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4

Couples' Labour-Market Participation in the Netherlands

JOHN HENDRICKX, WIM BERNASCO, AND PAUL M. DE GRAAF

Introduction

THE Netherlands, a progressive country in many respects, has a surprisingly traditional division of labour between spouses. The husband's traditional role of breadwinner is still largely unchallenged and until recently women's participation in the labour market lagged behind neighbouring countries. In this chapter, we examine how couples organize the division of paid labour in the Netherlands and attempt to explain the variation between couples. Since there is little variation in labour-market participation of the husband—husbands overwhelmingly have full-time jobs—we will focus on the wife's participation (Kempkens 1993; Eijkhout 1995). What factors affect the wife's decision to leave paid employment? What prompts her to re-enter the labour market?

These transitions can be affected by the husband's characteristics as well as those of the wife. The better the husband's financial position, the less incentives there are for the wife to seek paid employment. The more traditional the husband is, the more likely he will be to oppose his wife having a job. We therefore pay special attention to the impact of the husband's characteristics on the wife's labour-market participation. Since characteristics of husband, wife, and household are subject to change over time, we analyse the transitions between the wife's labour-market participation status using event-history models.

In the Netherlands, women's labour-market participation is strongly associated with the process of family formation (de Graaf and Vermeulen 1997). Until the 1970s, most women stopped working after they became married. Later, many women stayed in the labour force until the arrival of children. More recently, it has also become an option to reduce the number of working hours, rather than stop working completely. In addition, many women who decide to stop working on the arrival of children re-enter the labour market once the children start going to school, often in part-time jobs. The family cycle is therefore a key factor affecting transitions between full-time work, part-time work, and outside the labour market.

Another important factor to take into account is the period in which the decision took place to reduce or increase the wife's labour-market participation. Until 1970 the Netherlands had a very low rate of participation by women in the labour force compared to neighbouring countries (Mol *et al.* 1988). Even in 1973, only 29 per cent of Dutch women were in paid employment, the lowest rate of labour-market participation of all OECD countries (OECD 1992). This was far below the participation rate in Germany (50 per cent) or Belgium (41 per cent), whereas in Scandinavian countries women's labour-market participation was over 60 per cent. An explanation for this low participation rate is the central role of religion in Dutch society in the period before 1970 (Lijphart 1968; Bax 1988). Church attendance was high and the local priest or minister was a figure of considerable authority. The prestige of church leaders was compounded by a system of separate organizations for each denominational group, as well as for the socialists. Separate political parties gave church leaders a direct say in matters of state, and separate schools, hospitals, unions, newspapers, sport clubs, etc., made religion pervasive in everyday life. In this climate, traditional family values stated that a woman's place was in the home, particularly for a married woman, and most definitely for a woman with children. Before 1960, married women were officially banned from the labour market. The role of religion also kept fertility high, which impeded women's entry into the labour market even if they were so inclined.

The influence of religion started to erode during the 1960s, and by 1970 the stoutly traditional Dutch society had become a highly liberal one. Despite a favourable climate towards working women and a growing economy in the 1960s, female labour-market participation did not increase substantially until the 1970s. One reason for this is the fertility rate, which remained high until 1970. From that point on, labour-market participation began to increase and by 1990 had reached levels comparable to those of neighbouring countries (48 per cent for the Netherlands, versus 52 per cent in Germany and 55 per cent in Belgium; OECD 1992). Not only did women participate more in the labour market, they stayed in it longer as well. In the 1970s, women remained in the labour force when they became mothers or re-entered once their children started requiring less attention.

The increased participation of women in the labour force during the 1970s and 1980s was strongly affected by the growing availability of part-time work (Hooghiemstra and Niphuis-Nell 1993; de Graaf and Vermeulen 1997). Virtually all mothers who keep working after having had children reduce the number of working hours, and virtually all women who return to the labour market after a period of housekeeping take part-time jobs. Part-time work is often seen as the most convenient arrangement in which a mother can take care of children and of other domestic work, and contribute to the family income at the same time. During the last decades, men have increased their share of domestic work to some extent (van der Lippe and Siegers 1994), but the wife still assumes most of the responsibility for the majority of everyday domestic tasks.

