partners are computed and compared. The percentages of either gender stating the goals or reasons for advertising are also computed and compared. The female and male offering and seeking frequency patterns of the five categories identified above are presented in the section on findings below.

4. Findings

The findings in respect of biodata (age, marital status, religious affiliation, place of residence and ethnicity) are presented first. Table 1 presents the findings with respect to age:

Table 1 Ages offered and sought by advertisers

Age ranges	Offered		Sought	
	% of male (140)	% of female (136)	% of male (140)	female (136)
19 and below	1.4	6.6	5.0	0.0
20–29	30.0	53.7	18.6	2.9
30–39	28.6	8.8	10.7	10.3
40–49	10.7	5.9	10.0	14.7
50–59	5.0	0.7	3.6	6.6

The Table shows some interesting patterns. As is to be expected, women offered relatively younger ages than men, as 60.3% of them are below the age of 30 years while only 15.4% of them are 30 and above. Men, on the other hand, offered relatively older ages as 31.4% are below the age of 30 and 44.3% are 30 years and above. The Table also shows that the younger ages offered by women are overwhelmingly in the 20–29 age range. The ages of men, on the other hand, are spread across the age ranges of 20–29, 30–39 and 40–49. For the ages sought by both genders, while 2.9% of women sought men below the age of 30, 23.6% of men sought women of the same age range. This supports the view that men that seek younger ages and women older ages (which 31.6% of them did). However, as with the ages that men offered, the ages they sought spread across all the age ranges. This in turn suggests that men are less discriminating than women with respect to the ages they sought. These age-related findings are discussed in section 5.

Table 2 summarizes the other findings on the advertisers' biodata:

Table 2 Religious affiliation, ethnicity, marital status, place of residence offered and sought by advertisers

	Offered		Sought	
	% of male (140)	% of female (136)	% of male (140)	% of female (136)
	%	%	%	%
Religious Affiliation				
Christian	10.0	10.3	11.4	19.9
Muslim	0.7	0.0	0.7	0.0
Ethnicity				
Same	1.4	2.9	2.9	1.5
Different	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Marital Status				
Single	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0
Married	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Divorced	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0
Widow/er	0.7	0.0	0.7	0.7
Place of Residence				
Same	15.7	5.1	4.3	15.4
Different	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.7

About the same percentage of men (10.0%) and women (10.3%) offered religious affiliation. However, more women (19.9%) in contrast to men (11.4%) preferred that their prospective partners should be Christians. In contrast to the findings for religious affiliation, more men (15.7%) than women (5.1%) offered place of residence while more women (15.4%) than men (4.3%) sought it. Hardly any man (1.4%) or woman (2.9%) offered their ethnicities and sought (2.9% men and 1.5% women) prospective partners' ethnicities. Finally, hardly any of the genders offered their marital status (for men 0.7% married and 0.7% widowers, and for women 0.7% single and 0.7% divorced) or sought it (for men and women 0.7% each for widow/widower) from their prospective partners. It is clear from Table 2 that there is not enough data on which gender differences according to ethnicity and marital status can be ascertained. Therefore, only religious affiliation and place of residence are discussed in the next section.

The next set of findings, as shown in Table 3, relates to the category appearance or physical attractiveness and consists of the subcategories of height, complexion, beauty/handsomeness and shape.

Table 3 Appearance traits offered and sought by advertisers

Appear-ance traits	Offered		Sought	
	% of male (140)	% of female (136)	% of male (140)	% of female (136)
Height				
Tall	17.1	10.3	3.6	1.5
Short	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Average	2.9	2.2	2.1	0.0
Complexion				
Fair	4.3	11.0	3.6	0.7
Dark	7.1	5.1	0.0	0.7
Beauty/handsomeness				
Beautiful/ handsome	15.7	27.9	19.3	5.9
Shape				
Slim	3.6	2.9	2.1	0.0
Busty	0.0	12.5	4.3	1.5

As Table 3 shows, more males (17.1%) than women (10.3%) females offered "tall." Also, although the figures are very low, twice as many men (3.6%) as women (1.5%) sought the same height from their prospective partners. Neither gender offered or sought "short." The percentages of women and men offering "average" are similar. While no woman sought average, only 2.1% of men sought it. Therefore, "short" and "average" are not included in the discussion section. With respect to complexion, more women (11.0%) than men (4.3%) offered fair complexion while more men (3.6%) than women (0.7%) sought it. In addition, more men (7.1%) than women (5.1%) offered dark complexion while hardly any of the genders sought it (0% for men and 0.7% for women).

For this reason, only the complexion offering behavior of both genders is emphasized in the discussion section.

For the subcategory beauty/handsomeness, more women (27.9%) than men (15.7%) offered beautiful/handsome and more men (19.3%) than women (5.9%) sought the same trait. Finally for shape, surprisingly, the percentile figures for one of them, slim, for both groups of advertisers, are close, as 3.6% and 2.9% of men and women respectively offered it while 2.1% of men and 0% of women sought it. But some of the women (12.5%) did consider their busty shape important, and offered it as a selling point. As should be expected, no man offered this specifically female attribute, but some of them (4.3%) sought it. All the offering and seeking behavior identified as relevant regarding appearance are discussed subsequently.

As already noted, only two markers of financial security, employment status and education status, were identified in the data, and the findings on them are presented in Table 4:

Table 4 Markers of financial security in the data

	Offered		Sought	
	% of male (140)	% of female (136)	% of male (140)	% female (136)
Employment Status				
Employed	7.1	8.1	12.1	8.8
Unemployed	3.6	0.7	0.7	0.0
Education Status				
Educated	6.4	9.6	1.4	4.4
Uneducated	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0

Regarding employment status, more men (12.1%) than women (8.8%) sought it in the ads. However, slightly more women (8.1%) than men (7.1%) offered it. Generally, more men (3.6%) than women (0.7%) indicated their employed status, and hardly any gender sought it. For educated status, more women (9.6%) than men (6.4%) offered it. Similarly, although the numbers are low, more women (4.4%) than men (1.4%) also sought it. Once again, hardly any of the genders offered and sought unemployed status. In consequence, only the results for employed and educated status are included in the discussion. Also, as would be shown presently, financial security is indicated obliquely in the section on goals or reasons for the ads.

There are a number of interesting findings on character or personal qualities that can be abstracted from Table 5:

Table 5 Personal qualities offered and sought by advertisers

Personal qualities	Offered		Sought	
	% of male (140)	% of female (136)	% of male (140)	% of female (136)
Adventurous			0.7	1.5
Caring	0.0	0.7	6.4	12.5
Charming	0.0	2.9	0.0	2.9
Comfortable			0.7	0.7
Decent	0.7	0.0	2.1	4.4
Friendly	1.4	0.7	4.3	4.4
Fun	0.7	0.7	4.3	4.4
God-fearing	0.7	0.0	7.9	15.4
Good			2.9	3.7
Homely	0.0	2.2		
Honest	0.0	0.7	2.1	2.9
Humble	0.7	0.0	2.1	5.2
Jovial	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.7
Kind-hearted			2.9	6.6
Loving			3.6	5.9
Mature	0.0	0.7	3.6	6.6
Responsible			1.4	7.4
Romantic	2.1	0.7	4.3	6.6
Serious			0.0	2.2
Sophisticated	0.0	0.7		
Understanding			0.0	1.5
Total	7.9	10.3	45	91.2

Note: The eight qualities in the rows shaded with horizontal lines and the two for the vertical lines were not offered and sought respectively by either gender.