In the Netherlands, part-time jobs are not necessarily in the secondary labour market, where wages are low and social rights are absent. However, the focus of women on part-time work is detrimental to their careers. Women with full-time jobs accumulate human capital faster and are seen by employers as more motivated than part-time workers. Because of this, women have lower average wage rates and are underrepresented in the higher occupational groups. On the other hand, having a part-time job is much better than having no job at all. Being outside the labour market altogether for an extended period would have, an even more damaging effect on women's career resources.

Table 4.1 shows the distribution of working hours for couples without and with children under the age of 12, in the year 1997. In order to avoid complication by older cohorts of women with low participation rates, the table has been limited to couples in which the wife is 40 years old or younger. The upper panel shows that in 56.8 per cent of all young couples without young children, both husband and wife have full-time jobs of more than thirty hours a week. In most of the other couples without young children the husband has a full-time job and the wife has a part-time job (twelve to thirty working hours), or the husband has a full-time job and the wife has no job or is marginally employed (none to eleven working hours). In a very limited proportion of all couples the wife has more working hours than her husband. Couples in which both husband and wife have part-time jobs are scarce (0.8 per cent).

Table 4.1. Division of paid labour between husbands and wives in the Netherlands (%)

Working hours of couples without children (N=575,000)

wife	husband			
	< 12 hours	12–30 hours	> 30 hours	all
< 12 hours	3.1	0.6	14.2	17.9
12–30 hours	1.2	0.8	17.6	19.6
> 30 hours	3.7	1.9	56.8	62.5
all	8.0	3.4	88.7	100

Working hours of couples with children (N=1,043,000)

wife	husband			
	< 12 hours	12–30 hours	> 30 hours	all
< 12 hours	4.8	0.7	49.6	55.2
12–30 hours	1.2	1.0	32.6	34.8
> 30 hours	1.4	0.5	7.7	10.0
all	7.4	2.7	90.0	100

Population estimates for 1997, for couples without and with children under 12, in which the wife is 40 years old or younger.Data collected by Netherlands' Statistics: Labor Market Survey 1997 (EBB–1997), own computations.

The lower panel of Table 4.1 for couples with children shows a completely different picture. The majority of full-time working women apparently reduce their working hours when they have children. Whereas 62.5 per cent of women with no children have full-time jobs, this percentage is only 10.0 for women with children. Even at the end of the 1990s, more than half (55.2 per cent) of women with young children have no job or marginal employment. Only a small fraction of couples distribute the working hours evenly between both partners. The modal pattern is a full-time working husband and a non-participating wife (49.6 per cent). The second highest frequency occurs for couples in which the husband has full-time work and his wife works part-time (32.6 per cent).

The low participation rate for women with children is related to the division of domestic labour within households. Although norms regarding participation in the labour market by women with children have changed enormously (Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau 1997), the division of labour is still rather traditional. Men work full-time and women are expected to assume most of the household tasks, even if they have full-time jobs of their own (van der Lippe and Siegers 1994). Until 1988, the tax system also provided disincentives to dual-earner families, absorbing a large portion of the woman's income (WRR 1990). A further obstacle for women with small children is the difficulty and expense of finding good day-care facilities (Tijdens et al. 1994; van Dijk and Siegers 1996).

Although family cycle and period are important factors, the main focus of this chapter is on the effects of economic and cultural characteristics of both partners on the wife's participation in the labour force. The more human capital a woman has, the higher her wage rate and the more incentives she has to remain in the labour market. Women with higher paying jobs and with greater work experience are therefore more likely to continue working once they have children, at least in part-time jobs, whereas women with less human capital will interrupt their careers. Women with more human capital can also be expected to return more readily to the labour market after an interruption. Characteristics of the husband can affect the wife's labour-market participation as well. Economic theory has it that the husband's financial resources (income, employment stability) lower the wife's economic incentives to seek paid employment and therefore negatively affect her labour-market participation (Killingsworth 1983).

Cultural factors relate to the norms and values of the spouses. The more traditional a woman is, the more likely that she will stop working or work fewer hours once children arrive, and the less likely she is to re-enter the labour market at some point. Modern husbands will support their wives' decision to work and could facilitate this to some extent by assuming a greater portion of domestic tasks. Traditional husbands will disapprove of their wives working and, since they will tend to be more authoritarian, could exert strong pressures on the wife to remain at home.

In the analyses below, we examine which factors cause women to reduce their labour-market participation and which factors prompt them to increase

their participation. With regard to the effects of economic and cultural characteristics of husbands and wives, Table 4.2 summarizes our hypotheses with regard to these main types of transitions. An important aspect of these hypotheses is the association between husbands' and wives' economic and cultural characteristics, which is likely to be very strong. Husbands with higher earnings will also have higher levels of education and will therefore also tend to have modern values. Their earnings will create disincentives for their wives to seek paid employment, whereas the liberal norms will stimulate their wives' labour-market participation. For this reason, the husband's financial characteristics and his cultural characteristics must be analysed simultaneously (Bernasco 1994; Bernasco et al. 1998). Since the effects of the two resource types have opposite signs, they could suppress each other if only one type were included. There will also be a strong relationship between economic and cultural characteristics for the wives as well. However, these effects are expected to have the same direction. Human capital and modern norms will go hand in hand and will lead to the decision to participate in the labour market.

Table 4.2. Hypotheses with regard to the main types of transitions

	Economic factors		Cultural factors (traditional versus modern)	
	wife	husband	wife	husband
Reduce labour-market participation	negative	positive	positive	positive
Increase labour-market participation	positive	negative	negative	negative

Data and Methods

In order to test our hypotheses, we use discrete time event history models on retrospective life-history data. To increase the statistical power, two large-scale surveys were combined, the Netherlands Family Survey 1992–93 (NFS92: Ultee and Ganzeboom 1993), and Households in the Netherlands 1995 (HIN95: Weesie and Ganzeboom 1995). Both surveys contain a broad range of retrospective items for both husbands and wives. The joined dataset contains 2,190 couples, 784 (36 per cent) from the NFS92 and 1,406 (64 per cent) couples from HIN95. In order to test for effects of differences in formulation and sequence of the questions, a dummy variable indicating data source was included in the analysis.

We examined selected transitions between the following four states in the labour-market careers of women:

(a) *full-time employment*: thirty-two hours or more paid employment
(b) *part-time employment*: twelve to thirty-two hours paid employment

(c) *housekeeping*: less than twelve hours paid employment, adult education, unpaid work

(d) *otherwise outside the labour market*: unemployment, illness, disability

A distinction is made between 'housekeeping' and 'otherwise outside the labour market' in order to differentiate voluntary from involuntary non-employment. People become unemployed or disabled due to circumstances beyond their control, whereas leaving paid employment to become a house-keeper is usually a matter of choice. Table 4.3 shows the frequency of transitions from one month to the next between these four labour-market states in the life course of our sample of 2,190 women, separately for women with no or pre-school children only (upper panel) and for women with at least one child (lower panel). Only transitions made before the age of 55 are included in this table, in order to omit transitions which have to do with early retirement. Many transitions between the four states are available for analysis in both panels, but we decided to limit our analyses to five important events which provide insight in women's labour-market careers, especially with respect to reducing working hours in the early phase of marriage, and with respect to re-entrance into the labour market and the increase in the number of working hours when children are growing up.

The upper panel of Table 4.3 shows transitions for married (or cohabiting) women with no or pre-school children, which are the focus of our analyses of decreases in labour-market participation. In the first place we focus on the transition from full-time employment to either part-time employment or to

Table 4.3. Transitions in wife's labour-market status

For women with no or pre-school children only

Origin state	Destination state				
	Full-time	Part-time	Housekeeping	Other outside	Total
Full-time	—	401	917	129	1,447
Part-time	90	—	326	54	470
Housekeeping	226	254	—	52	532
Other outside	66	73	115	—	254
Total	382	728	1,358	235	2,703

For women with at least one child

Origin state	Destination state				
	Full-time	Part-time	Housekeeping	Other outside	Total
Full-time	—	172	509	57	738
Part-time	50	—	315	71	436
Housekeeping	113	373	—	55	541
Other outside	22	53	79	—	154
Total	185	598	903	183	1,869

the housekeeping status. To analyse this transition a two-stage decision process seems to be appropriate, since we assume that women first decide to stop working full-time, and then decide whether to work part-time or become housekeepers. In the second place we analyses transitions from part-time employment to housekeeping. The first events to be analysed are:

(1a) from full-time employment into either part-time employment or house-keeping (401 + 917 = 1,318 events);

(1b) the choice of housekeeping versus part-time employment, given a transition out of full-time work (917 events);

(2) from part-time employment into housekeeping (326 events).