First, women (91.2%) sought 19 qualities listed in the Table while men (45%) sought only 15. The implications of such a large number of women stating the qualities they desire and a large number of men (i.e., 55%) not mentioning any qualities are discussed in section 5. Second, more women (88.2%) than men (45%) sought all the 15 qualities which relate to both genders. Third, more women (10.3%) offered 9 qualities while more men (7.9%) offered 7 qualities. Fourth, on the one hand, some women (8.1%) offered the qualities: *caring*, *charming*, *homely*, *honest*, *mature* and *sophisticated* while men did not. On the other hand, some men (2.1%) offered the qualities: *decent*, *God-fearing*, *humble* and *jovial* while women did not. Fifth, some women (7.4%) sought the following traits: *Charming*, *jovial*, *serious* and *understanding* while men did not. Finally, the qualities most sought by both genders are: *caring* and *God-fearing*. Even then, more women (12.5% and 15.4% respectively) than men (6.4% and 7.9% respectively) sought them. In summary, except for offering two qualities which women did not, women offered and sought more personal qualities than men.

The last set of findings in Table 6 relates to the goals of the advertisers:

Table 6 Goals of the advertisers

Goals	% of male (140)	% of female (136)
Friendship	10.0	6.6
Lovers/sexual relationship	35.0	40.4
Marriage	22.1	14.7
Sponsorship	5.7	16.9
Sugar mommy/daddy	25.7	5.2

It is obvious that the goals can be arranged in a most frequently or less frequently mentioned order by both genders. The category lovers/sexual relations is the most frequent. More women (40.4%) than men (35.0%) proffered it as the reason for their ads though. The next category differs for men and women. More women (16.9%) than men (5.7%) indicated sponsorship (financial support) as their goal while more men (25.7%) than women (5.2%) sought sugar mommy/daddy relationships from their prospective partners. Marriage is third on the list of most frequently mentioned goals by both women and men. However, more men (22.1%) than women (14.7%) indicate it as the goal of their adverts. Finally, friendship concludes this section. More men (10.0%) than women (6.6%) indicate it as their goal. The findings in this (sub)section are also discussed in the next section.

5. Discussion

This study confirms the findings in the literature with respect to age. The expectation that women would offer younger ages and seek older men is confirmed. The expectation that men would offer older ages and seek younger ones is also confirmed. Many studies on gender differences in printed personal ads across cultures have reached a similar conclusion (e.g., Waynforth & Dunbar, 1995; Butler-Smith et al., 1998). These findings are in line with the contention of evolutionary theorists who posit that reproductive strategies are at the heart of the mate selection process. This is particularly true, in this study, of the fact that an overwhelming percentage of female advertisers offered the ages of 20–29, when they are most fecund. From a sociocultural perspective, as scholars such as Nwosu (2012) have shown, Nigerian men, traditionally, have the responsibility of, among other things, protecting and providing for their families. This accounts for why women seek men of older ages who are able to cater for their needs. Another finding is that men appear to be less discriminating than women regarding age. Unlike women, the ages they offered and sought spread across all the age ranges. This finding is not surprising, as quite a number of studies (for example, Trivers, 1972; Abramova et al., 2016) have shown that women are more selective than men in matters related to mate preferences.

Only two of the other four biodata items, religious affiliation and place of residence are discussed here. Regarding religious affiliation, those who offered or sought it were overwhelmingly Christians. The finding that more women than men offered and sought partners of the same faith is in consonance with it being one of the items that influence gender relations listed in Omadjohwoefe (2011). It also tallies with the finding reported in the personal qualities section where there are also indications of women seeking qualities related to religion. In Nigeria, forsaking one's religious affiliation in favor of that of a partner has been a source of acrimony between the families of prospective couples. As women are expected to become part of their spouses' families (Egbucha, 2006), many of them attempt to avoid the acrimony by offering and seeking same religious affiliations. On place of residence, the expectation, inferred from Asiyanbola (2005) and Morgan et al. (2010), that more men than women would offer it and that more women than men would seek it is confirmed. In other words, it is a generally accepted tradition (once again, see Agbogu & Igbokwe, 2015) that women would move into their partners' or husbands' houses when marriage or other heterosexual relationships are established and/or contracted. In order to mitigate the problem of moving from one city or region to another, therefore, a lot more women than men sought partners living in their immediate environments.

As reported in the findings section, some aspects of appearance or physical attractiveness are related to gender differences. First, the study confirms the expectation that more women than men would offer and seek "tall," as a desirable height. Second, while more women offered fair, more men offered dark although the percentile figure for fair complexion is more accentuated than that of dark. Further support for this finding is seen in the fact that about twice the number of men offered dark and twice the number of women offered fair as their complexions. At this point, it is worth mentioning that skin tone stratification, or colorism, "a process that privileges light skinned people of color over dark in areas such as income, education, housing and the marriage market" (Hunter, 2007, p. 237) has received considerable (research) attention world-wide. For example, Arif (2004) and Ramasubramanian & Jain (2009) show that it is deep-rooted in India as well. There is no doubt that fair skin is more associated with female beauty than dark in the Nigerian setting, as this study has revealed. Adichie (2009) indicates this preference in her short story, "Cell One," when market traders ask Nnamabia's mother:

> "Hey! Madam, why did you waste your fair skin on a boy and leave the girl so dark? What is a boy doing with all this beauty? (p. 6).

This preference for fair skin explains why Nigeria, according to WHO (World Health Organization), accounts for the world's highest percentage of women (77%) using skin lightening tone" (UNEP, 2008). As further evidence of the

preference of fair over dark, no male sought dark complexion while some did fair complexion. Interestingly, women neither sought fair nor dark complexion. This, in turn, suggests that while complexion (fair or dark) is important in women's mate offering behavior, it is not in their mate seeking behavior. It also suggests that women are more concerned with this aspect of physical attractiveness, but do not demand it from their prospective mates.

Third, the only interesting aspect of shape worth discussing is busty or curvy which four times as many women offered. Unlike complexion, a lot more women offered their busty shape rather than the slim shape which, according to Miller et al. (2000, p. 129), is "a well-established hallmark of physical attractiveness" favored in the Western world (see also Hsu, 1989; Stake & Lauer, 1987). However, there is support for the view, in the literature, that different races or ethnicities prefer certain body types. For example, Glasser et al. (2000) rightly observe that "African-American and Latino men are … more likely than white men to prefer female dates with thick or large bodies" (p. 14). There is support for this view, in this study, as more men sought busty rather than slim shape. Finally, the study confirms the expectation that more women than men would offer beautiful/handsome. It also confirms the expectation that more men than women would seek handsome/beautiful from their prospective partners (see Jagger, 1998; Butler-Smith et al., 1998).

According to the literature, more women offer their physical attractiveness in exchange for men's wealth (Butler-Smith et al., 1998). More men also offer their wealth in exchange for women's physical attractiveness (Butler-Smith et al., 1998). The first part of the first assertion, that is, women offering their physical attractiveness, has been confirmed in this study. The second part of the assertion is now discussed. Surprisingly, more women than men offered their employed status (one of the criteria for determining financial security) and more men than women sought the same status from prospective partners. This is a reversal of the expectation that more men than women would offer their employed status and that more women than men would seek it from their prospective partners. Also, interestingly, and contrary to expectations as well, more women than men offered their educated status and more of them also sought educated status from their prospective partners. Jagger's (1998) explanation that lifestyle choices are now influencing gender relations may account for this finding. The lifestyle choices, in Nigeria, result in some delay in women seeking husbands or prospective partners because of long periods of training, in particular (Omadjohwoefe, 2011). The findings on employment and education status, therefore, support the view that the economic well-being of women has increased substantially in Nigeria (Nwosu, 2012) and that this has changed the pattern of gender relations from one in which women would not normally offer financial security to one in

which they now do. To conclude, if employed status and educated status were the only criteria for determining financial security, then the era in which women offered physical attractiveness in exchange for men's financial resources would be over.