In the lower panel of Table 4.3 we focus on the increase of working hours for women with children who have part-time jobs or no job at all (housekeeping and others outside labour market taken together). This is relevant to questions about re-entrance to the labour market for women who reduced their working hours after they had children. Again we model a two-stage decision process. We assume that women re-entering the labour market will first decide to seek employment, and then decide whether to work full-time or part-time. We would also have liked to analyse the determinants of transitions from part-time to full-time work when children become older, but here only fifty events are available, which is not enough to estimate multivariate models.

(3a) from housekeeping or otherwise outside the labour market into either part-time employment or full-time employment (113 + 373 + 22 + 53 = 561 events);

(3b) the choice of full-time versus part-time employment, given a re-entry into the labour market (113 + 22 = 135 events).

The analyses of the economic and cultural determinants of transitions 1a, 2, and 3a were done using discrete time event history models (Allison 1984; Yamaguchi 1991). A couple-month file was created, with a separate record for each month in which the wife was at risk of experiencing a transition. The effects are estimated by logistic regression models. For models 1b and 3b, the records were restricted to those in which a transition had taken place. A logistic regression analysis was performed to analyse the choice in question, given that a transition had occurred.

A main advantage of the use of event-history analysis is that it can take into account changes through time of the independent variables. Since life-history data were available for the independent variables, these are treated as time-varying covariates. The independent variables form three groups: time-related factors, economic factors, and cultural factors. Each group is discussed separately in the following paragraphs.

Time-Related Factors

The group 'time-related factors' consists of two variables, family cycle and period. As noted in the introduction, many women in the Netherlands stop

working when they get married or when the first child is born. Many also re-enter the labour market once the children reach age 4 and start going to school. The variable 'family cycle' is based on stages of household formation and the age of the youngest child and plays a key role in our analyses. Family cycle distinguishes the following five stages:

(1) *starting houshold*: from six months before living together until six months before the birth of the first child;

(2) *youngest child 0–4*: from six months before the birth of the first child until all children older than 4;

(3) *youngest child 4–12*: no children under 4, at least one child between 4 and 12;

(4) *youngest child 12–18*: no children under 12, at least one child between 12 and 18;

(5) *empty nest*: no children under 18.

A couple enters the first stage, *starting household*, six months before they start cohabiting or become married. The period of six months before actual marriage or cohabitation is included in order to capture anticipation effects. In the past, women often left employment once definitive marriage arrangements had been made and these transitions should be included in our analyses. The next stage, *youngest child aged 0–4*, starts six months before the birth of the couple's first child. Again, the lead period of six months is included in order to take into account the effects of anticipation of childbirth on labour-market decisions. The third stage, *youngest child aged 4–12*, starts when the youngest child in the couple's household reaches the age of 4. At that age, children start attending nursery school, giving their mothers new opportunities to re-enter the labour market. When the youngest child in the couple's household reaches the age of 12 the couples enters the *youngest child 12–18* stage. All children are now in high school and are considered mature enough to require less adult supervision. The *empty nest* stage starts when the couple's youngest child reaches age 18. At this point, children start living on their own and in any case require (or tolerate) little supervision. Women in the empty nest phase therefore have the best opportunity to enter the labour market. On the other hand, at this stage they are relatively old and an extended period outside the labour market has strongly depreciated their human capital. Although they have the time and in many cases the desire to re-enter the labour market, finding paid employment will not be easy at this stage.

Couples need not progress smoothly from one stage to the next. Childless couples remain in the *starting household* stage throughout. In a few rather exceptional cases couples skip this stage, if their first child is born within three months after they start living together. If there is a gap of more than four years between the births of consecutive children, couples will re-enter the stage *youngest child aged 0–4* from the later stage *youngest child aged 4–12*. If the gap is large enough, couples can re-enter stage 2 from stage 4.

The second time-related factor in our analyses is period. From 1970 onward, women have become increasingly more likely to enter the labour market. As time progressed, they also tended to stay longer and were more likely to re-enter the labour market after an interruption. The retrospective data used here allow us to distinguish five periods: before 1960, the 1960s, the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s. However, because part-time work only became available during the 1970s and 1980s, there were insufficient transitions for a meaningful analysis. In some of the analyses, the first two periods were therefore merged.

Economic Factors

The time-related factors can be expected to have large and important effects, but the main focus in this chapter is on the effects of economic and cultural factors of both the wife and her husband. The economic factors consist of occupational status for both husband and wife, wife's work experience, and husband's employment stability. Education is included as a cultural rather than an economic factor, although it has aspects of both. However, the economic effects of education will run via occupation. Any independent effect of education can therefore be attributed to its cultural aspects.

Husband's and wife's occupation were measured using a scale of *economic status* developed by de Graaf and Kalmijn (1995) based upon average income levels per occupational group. Research by Pollaerts *et al.* (1997) showed that this scale is better at uncovering differences between men and women than scales of occupational prestige or socio-economic status. The scale contains standardized values, with a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1. Occupation measures highest economic status of husband and wife, rather than current economic status. Women sometimes accept a downgrading in occupational status when re-entering the labour market or in order to work part-time. We feel that highest occupational status is a better measure of investment in human capital and motivation to remain in the labour force.

We also included the wife's number of years in a paid occupation as a measure of her labour-market experience. This variable was weighted by the number of hours in each job, using forty hours as the standard. Each unit is therefore the equivalent of a year's full-time work experience. Work experience relates to human capital accumulated on the job and should therefore decrease the probability of the wife reducing her labour-market participation and increase the probability of her increasing it. It is generally accepted that the accumulation of human capital through work experience has a curvilinear form, with diminishing returns as employees become older and less able to absorb new knowledge and skills. We therefore included a squared term of experience to capture this process. For analyses of re-entry into the labour force, we also included a variable for the *duration of non-employment*, measured in years.

Husband's employment stability represents the percentage of time that the husband has been unemployed during at most the last five years, or since

entering the labour force if that was less than five years ago. The unit of measurement is 10 percentage points, in order to avoid small parameter values.

Cultural Factors

As noted above, husband's and wife's education are considered to be cultural rather than economic factors. Husbands and wives with higher levels of education will have modern values, so the wife will be more likely to increase her labour-market participation and less likely to decrease it. Education here refers to highest completed level of education and was included as a time-varying covariate. The classification scheme used in the questionnaires comprises nine levels of education ranging from primary education to post-academic degrees (Ph.D., for example). In order to obtain a better approximation of an interval level scale, we recoded this classification into 'effective years of schooling', ranging from six (primary education) to seventeen (post-academic degree).

Wife's religion is included in the analysis as an objective measure of traditional versus modern values. Religion was coded as a three-category variable, indicating whether the wife has no denomination, whether she has a denomination but does not attend church services on a regular basis (at least once per month), or whether she has a denomination and does attend services regularly. A second objective measure of the wife's cultural values used in these analyses is *mother's employment status*. This was measured by a dummy variable indicating whether the wife's mother held a paid job (1) or not (0) when the wife was a teenager.

A final indicator of cultural values is *relationship status*. This dummy variable indicates whether a couple is formally married (1) or cohabiting (0) at the time of relationship formation. Relationship formation is set at six months before the date of marriage or the start of cohabitation, in order to include transitions which occur in anticipation of marriage/cohabitation. Couples who get formally married are more traditional than couples who cohabit, even if the cohabiting couple does marry at some later date. Relationship status also has economic aspects, since married women are economically more secure than cohabiting women (Bernasco and Giesen 1997). This is not problematic, since both aspects work in the same direction by increasing the likelihood of the wife reducing her labour-market participation.

Results

Exits from Full-Time Employment

Our first model examines exits from full-time employment for women with no or pre-school children. This section contains the results of all voluntary exits, the following section examines the choice of housekeeping versus part-time employment, given a voluntary exit from full-time employment. The effects

of our independent variables on exits from full-time work are presented in Table 4.4. This and ensuing tables for the event-history models contain the multiplicative effect in the first column, the linear B parameter in the second column, and the Wald statistic in the third column. If the multiplicative effect is less than 1, its inverse is given with the superscript -1. This allows for a clearer interpretation of the parameters as multiplicative effects, while avoiding the interpretation difficulties that occur when these effects are between 0 and 1. The multiplicative effects indicate by what factor the odds of the transition increases or, if the value has been superscripted, by what fraction the odds decreases, for a unit's change of the independent variable. When the baseline odds are small, this effect can also be interpreted as the change in the probability rather than the odds of a transition.

The Wald statistic in the third column is equal to the parameter divided by its standard error and then squared. Wald statistics have a chi-square distribution with 1 df for a single parameter and k df for a categorical variable with k parameters. The Wald statistic is included to provide a scale-independent measure of the strength of an effect. The critical chi-square value for 1 df is 2.7 for p = 0.10, 3.8 for p = 0.05, and 6.6 for p = 0.01.