There are a number of pertinent observations regarding personal qualities. One of them is that both women and men frequently mentioned *God-fearing* and *caring* as the personal qualities they seek in their prospective mates. For *God-fearing*, the more prominent of the two, this implies that the question, "What do girls mean by 'God-fearing'?," discussed extensively in 2012 on the Nairaland Forum (with 1,800,789 members as of 14 May 2017), should also be asked of boys or men, as the label is not restricted only to the female gender. The other observation is that this study confirms the finding, noted in Waynforth & Dunbar (1995), that women seek more personal qualities than men do. However, it does not support the view that men offer more qualities than women do. On the contrary, a greater number of women offered more qualities than men did. As already reported, women sought 19 qualities while men sought 15. In addition, more women than men sought all the 15 qualities which relate to both genders. This buttresses the evolutionary perspective of women being more selective than men (Trivers, 1972; Abramova et al., 2016). However, in offering more personal qualities, women appear determined to match the high selectivity standard they hold men to.

As noted in the section on findings, there is evidence of some gender exclusiveness in the offering and seeking of some personal qualities. It is interesting to note that the list of exclusive qualities offered by some women is longer than that offered by men, and that while women have a list of the exclusive qualities that they sought, the men have none. This finding, without overstating its importance, is in agreement with the pattern established for some of the other findings, where women have upset traditional gender role expectations, including offering more and seeking less financial security than men. The lists of exclusive qualities offered and sought especially by some women (the percentage is much larger than that of men) should interest gender scholars who research differences in language use. It should be interesting to ascertain whether the lexical items used to label the exclusive personal qualities are synonyms and/or (co)hyponyms of other personal qualities selected by other women or even men. For example, it is plausible to consider *caring* and *homely*, *charming* and *jovial*, and *mature* and *sophisticated* as either (pseudo) synonyms or co-hyponyms of other labels selected by women. As one of the obviously male contributors in Nairaland Forum indicates, *God-fearing* is "a complete package" which includes such "core values as integrity, honestly, love and so on." Thus, it is also plausible to consider it, in this study, as a hyperonym of all the other qualities sought by both women and men. It should be noted though that Spender (1998) has

warned that in language use related to the male and female genders, many of the "hypothesized differences that have been tested have not been found" (p. 32). However, the need for this kind of research is underscored by Coates (2013) who notes that there is evidence of "separate lexical items for women and men in certain areas" (p. 33). Perhaps, in the sociocultural and sociolinguistic context of Nigeria, the gender differences in language use as they relate to the phrasing or labeling of the personal qualities of the printed personal advertisers will be clearly shown.

The discussion in this section underscores the "special" nature of Nigerian printed personal ads. The ads appear to combine the Western-type relationship-related solicitations and Indian matrimonial ads whose sole purpose is to secure marriage (Ramasubramanian & Jain, 2009). Accordingly, the Nigerian ads are not restricted to a single goal. As the findings section shows, the most frequently mentioned goal by both genders is lovers/sexual relationship. However, the fact that more women than men mentioned it supports the view that the advertisers, especially women, value the personal ads genre as a means of contacting viable sexual partners or companions. As the findings section also shows, the second most frequently mentioned goals are sponsorship (financial security) and sugar mummy relationships. More women mentioned the former while more men mentioned the latter. Regarding sponsorship, it is now clear that some women seek prospective partners because they need financial help, a finding more in line with the literature on the subject. However, there is no evidence in the data that the sponsorship is tied to women's physical attractiveness. Regarding sugar mummy/daddy relationships, the expectation that many more women would seek them is not confirmed. On the contrary, a lot more men than women sought them from their prospective partners. The foregoing suggests that while more women than men sought only financial security, more men than women sought both financial security and maternal care, which the sugar mummy relationship suggests. The third goal in terms of frequency is marriage. More men than women cited it as their goal for advertising. It is necessary to indicate this because of the impressionistic view in the Nigerian context that more women use the printed personal ads as a means of finding husbands. The discussion in this section shows that this is not the case. Rather, it may be the male advertisers who are more desperate for marriage. Finally, the fact that more men indicated friendship as their main goal is consistent with the fact that they also consider the ads as a means of meeting viable partners and companions, as has been indicated for women in this paper. In sum, more men advertised three of the goals, marriage, sugar mummy relationships and friendship, and more women two, sexual relationships and sponsorship, and this is an indication of the high value men especially place on the ads.

6. Conclusion

The study has highlighted a number of pertinent issues in the study of gender differences in printed personal ads. The first is that from an evolutionary and sociocultural perspective certain aspects of the male and female mate selection behavior are remarkably similar across cultures. This is seen in the confirmation of some of the findings in the literature in this study. Relatedly, those variables that are known to be important in gender relations in traditional and contemporary Nigerian society have also been confirmed. It is now clear that the variables of age, place of residence, religious affiliation and physical attractiveness will continue to exert a great deal of influence on the mate selection protocol of both genders in the Nigerian setting.

The second pertinent issue is at variance with the first. It deals not with similarity but with change. A movement towards gender equity in hetero-sexual relationships and marriages in Nigeria, similar to that occurring in India (Jain & Hazen, 2007), is discernible in this study. Many of the women in the study data are educated and financially more independent than had been previously supposed. The result has been a de-emphasizing of a manifestation of the evolution theory of mate selection, which is that women offer their physical attractiveness for financial support. Indeed, the study shows a role reversal in which some men, because of their financial inadequacy, now demand financial support from their prospective mating partners. It should be interesting to see whether this demand, like that of women, is in exchange for men's physical attractiveness.

The last issue is that the study has opened up new areas for further research. The first, as the foregoing reveals, is the need to study the relationship between the financial support seeking behavior of men and the manner in which they present themselves in terms of physical attractiveness. The second is the need to study gender differences in language use (especially in the field of lexicology). The semantic classification and description (as synonyms, or hyperonyms or co-hyponyms) of the potential gender exclusive personal qualities (or labels) for both women and men should be important in helping scholars further understand gender differences in language use. A final suggestion relates to colorism. There is evidence in the printed personal ads data used in this study that a scholarly inquiry into this area can also contribute significantly to our understanding of hetero-sexual mate selection behavior. It should be interesting to also ascertain, for example, the extent to which skin color is a determining factor in the marital and mate selection arena in contemporary Nigerian society. Generally, then, this study revealed new insights that show that printed personal ads continue to be a viable genre for understanding gender relations and roles especially in the neglected socio-cultural and sociolinguistic setting of Nigeria.

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CONTEMPORARY PORTRAYALS OF WOMEN AND FEMININITY. A CASE STUDY OF LIFESTYLE BLOGS IN THE U.S.

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ABSTRACT. This article explores contemporary portrayals of women and femininity in lifestyle blogs written and edited by millennial women in the United States. Based on a sample of three of the most popular lifestyle blogs currently in the U.S. this article attempts to identify and describe current portrayals of women to determine if they support a progressive or a conservative approach to femininity. The study we present in this paper is based on a dual methodology: content analysis and discourse analysis. Content analysis allows us to identify topics covered by the selected lifestyle blogs and their categorizations (sections in which they are published) whereas the discourse analysis helps determine the presence or absence of women stereotypes and how gender is represented. Results show some affinity between lifestyle blogs and women magazines with regards to topics covered although the editorial tone is more progressive in lifestyle blogs, leaning towards feminism and discarding conservative representations of femininity.

Keywords: journalism; stereotypes; Internet; blogs; women's magazines; media

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Introduction

The Internet has changed our lives. Technology has transformed the global media environment from one organized around passive media consumption to a far more complex environment – mobile, multitasking, on-demand – where consumers have more control over where, when and how they interact with media. Today, consumers produce their own forms of content and are capable of producing, distributing and consuming information bits and bytes, no matter where he or she is, as long as Internet access is provided. As a result of the Internet's structure and distributed architecture, access to information has progressively relocated into the users' hands. Audiences have evolved and adopted a more active role; Internet users read, listen and watch, they also express themselves and create their own content (Jenkins, 2006). The consumer, who used to be at the receiving end of the communication chain, has been placed at the center of the process. This change has mainly been possible thanks to social apps, a corpus of tools, services and technical devices that enable the user to produce (edit, copy, distribute) content accessible to others (Gluck & Roca, 2008).

Multiplication of media and audience fragmentation are other factors that should be taken into account. Blogs targeting young millennials coexist in a highly competitive scenario, by and large more competitive than that which was characteristic of the preexisting communicative ecosystem; public access to media is no longer limited to a reduced number of newspapers, radios and television channels. In such conditions, where media and audiences are diversified, specialized and fragmented, it is not surprising that the content and focus of the blogs analyzed for this study target the interests and, above all, to the *weltanschauung* of a more limited and more specific audience. In this context, mediatization theory, as Bennett & Iyengar (2008) point out, would be applied less forcefully to the current communicative ecosystem, and in particular to digital media, given the context of competition and the breadth of supply. There would be an ambivalent scenario, in which content produced by media channels match the tastes of the audience while the audience seeks media aligned with their taste. In this complex scenario configuration of social reality, especially in the long run, would continue to be powerfully determined by media consumption.

The structure of the Internet stimulates that the way of producing and consuming information by the users, now called prosumers (Bowman & Willis, 2003), is more in line with increasingly specific interests, and less determined by the mass media agenda (Bennett & Iyengar, 2008). In fact, users not only have a much greater capacity than before to determine which specific contents are interesting to them, and how to consume them. But the same network has also the ability to learn from the user's preferences and, in the

same way that advertisements customize the search history, navigation, and purchases of each user, so does content, or the first results presented by search engines (Morozov, 2014). The content that users access online is increasingly predetermined by their preferences as well as by the other users with whom they interact on social networks. The "filter bubble" described by Pariser (2011) is proven to be well established.

Blogs have been very popular since the early days of the World Wide Web. The first blogs appeared in the late 1990s with the creation of Open Diary (1998) and SlashDot (1997), both considered to be the first "blog tools." Ten years later, in 2007, Technorati's *State of the Live Web* gave an estimate figure of 70 million blogs worldwide (120,000 new blogs were created each day). In just two years (from 2004 to 2006) the blogosphere doubled its size (total blogs tracked) every five to seven months. The success of free and open-source content management systems (CMSes) like Wordpress (released 2003) also contributed to the popularity of blogs, without users needing to know how to code or write HTML. By 2004, blogs were so popular that the word "blog" was declared word of the year by the Merriam-Webster, much as "selfie" was named word of the year by Oxford Dictionaries in 2013 (Rettberg, 2017). But, what is the current scenario? In 2011 there was an estimated 173 million blogs online[1] and according to WordPress official statistics[2]; users generated about 59.3 million new posts and 48.4 million new comments each month as of June 2016.

It is often sustained that both personal websites and social networking sites provide a significant environment for identity exploration, self-presentation (particularly of teenagers and young adults) and social expression of idealized characteristics of what one is or would like to be (Tortajada et al., 2013). This paper analyzes a sample of three lifestyle blogs edited by young women and targeting women in order to identify contemporary portrayals of femininity on the Web. In terms of social influence, these blogs do not work differently than traditional media: the media ecosystem establishes what topics or issues are under discussion and what the best approach to cover them is.

The media has a tremendous influence on audiences (consumers). Not only does it dictate the topics of interest but also suggests how best to deal with the topics. Scholarly research suggests that in the long run, mass media plays a significant role in molding attitudes and behaviors, and in promoting certain viewpoints. Two of the most cited approaches are the agenda-setting theory (McCombs and Shaw, 1972), which analyzes the influence of the media on the focus of public attention, and the framing theory (Entman, 2004), focused on when media chooses some factors about an issue or event to emphasize over other factors. The agenda setting helped prove the importance of mass media in public perceptions of the present: what is important and what is not. The framing theory analyzed how media (and also institu-

tions, NGO's, political parties, etc.) try to deliver news to general audiences using the frame that suits their needs the most. All in all, audiences' perception of the world surrounding them is heavily related to the news they get and the stories they read (Zaller, 1992). More recently, the mediatization theory (Schulz, 2004; Couldry & Hepp, 2013) emphasized the notion that "media logic" increasingly determines the actions of different social institutions and groups, depicting a scenario in which the form and content of messages are conditioned by their transmission through mass media. To put it simply, people talk about topics that mass media consider relevant, although such topics are narrated from a certain point of view that tends to benefit the storyteller (editorial tone, headlines, format, etc.) Mediatization means that the content is treated like merchandise whose goal is to reach an audience, the bigger the better, and we have encountered several examples of this in our sample. Catchy headlines, for instance, whose main purpose is to attract attention and encourage visitors to click on a link even though the content does not meet expectations (clickbait).

Post-Feminist Representations of Women

The Internet has enabled the rise of a new form of socialized communication: mass self-communication. The emergence of mass self-communication offers an extraordinary medium for rebellious individuals and social movements to build autonomy and confront the institutions of society in their own terms and around their own projects (Castells, 2007). Research suggests that emerging adulthood (roughly from eighteen throughout the twenties) represents a critical period for identity development; emerging adults are in a stage characterized by instability and self-focus, exploring a variety of possibilities in work, relationships, and beliefs before committing to adult roles (Manago et al., 2008). At the same time research also indicates that individuals develop a sense of self by creating an impression they wish to give to others (Goffman, 1959). When emerging adults act within social computer-mediated interactions (blogs, websites, social networking sites, etc.) they share experiences and reflect on values. In a way, they are helping one another consolidate identities as they transition to adulthood (Nurmi, 2004). That is the reason why we believe it is so important to understand the way millennial women write about femininity and women representation. Their perception of how contemporary women look like, behave or love is contributing to reformulate certain gender portrayals that have been anchored in the past for decades, losing the power of representation and corrupting a reality that is no longer accurate. The human brain needs stereotypes, references that help us understand the world in which we live; the problem is when those representations remain oblivious to change.

Women's magazines have always been a well-established medium to reproduce and promote discriminatory portrayals of femininity while observing the social imperatives of a given time. How to love, live or work are just three examples of critical components in everybody's life upon which these magazines have traditionally had heavily biased editorial opinions, perpetuating certain biased and non-egalitarian roles (Gallego, 1990). In this section, we present an approach to the current debate about contemporary portrayals of women and femininity in the media, which will later be used to determine the kind of gender representation promoted by our sample of lifestyle blogs.

Research on the development of different forms of femininity sheds light on the complex remaking of femininity that we are currently facing (Budgeon, 2014). This contemporary "landscape" of gender relations has been described as a contradictory field in which discourses of female empowerment currently circulates alongside the reinvigoration of inequalities and the emergence of new forms and modalities of power (Gill & Scharff, 2011). Blogshops, online sites in which young women model and sell apparel via social media, are a good example of these contradictions as models are caught in a paradoxical intersection between "feminine objectification" and "feminine empowerment" as they trade on their femininity in relation to other women rather than in relation to male judges (e.g. beauty contest) or clients (Abidin & Thompson, 2012).

Equalitarian and progressive portrayals of women are critical for a healthy media environment as it is a key component in the social construction of gender. Portraying women and men as equals, female depictions in professional settings with promising careers, love scenarios other than heterosexual marriages, couples who choose not to have children, or bodies that defy the traditional beauty canons are just some examples easy to find in the new digital media scenario since the early days (Dobson, 2016). In this paper, we attempt to identify how women are represented in lifestyle blogs and whether such representations are more progressive and equalitarian than the rigid stereotypes used by women's magazines.