Table 4.4. Transition from full-time employment to part-time employment or housekeeping

	Multiplicative effect	B	Wald
Family cycle: youngest < 4 (starting household)	4.38	1.48	571.9
Period	—	—	117.8
1960s (< 1960)	1.82^{-1}	-.60	15.9
1970s (1960s)	1.65^{-1}	-.50	25.1
1980s (1970s)	1.22^{-1}	-.20	5.7
1990s (1980s)	1.03^{-1}	-.03	.1
Education	1.05^{-1}	-.05	13.0
Occupation	1.26^{-1}	-.23	29.3
Experience	1.01^{-1}	-.01	.4
squared	1.00^{-1}	-.00	5.2
Religion	—	—	5.2
irregular attendance (no religion)	1.17^{-1}	-.16	5.2
regular attendance (no religion)	1.07^{-1}	-.07	.8
Relationship status: married (cohabiting)	2.42	.88	81.4
Mother's employment status	1.18^{-1}	-.16	2.5
Husband's education	1.02	.02	3.1
Husband's occupation	1.03	.03	.8
Husband's unemployment history	1.03^{-1}	-.03	4.8
Source of record, HIN (NFS)	1.12^{-1}	-.11	2.3
Constant	153.65^{-1}	-5.03	277.0

The results in Table 4.4 show a massive effect of family cycle on voluntary exits from full-time work. Women with pre-school children are 4.4 times more likely to leave full-time work in a given month than married women with no children. The Wald statistic shows that family cycle is by far the most important factor affecting voluntary exits. The second variable, period, uses the difference contrast. This means that each previous period is used as the reference category, rather than a fixed period. The Wald statistic for the total effect of period shows it is the second most important variable. The linear parameters for period are all negative, indicating that voluntary exits from full-time employment became less likely for each subsequent period. However, the magnitude of this effect decreases for each subsequent period and it was no longer significant for the last parameter for the 1990s versus the 1980s.

Each extra year of education reduces the probability of the wife leaving full-time employment by 5 per cent, whereas an increase of occupational status by 1 unit of standard deviation reduces the probability by 26 per cent. Effects of the economic aspects of education on leaving full-time employment will be interpreted via occupation. The independent effect of education found here can therefore be seen as a cultural effect. Women with higher levels of education will tend to have more progressive values, and feel that a woman's place is at her job. Work experience has a significant and curvilinear effect, which becomes increasingly negative as time progresses. Ten years of full-time work experience reduce the probability of leaving full-time employment by a factor of 1.4, twenty years by a factor of 3.2, thirty years by a factor of 11.5.

Religion, relationship status, and mother's employment status measure the woman's non-traditional values. Women who are religious but do not attend church are significantly less likely to leave full-time work than non-religious women. This effect is negative but non-significant for women who do attend church regularly. This is surprising, since we had expected the effect to be in the opposite direction, with religious women being most likely and non-religious women least likely to leave full-time work. We are reluctant to offer post-hoc explanations, but it might be that religious women working in full-time jobs are a selected group with a strong work ethic. Given that these women take a full-time job, they are very committed and therefore unlikely to abandon their employer.

Relationship status has a significant effect, with married women being more likely to leave full-time employment than cohabiting women, an effect which has also been found in Sweden (see Henz and Sundström in Chapter 10, below). This could be a cultural effect due to the fact that women who cohabit instead of marrying are less traditional and ignore norms stating that their place is in the home. The effect of relationship status could also be due to economic considerations, since married women have greater economic security.

With regard to husband's labour-market resources, only unemployment history has a significant effect. Each 10 per cent period of unemployment during the last five years decreases the probability of the wife leaving full-time employment by 3 per cent. If the husband is an unreliable provider, then the

wife will hesitate to leave her full-time job. However, other characteristics of the husband have no effects.

Housekeeping versus Part-Time Work, Given an Exit from Full-Time Employment

The second step in the analysis of exits from full-time employment examines the choice of housekeeping versus part-time employment, given that a transition occurred. These results are presented in Table 4.5. The effect of family cycle is again very large, although smaller than for leaving full-time employment. Women with pre-school children are 3.5 times more likely to choose housekeeping rather than part-time work. Period is the most important factor in this analysis, judging by the Wald statistic. In each successive period, women became less likely to choose housekeeping over part-time work. This effect was strong but not significant for the 1960s compared to the pre-1960s, due to the scarcity of part-time jobs before 1970. The propensity to choose part-time work over housekeeping seems to be tapering off, as the effect for the 1990s versus the 1980s is considerably lower than for the 1980s versus the 1970s.