Women have traditionally been depicted in women's magazines according to three well-defined stereotypes that have survived to our days: wife-mother-housewife (devoted to her husband, children and home), superwoman (wife, mother and ambitious professional who also has time to work out and look beautiful) and woman as object of desire (mostly devoted to her body) (Roca, 2006). Even though female stereotyping is currently more subtle and indirect, it aligns with the notion of benevolent sexism, a subjectively positive attitude toward women who are seen as warmer but less competent than men (Zotos & Tsichla, 2014). Research suggests that women's magazines are found to exhibit a steady bias towards female decorative roles whereas magazines targeting men are found to frequently display sexist female portrayals in

their advertising content. However, it is worth mentioning that they include a higher fraction of female non-traditional roles compared to women's magazines while general audience magazines tend to advance in "neutral" female portrayals, seldom displaying sexualized images (Zotos & Tsichla, 2014).

There is an ongoing debate concerning the conflict between two ways of analyzing women's magazines (Gill, 2007), which can also be applied to lifestyle blogs. On the one hand, they are considered a vehicle for pleasure and distraction (feminine texts that present a seductive address to women) while on the other hand they can also be seen as suppliers of oppressive and outdated ideology (deeply problematic representations of sexuality, race, class, etc.) Even though contemporary women's magazines and lifestyle blogs embody feminist values such as equal rights and pay, career and motherhood, contraception and access to education, the distinction between *public* and *private sphere* (see next section) remains tangible in most publications and blogs.

Digital media such as blogs and social networking sites have significantly contributed to the inclusion of *equality* and *non-conventional* portrayals of women in the rigid repertoire mentioned earlier, leaving behind domestic settings and traditional occupations and focusing on topics other than physical attractiveness or sexualized images. As documented by many scholars, a post-feminist heroine has appeared in the past decade who is empowered and autonomous while also playful and youthful (Gerodetti, 2017). Feminist theorists have documented the construction of a variety of "new femininities" (Gill and Scharff, 2013; Harris, 2004; McRobbie, 2007), based on the idea that we are living in a neoliberal era where young women can be considered the successors of social and political change in the widespread discourse of "girl power" and the representation of women as "future girls" (Harris, 2004) and "top girls" (McRobbie, 2007), among other references (Gerodetti, 2017). However, despite a proliferation of new femininities, a privileged construction taking the form of a white, western heterosexual femininity prevails in the majority of mainstream media (Budgeon, 2014).

Last but not least, we would like to make a mention to the *love your body* (LYB) discourses, which have emerged over the last decade as a result of multiple causes, such as the growth of social media and attempts by traditional media to respond to feminist critiques of what have been characterized as "unrealistic" and "harmful" body image ideals and stereotypes (Gill & Elias, 2014). This topic will not be addressed in this article but we wanted to include a reference as research highlights the importance of these discourses in encouraging women to accept themselves the way they are, in all shapes, ages and colors. New media such as blogs and social networking sites (e.g. Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook) have given voice to a vast number of women that have been underrepresented for a long time in traditional media,

especially in advertising (women often appear as an object of desire drawn by the beauty cannons of each time) and in women's magazines, where traditionally the "ideal woman" or "perfect lady" is portrayed as beautiful, submissive and devoted to her husband and children. The blogs studied in this paper contain several references to LYB discourses but they have not been analyzed given the complexity of this topic, which would deserve a separate analysis.

Lifestyle Blogs and Women's Magazines

Lifestyle blogs and women's magazines show some structural and content consistencies that enable us to refer to them as a genre *per se*. On the one hand, they are addressed specifically to female readers; on the other hand, their content primarily revolves around the *private sphere*, as opposed to the *public sphere*, the foundation of legacy newspapers, which traditionally targeted male audiences. The notion of separate spheres has been a key component in studies about gender roles for over two centuries. This concept is based on the division of gender roles into separate spheres, where women's place is in the private sphere (family life, home) and men's place is the public sphere (politics, work) (Pateman & Grosz, 2013; Mies, 2014).

Women's magazines (and lifestyle blogs) share a number of important features: they tend to address readers as equals and friends by adopting an intimate editorial tone; they are organized around the shared "pleasures and labors of femininity"; they are invariably constructed in opposition to masculinity and are also structured by implicit exclusions relating mainly to age, race, sexuality and class (Gill, 2007). They also contain a high number of advertisements, some magazines account for 50% of the content, although rather than being perceived by the reader as something disruptive, ads are considered by the audience as part of the flow, in a way, they are "recommendations" offered by the publication on how to dress or what perfume to use.

Structure: Name and Content

Name: short, usually a female first name (*Marie Claire, Catalina, Eliza*) or a reference to the kind of woman the publication targets (*Cosmopolitan, Travelgirl, Born with Style, Good Housekeeping, Working Mother*). The lifestyle blogs that we have analyzed also respond to this parameter (*Her Campus. A Collegiette's Guide to Life, 20-nothings, Hello Giggles*).

Content: structured around the axis *beauty–love–home* (Gallego, 1990). The editorial tone and style is direct but at the same time intimate, the magazine is above all a "friend" that the reader can trust. The audience is not perceived

as a whole but as individuals, so articles try to imitate the conversations one would have with girlfriends while having a drink (private sphere). Beauty is understood as an aspiration and a ritual, attached to secondary concepts such as youth and fashion. But, beauty without romance and relationships is irrelevant: women's magazines see love as a step towards happiness. They not only show how women can find true love but also how to retain it through articles on the importance of family, relationships and sexual health. Only if you have beauty you will find love, which will eventually lead you to a happiness that will fully bloom at home; this could be the *leitmotiv* of women's magazines. But, balance may be hard to keep due to jealousy or loss of sexual appetite, for instance, and that is why sections containing advice are also very popular in this type of publications, with special emphasis on sex. Through so-called *experts' accounts* from journalists to self-established as experts, highly trained professionals (sexologists, psychologists, etc.) or through "profanes" (mainly testimonials from readers), the promise made to the reader is a gain in sexual knowledge and skills that will improve sexual life (Raynaud, 2014). Quizzes to self-evaluate are also common, after all the magazine is a dear friend. The following covers of Cosmopolitan and Good Housekeeping (exhibit 1) show examples of the *beauty–love–home* content axis.

Exhibit 1 Covers of Cosmopolitan magazine
(US Edition, June 2016; US Edition, May 2016)



Lifestyle blogs do not have a fixed block of content, or even a recurring table of contents. Posts appear to be somehow random and the reader has the perception that they depend on the writer's mood or interest on a given day or week. But this does not mean that blogs are chaotic or disorganized. On the contrary, posts are extremely well organized thanks to categories. Entries are categorized by keywords which are a useful resource; not only for readers who access the website on a regular basis but also for those who monitor the site using an RSS feed tool or an aggregator. Taking a look at some of the common categories of the three blogs analyzed, it can be easily noted that the focus of interest aligns with that of women's magazines described earlier: career, love, style & beauty, family, friends and sex. In addition, as we will see later on, the editorial tone and writing style of lifestyle blogs also resembles that of women's magazines as the reader is always treated as a friend.

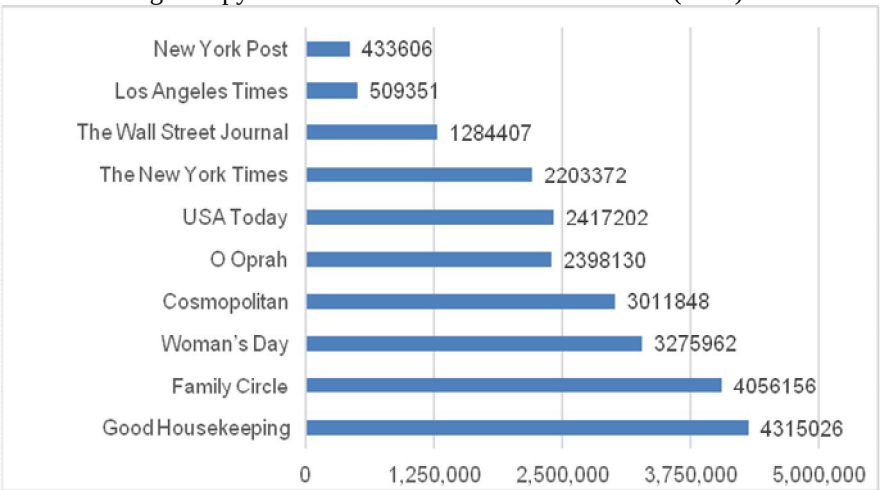
Genres

A broadly accepted classification of magazines is that based on the type of content they focus on (McCracken, 1992). Women's magazines can be classified into three major groups: general information (structured around the *beauty–love–home* axis), specialized (focused on one particular aspect of women's everyday lives such as maternity, travel, DIY) and service magazines (highly specialized, the target group is very specific, such as furniture lovers, crochet, or indoor décor). The blogs we have studied align with the first group (general information).

Circulation (U.S.)

Women's magazines play a critical role on disseminating (and promoting) portrayals of women and femininity. Their high circulation figures are critical to understand why the study of gender representation in the media is so important, especially because they have tremendous influence on readers' perception of the roles that men and women should play in society. Exhibit 2 compares circulation figures[3] of women's magazines with daily newspapers; exhibit 3 shows audience data for the blogs analyzed.

Exhibit 2 Women's Monthly Magazines and Daily Newspapers
Single-Copy Sales in the US. Total Paid & Verified (2016)



Audience indicators for the three blogs analyzed come from Alexa, Facebook and Twitter. Alexa offers data from the Internet as a whole although the data collected comes only from users that use this toolbar, meaning that it is strongly biased. Nonetheless, we believe that the data shows, at least, a trend. Alexa shows the position of a given site compared to the rest of sites that this application tracks. It does not offer specific data but a ranking (a low number means that a site is well positioned and it has a large group of readers). The following exhibit also includes the number of followers that the blogs have on Facebook and Twitter to showcase popularity on social media.

Exhibit 3 Audience Indexes for *Her Campus*, *20-Nothings* and *Hello*:
Position in Alexa Rank; Facebook and Twitter followers (3/1/2017)

	Alexa (global rank)	Facebook	Twitter
Her Campus	22,825	37,6137	40,200
20-Nothings	4,227,768	380	2,548
Hello Giggles	6,842	1,883,199	176,000

As it can easily be seen, two of the three blogs (*Her Campus* and *Hello Giggles*) have a prominent number of followers on social media, and a significant position in the Alexa global rank. *20-Nothings*, on the contrary, has a roughly 2,500 followers on Twitter and only 380 on Facebook. The reason for this might be that *20-Nothings* works as a personal blog of a single

writer, who publishes sporadically, while *Her Campus* and *Hello Giggles* are both collective blogs that publish several articles on a daily basis.

Audience

Although we have already discussed the kind of readers that women's magazines target when we talked about genres, a sub-classification is possible if we focus on reader profiles. We distinguish between high-end magazines, practical magazines, and youth/juvenile magazines. High-end women's magazines target well-established professionals, are printed on high quality paper, and the contents focus on style, fashion, travel and glamorous celebrities. Practical magazines are slightly less expensive and their articles focus on useful information rather than expensive getaways or beauty treatments; interviewees usually are popular celebrities and fashion picks may include cheaper versions (Zara, H&M, Forever 21, etc.) of *Prêt*-à-*Porter* designs seen in Paris or New York. Finally, youth/juvenile magazines target young women and late teens. Advice sections, as well as testimonials from readers, have a significant presence in these magazines.

The reader's profile of the lifestyle blogs that we have analyzed is hard to determine, as we do not have access to traffic data and statistics. However, by taking a look at the descriptions offered by the editors we can attempt to identify the audience they target: women in their late-twenties or early-thirties interested in female empowerment through showcasing of personal experiences that offer practical development tips and guidance.

Research Design

In 2013, Forbes Magazine published *The 10 best websites for millennial women*[4] list. The sample we use in this study is based on Forbes' compilation, as we believe it is important to focus on websites edited and managed by millennial women. One of our hypotheses is that women representation (and stereotyping) in such sites, given that they are run by young women, is less conservative and may reflect the actual dynamics of 21st century women (independent, educated, emancipated, among other traits). Thus, femininity portrayals and women representations should include questions such as overlapping of the private and public spheres, emancipation (women who live on their own is because they choose to) or even expressing their willingness to not have children (maternity is usually a must within women's magazines spectrum). Our sample contains only three blogs from the above-mentioned Forbes' list mostly because the rest of sites were either inactive or closed when we collected the data (July 2016) or they were not considered lifestyle blogs.

Methodology

Exhibit 4 Sample of Lifestyle Blogs Analyzed

Blog name	Year established	Website	Founder	Posts analyzed
Her Campus. "A Collegi*ette*'s Guide to Life"	2009	www.hercampus.com	Stephanie Kaplan Lewis, Windsor Hanger Western, Annie Wang	90
20-Nothings	2007	www.20-nothings.com	Jessie Rosen	18
Hello Giggles	2011	www.hellogiggles.com	Zooey Deschanel, Molly McAleer, and Sophia Rossi	120

Data was collected between January 1 and June 30, 2016. A total of 228 posts were compiled; the distribution by publication is as it follows: *Hello Giggles* (120), *Her Campus* (90), and *20-Nothings* (18). We are well aware that the sample for the latest is fairly small compared to the other two blogs but the reason is that content is not published on a daily basis. *20-Nothings* published about one article per week, compared to an average of 50 to 60 articles per week published by *Hello Giggles* and *Her Campus*. For this reason, we decided to significantly increase the data range of *20-Nothings* until we collected a representative sample of articles. We also carried out a pretest (8% of the sample) to establish the reliability coefficient. Results showed overall consensus among authors (0.81 for thematic classification), and we considered that the reliability of this case study was guaranteed (Neuendorf, 2002). In addition, we also conducted a discourse analysis to better determine the characteristics and specificities of these publications and, in particular, how women were depicted.

Results and Discussion

This section begins with a note about format and categories. The second part focuses on the content analysis, which distinguishes between topics covered and portrayals of women and femininity, making a distinction between conservative and progressive approaches.

Format

Use of images and videos. Pictures are omnipresent. 92.7% of *Her Campus* articles and 100% of *20-Nothings* and *Hello Giggles* incorporate at least one image to illustrate the content. In contrast, the presence of videos is much less common. Only 9% of *Her Campus* articles and 16.7% of *Hello Giggles* include some video. *20-Nothings* incorporates none.

Authorship. All posts are signed; and all of them are authored by women, whether it is the editor of the publication (*20-Nothings*) or a number (relatively small) of collaborators, like in *Her Campus* and *Hello Giggles*.

Advertising. The purpose was not to identify ads but to find posts containing promotional content (seldom identified as such, but the nature of which could be clearly derived). We found 27 promotional articles (5 in *Her Campus*, 2 in *20-Nothings*, and 20 in *Hello Giggles*). An amount not to be underestimated (12% of the total sample, 16.6% if we consider only *Hello Giggles*), given the implications that this has from an editorial point.