Table 4.5. Housekeeping versus part-time work, for women leaving full-time employment

	Multiplicative effect	B	Wald
Family cycle: youngest < 4 (starting household)	3.50	1.25	65.5
Period	—	—	81.0
1960s (< 1960)	2.36^{-1}	-.86	2.7
1970s (1960s)	2.09^{-1}	-.74	7.5
1980s (1970s)	2.28^{-1}	-.83	17.7
1990s (1980s)	1.69^{-1}	-.53	8.9
Education	1.06^{-1}	-.06	3.5
Occupation	1.06^{-1}	-.06	0.4
Experience	1.18^{-1}	-.17	11.0
squared	1.01	.01	5.8
Religion	—	—	3.1
irregular attendance (no religion)	1.05^{-1}	-.05	0.1
regular attendance (no religion)	1.33	.29	2.3
Relationship status: married (cohabiting)	1.47	.39	3.1
Mother's employment status	1.21^{-1}	-.19	0.6
Husband's education	1.01^{-1}	-.01	0.1
Husband's occupation	1.09^{-1}	-.08	1.1
Husband's unemployment history	1.00^{-1}	-.00	0.0
Source of record, HIN (NFS)	1.02^{-1}	-.02	0.0
Constant	5.19	1.65	5.5

A woman's education or occupation does not affect her choice of house-keeping versus part-time work, but her work experience does. The effects of experience are strongly curvilinear, with greater experience leading to a reduction in the likelihood that housekeeping will be chosen. This effect reaches an extreme value after fifteen years of experience, after which it becomes weaker again. At ten years full-time work experience, the odds of a woman choosing housekeeping over part-time work are reduced by a factor of 3. At twenty years, this factor is 2.9, at thirty years it has almost disappeared and is only 1.1. It is possible that life-cycle and cohort effects are being confounded here, since women with greater experience will also belong to older cohorts and therefore be more traditional.

Surprisingly, there are no effects of non-traditional values on the choice of housekeeping versus part-time work. The husband's characteristics also show no significant effects on the choice of housekeeping versus part-time work.

Exits from Part-Time Employment

The second analysis examines the transition from part-time employment to housekeeping. Table 4.6 contains the results of the event-history analysis. There is a strong effect of family cycle, although it is weaker than for leaving full-time employment. Women are 2.8 times more likely to leave a part-time job after having a child than women with no children. The effects of period as a whole are significant. Only the contrast of the 1970s with the pre-1970s is not significant, due to the scarcity of part-time work prior to 1970. The effects of period are all negative and increase in magnitude as time progresses, indicating that women are increasingly less likely to leave part-time work.

The effects of economic resources show significant effects of occupation and experience. The higher a woman's earnings potential, the less likely she is to leave part-time work, although the effect is weaker than for full-time work. Experience has significant effects which are negative until seventeen years of full-time experience. However, since experience is weighted by the number of hours that the woman worked, this is beyond the careers of women in this analysis. At ten years full-time experience, a woman is less likely to leave part-time work by a factor of 3.8. At twenty years, the factor is 5.0, but at thirty years it would be only 2.2. With regard to non-traditional values, religion shows no effects but there are significant effects of relationship status and mother's employment status. Married women are 1.8 times more likely to leave part-time work compared to cohabiting women. Women whose mothers worked when they were 15 are less likely to leave part-time employment by a factor of 1.7.

There is little to be said with regard to the effects of husband's resources on the odds of the wife leaving part-time employment. Husband's education, occupation, and unemployment history all have no effects.