Categories

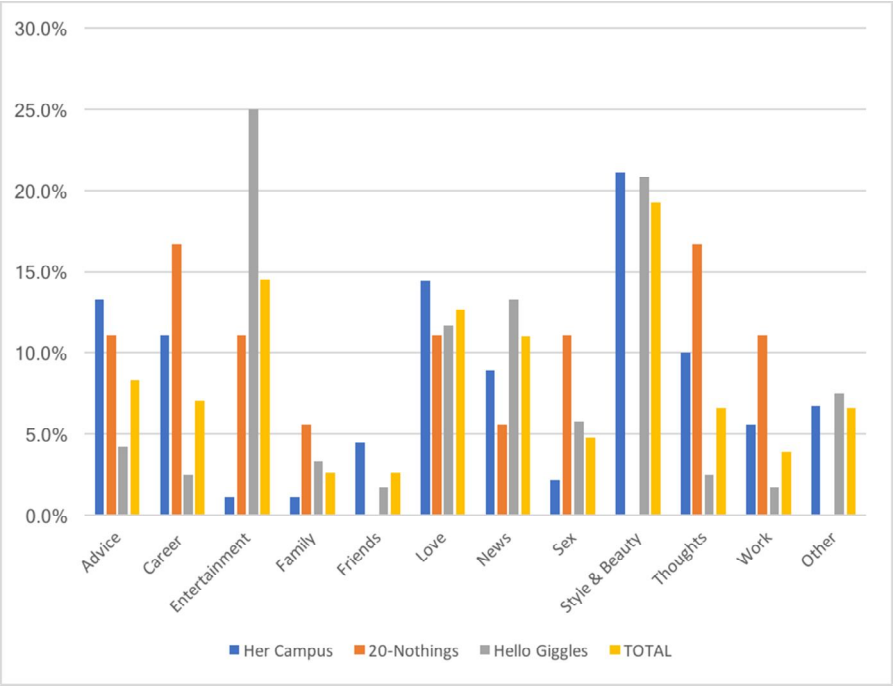
We classified our sample of 228 articles into 14 categories:

1. Career
2. Work
3. Love (Relationships, Dating)
4. Style & Beauty
5. Family
6. Friends
7. Sex
8. News
9. Advice
10. Quizzes
11. Travel
12. Entertainment (TV, Cinema, Theater, etc.)
13. Opinions / Thoughts
14. Other

Note that we distinguished between primary and secondary topic, as most of the articles contain a second topic of interest. These were the results for the primary topic:

Exhibit 5 Frequency of Categories Covered by *Her Campus*, *20-Nothings* and *Hello Giggles*

Topic	***Her Campus***	***20-Nothings***	***Hello Giggles***	**TOTAL**
Advice	12 13,3%	2 11,1%	5 4,2%	19 8,3%
Career	10 11,1%	3 16,7%	3 2,5%	16 7%
Entertainment	1 1,1%	2 11,1%	30 25%	**33** **14,5%**
Family	1 1,1%	1 5,6%	4 3,3%	6 2,6%
Friends	4 4,4%	0 0%	2 1,7%	6 2,6%
Love	13 14,4%	2 11,1%	14 11,7%	**29** **12,7%**
News	8 8,9%	1 1,6%	16 13,3%	25 11%
Sex	2 2,2%	2 11,1%	7 5,8%	11 4,8%
Style & Beauty	19 21,1%	0 0%	25 20,8%	**44** **19,3%**
Thoughts	9 10%	3 16,7%	3 2,5%	15 6,6%
Work	5 5,6%	2 11,1%	2 1,7%	9 3,9%
Other	6 6,7%	0 0%	9 7,5%	15 6,6%
TOTAL	90	18	120	228



The top three categories (or topics) are Style & Beauty (19.3%), Entertainment (14.5%) and Love (12.7%). Except for Love, which is consistent, the percentages vary in each publication. In almost half of the sample (107) we have identified a secondary topic. The two most common secondary topics are Style & Beauty (22.4%), followed by Advice (18.7%). Content related to style and beauty, traditionally related to women's magazines (and associated with certain conservative femininity portrayals), emerges as the most relevant category in our sample, although concentrated in two of the three publications. *20-Nothings* does not include articles that fall into this category; our hypothesis is that this is a personal diary targeting more mature audiences and the posts are based on personal experiences and anecdotes rather than on beauty tips or the fashion week.

Discourse Analysis

Given the similarities between women's magazines and lifestyle blogs in terms of structure, genres, content and editorial tone we propose a discourse analysis based on the *beauty–love–home* content axis described earlier. We have grouped "home" and "beauty" whereas "love" is presented separately.

Home and Beauty

Posts addressing topics related to home and beauty are the most popular in our sample. However, they can have a dramatically different approach depending on who writes the article or the specificities of the topic covered. Thus, we have encountered posts that support a progressive portrayal of women while others are based on a traditional and conservative approach. In *Hello Giggles*, for example, we found an article which explains that Miss Teen USA beauty pageant will replace the bikini pass for one in sportswear, as an explicit measure to support feminist values:

> The stated purpose of the swimsuit competition has always been to show off the athleticism of the contestants. In that vein, it is now being replaced with an athletic wear competition. So instead of bikinis, we'll be seeing the Miss Teen USA contestants hitting the stage in Lululemon and the like, which we fully support. I mean, the only thing we love more than yoga pants are inspiring messages of strength and empowerment for girls and women.

Another article by the same publication[5] echoes that miss Alabama published a picture of herself wearing a bikini only a few months after giving birth that clearly showed she had gained weight. She even posted a comment defying stereotypes about the need to hide overweight while chasing the perfect body:

> Posing in a red, white, and blue bikini, Webb-McCarron snapped the pic while in a dressing room. "Shopping for bikini season!" she wrote in the caption. "Shameless selfie…but seeing progress just from breastfeeding. Pretty awesome how the body works!" Webb-McCarron also made sure to point out that she gained 44 pounds while pregnant and that the pic wasn't meant to be humble. "Say what you want, but I feel great about myself even with the extra cellulite on my butt and stretch marks so shoot me if I felt banging for once in this bikini," she added.

Nonetheless posts under the Style & Beauty section can also appear under a conservative focus, as mentioned earlier and as the following examples depict. In *Her Campus*, for instance, one can frequently find articles implying the predominant space that women have is in the kitchen, and then giving them DIY ideas: how to turn a shirt into an apron or how to make a recipe notebook.[6] Another example could be an article with DIY tips for Cancer girls (zodiac), also published by *Her Campus*[7]:

> A Cancer loves to spend her free time in the kitchen, whether that involves baking or cooking dinner for her family. A cute and creative apron that reflects her individual personality will make a great gift! (…) a Cancer is super sweet and loves to eat sweets.

> These tiny cupcakes are adorable, and because they are so small she will be able to eat more!

This specific quote also emphasizes the fact that Cancer girls besides cooking also like eating, and they recommend bite size cupcakes so that they can eat more, which implies that they care about their size and weight.

In addition to these examples, which establish a relationship between women and the private sphere (kitchen) we have also identified others[8] that highlight the importance of femininity and looking and pretty. As an example, find below an excerpt from a list of basic objects that women should carry in their handbags (hair tools, nail polish, flats):

> 15 Essentials That Should Always Be in Your Work Bag:
> #2: Hair tools – A beauty disaster is totally not professional.
> #11: Nail polish – Every polish lover knows that toenail polish can last through an apocalypse while fingernail polish is likely to fall off if you even look at it the wrong way. If you carry a bottle of your current nail polish color in your bag, you'll never get caught looking unpolished.
> #13: Flats – No matter how much you love heels, even the most comfortable ones have the potential to turn into weapons of mass destruction.

However, the same publication (*Her Campus*) celebrates that singer Alicia Keys has stopped using make up[9]:

> Going off of the trend of power and #slaying in all ways, Alicia Keys went completely bare faced and it's safe to say that she was just as gorgeous as ever.

Although this may seem a contradiction, we have found out that within these blogs it dominates a progressive portrayal of femininity, especially regarding Style & Beauty. In addition, we found ten articles published by *Her Campus* under this category which relate specifically to role model issues. The majority (8) either defend progressive values (5) or are neutral (3) whereas only two promote conservative values. In *Hello Giggles* the trend is even clearer: eight out of eleven articles contain a role model discourse which defends progressive values, only one is conservative, and two remain neutral. In addition, *Hello Giggles* often publishes posts promoting *body positive* approaches, that is to say, defending the idea that women are pretty regardless of their size. All of the blogs analyzed have a preference for slim women (based on the pictures illustrating their articles), although it is also frequent to find articles in which authors defend the idea that beauty can also be found in bigger sizes and even in women whose looks defy traditional standards of beauty. An example can be found in *Her Campus* where they published and celebrated a

summary of the findings from a research about female self-esteem sponsored by the soap brand Dove[10]:

> Media seems to be a large concern for women and girls as well, with 71% of women and 67% of girls telling Dove that they want the media to portray a more realistic body image. With the prevalence of social media and the constant pressure to look, feel and live up to unrealistic expectations, it's hard to find confidence, but with so many women and girls pushing for change, hopefully we can learn to truly love ourselves.

Love

Most of the articles portraying love and relationships are written from a progressive perspective. Relationships (hetero and homo) are presented as a space in which individuals should be able to keep their freedom and circles of friends. The following quote from *Her Campus* supports the idea that having a partner does not mean giving up on one's interests[11]:

> The reason why he likes me is not because I'm his, but because of the person that I am. We're not one of those couples attached to the hip, because we are two separate people with two different lives to take care of… Remember who you are and to love yourself, because it's easy to forget that when pledging commitment to loving someone else. It's easy to forget that, as a person, you have the right to your dreams and interests and chasing after them, even if they're different.

This same publication has also published posts defending the idea that not being in a relationship is a legit option and something not to be ashamed of[12]:

> So maybe you've looked at the signs and realized a relationship just isn't for you. That's totally fine! And don't think this means you have to go around hooking up with every coed you see. You should feel equally empowered if you make the decision to be happily single and just do your own thing if that's what you want to do.

It is also possible to find articles containing a dual approach. The following example from *20 Nothings*[13] is written by someone who admits being married and whose husband is her number one career advocate. But this is just an anecdote used as an excuse to write the post and the text ends up having a progressive approach:

> My husband is my #1 career advocate. He believes in all my goals and wants to do whatever he can to make them a reality. I know

> this because he tells me, and that is meaningful to me because I trust him and his opinions… But let me be very, very clear: I am not saying that you need to have a loving and supportive husband in order to have a career. GOD no. I am saying that if you choose to go through life with a partner, that partner could be the most important career choice you will make.

Conservative portrayals of love and relationships are always related to marriage. Even though most of the posts do not mention or promote marriage, we identified a small number of articles in which this option is presented as a goal – a necessary step towards happiness which no women should renounce. Sometimes the approach is subtle, such as the following article from *Hello Giggles*[14] explaining the origin of the word "Honeymoon" or another post by *Her Campus* about the importance of being a good bridesmaid[15]:

> When one of your best friends or relatives gets engaged, you can't help but wonder if you'll get to be a part of her big day. Getting asked to be a bridesmaid is very special… Shopping for bridesmaid dresses is almost as exciting as shopping for your own bridal gown.

We have also found other articles that highlight the importance of having a boyfriend. The following quote from *Her Campus*[16] starts arguing that it is okay to be single in summer but concludes joking that if this is the case let's hope summer goes by quickly so that classes resume, as in college it is easy to find single cute guys:

> 19 Thoughts Every Girl Has During a Loveless Summer
> #1: I don't need a guy. I'm totally fine being single and free this summer!
> #2: Just kidding, I need a guy – ANY GUY – to come cure my summer boredom.
> #14: Since Mr. Prince Charming clearly isn't planning on making an appearance this summer, my new motto is: Lower your expectations
> #19: Is summer almost over? Can I go back to school where there are actual parties and lots of cute guys?

Summary of Findings

Since the early days of blogging, online diaries have been considered one of the most influential digital media, ranking high with consumers for trust, popularity and influence. Even though they don't get a large portion of brands' digital spend, blogs rank high with consumers for trust, popularity and influence.[17] Consumers believe that blogs are more influential in shaping opinion

than Twitter and when it comes to affecting purchase decisions more important than Facebook. Actually, blogs are considered the third most influential digital resource (31%) when making overall purchases, only behind retail sites (56%) and brand sites (34%). All in all, blogs are the fifth most trustworthy source for information on the Internet.

Our study confirms that there is a correlation of topics covered by lifestyle blogs and women's magazines. Categories such as "style & beauty," "entertainment" and "love" are the most popular in the sample of blogs we have studied, something which is consistent with the *beauty–love–home* axis upon which women's magazines are structured. One of the main differences between women's magazines and the blogs we studied is advertising. Most of the posts we have analyzed had no advertising (85.9%). This is critical to guarantee a "neutral" approach, something that does not happen in printed press as women's magazines rely on advertising (mostly cosmetics and fashion) to be profitable. It is our belief that due to advertising independence authors can adopt a progressive mindset when it comes to femininity portrayals. However, we have not taken into consideration the advertising deals that the writers may have (very popular among the so-called *influencers*) which can also have an impact on the kind of gender representation they promote.

Sex and health related articles are two critical components in women's magazines, especially when it comes to giving advice. Surprisingly, sex is not a hot topic in our sample and only 4.8% of the posts talk about it. The tone is mostly informative and does not have a frivolous approach, which is very common in print magazines; nonetheless articles are usually written very informally and seek complicity with the reader. After concluding this study, we asked ourselves what do editors and writers from the analyzed blogs understand by "health." We have found under that category articles with recipes, nutritional tips, work out routines to have a bikini body and even drug reviews (anxiolytics, morning-after pill, etc.) There is a clear confusion on what kind of articles a health section should include, which is usually clearly delimitated in women's magazines and often includes a vertical from a doctor or nurse practitioner.

In terms of structure, we have found that a high percentage of the articles analyzed (97%) contain a picture whereas videos are very scarce (12%). It is almost impossible to find a blog (or website) with no photos as images are used as bait to attract readers (traffic) and in those cases in particular memes are a frequent resource. It is our belief that this is related to the publications' editorial tone, trying to be a friend, a confidant, someone with whom the reader would share a coffee and a joke (actually memes are jokes). The fact that there are no videos can be explained: we have analyzed blogs, not videoblogs. The cost is lower (it is easier and faster to write a text than to

produce a video) and these blogs post on a daily basis. The only videos we have found are embedded links to third-party websites.

Conclusions

The present study aimed to understand if women's magazines and lifestyle blogs edited by millennial women shared a repository of femininity portrayals and up to what extent those were progressive or conservative. This is of particular interest given that women's magazines and lifestyle blogs share a number of structural characteristics (e.g. editorial tone, targeted audience, name, content, etc.) and play a critical role in gender representation and construction of feminine identities. Based on a sample of 228 posts from three lifestyle blogs edited by millennial women based in the U.S. we have confirmed that content mostly revolves around "style & beauty" issues, followed by entertainment and love, which is consistent with women's magazines main interest. In addition, this sample allows us to draw some conclusions on how the axis *beauty–home–love*, pivotal on women's magazines, is approached by lifestyle blogs. Based on our research, the notions of beauty and love have a multifocal approach when addressed by bloggers and there is room for progressive portrayals and representations, which are difficult to find in women's magazines. Even though some stereotypes persist on lifestyle blogs (especially those related to marriage and an idealized notion of love) it is common to encounter posts that have a feminist approach. Something similar happens with portrayals of beauty, whereas women's magazines mostly rely on a stereotypical representation of a white, western and heterosexual female (Budgeon, 2014) the blogs analyzed show there is appetite for a different representation, particularly when it comes to beauty and physical appearance. But, why portrayals of women and femininity are more progressive on lifestyle blogs than on women's magazines even if they share some structural characteristics and target the same audience? Based on our analysis we have come to the conclusion that the age of editors (and contributors) is critical as they are millennials and they have a progressive approach to family life, compared to Generation Xers and Baby Boomers. Moreover, the blogs analyzed are not subject to the tyranny of advertising. As we mentioned previously, women's magazines contain a high number of advertisements (up to 50% of the content in some cases) which means that their approach has to be consistent with the portrayals of femininity found in the ads if they want to secure investment and remain profitable.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
The authors declare that they have no relevant or material financial interests that relate to the research described in this paper.

NOTES

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