Table 4.6. Transition from part-time employment to housekeeping

	Multiplicative effect	B	Wald
Family cycle: youngest < 4 (starting household)	2.77	1.02	56.5
Period	—	—	28.5
1970s(< 1970)	1.10^{-1}	–0.09	0.2
1980s (1970s)	1.39^{-1}	–0.33	4.8
1990s (1980s)	1.62^{-1}	–0.49	10.4
Education	1.00	0.00	0.0
Occupation	1.19^{-1}	–0.17	4.3
Experience	1.21^{-1}	–0.19	10.8
squared	1.01	0.01	1.1
Religion	—	—	1.8
irregular attendance (no religion)	1.05^{-1}	–0.05	0.1
regular attendance (no religion)	1.18	0.17	1.2
Relationship status: married (cohabiting)	1.81	0.60	6.2
Mother's employment status	1.70^{-1}	–0.53	5.4
Husband's education	1.01	0.01	0.1
Husband's occupation	1.10^{-1}	–0.10	2.7
Husband's unemployment history	1.01	0.01	0.2
Source of record, HIN (NFS)	1.12	0.11	0.6
Constant	202.96^{-1}	–5.31	63.6

Re-entry into the Labour Market

The next two analyses examine re-entry into the labour market for women with at least one child. This section analyses re-entry into paid employment and the following section examines the choice of full-time versus part-time work, given the decision to re-enter the labour market. The results of the first step are presented in Table 4.7. The effects of family cycle show that women with children between 4 and 12 years of age are 2.4 times more likely to re-enter the labour market than women with pre-schoolers. This effect is only slightly lower once the children are of high-school age (12 to 18), but is much lower although still significant in the empty-nest stage, when all children are over 18. Women in the empty-nest stage have more opportunities to seek employment but will be less eligible due to the depreciation of human capital. These women will also belong to older, more traditional cohorts and therefore be less inclined to re-enter the labour market. The effects of period are all positive, with a strong effect for the 1970s versus the pre-1970s and to a lesser extent the 1990s versus the 1980s. Interestingly, women in the 1980s were not significantly more likely to re-enter the labour market than women in the 1970s. This could be due to high unemployment rates, particularly in the early 1980s, which prevented women from finding work even if they were more motivated to do so.

Table 4.7. Re-entry into the labour market

	Multiplicative effect	B	Wald
Family cycle	—	—	60.3
youngest < 12 (youngest < 4)	2.35	0.85	57.9
youngest < 18 (youngest < 4)	2.23	0.80	20.9
empty nest (youngest < 4)	1.61	0.48	4.3
Period	—	—	29.6
1970s (< 1970)	2.37	0.86	12.5
1980s (1970s)	1.13	0.12	1.0
1990s (1980s)	1.33	0.28	6.5
Education	1.09	0.08	19.3
Occupation	1.04^{-1}	-0.03	0.5
Experience	1.09^{-1}	-0.08	5.3
squared	1.00	0.00	0.4
Duration of non-employment	1.06^{-1}	-0.06	51.4
Religion	—	—	18.0
irregular attendance (no religion)	1.11^{-1}	-0.10	1.0
regular attendance (no religion)	1.72^{-1}	-0.54	17.8
Relationship status: married (cohabiting)	1.93^{-1}	-0.66	13.3
Mother's employment status	1.05	0.05	0.1
Husband's education	1.01	0.01	0.9
Husband's occupation	1.09^{-1}	-0.09	4.3
Husband's unemployment history	1.01	0.01	0.2
Source of record, HIN (NFS)	1.33^{-1}	-0.28	3.4
Constant	209.96^{-1}	-5.35	128.8

Education, previous work experience, and duration of non-employment have significant effects on the decision to re-enter the labour market, but occupation does not. Interestingly, prior work experience decreases rather than increases the likelihood of re-entry into the labour market. Women with ten years prior work experience are only half as likely to re-enter the labour market. At twenty years of experience, the probability is reduced by a factor of 2.9, at thirty years experience it is reduced by a factor of 3.1. This negative effect of work experience is due to the fact that women who have their children at an early age, when they have limited labour-market experience, are more likely to re-enter the labour market at some point. On the other hand, women who have children later on tend to end their labour-market careers at that point in order to become full-time mothers. The duration of being outside the labour force decreases the likelihood of re-entry by 6 per cent for each year of non-employment.

Education increases the probability of re-entry by a factor of 9 per cent for each year of education. The values of higher education stimulate women to

re-enter the labour force. Traditional women who are religious and attend church regularly are less likely to re-enter the labour market than non-religious women. This effect has the same direction but is not significant for women who do not attend church regularly. Married women are also significantly less likely to re-enter the labour market than women who were cohabiting at the time of relationship formation. On the other hand, mother's working status has no effect in this analysis.

Husband's occupation has a significant negative effect on the probability of the wife re-entering the labour market. An increase in husband's earnings potential by one standard deviation reduces the probability of the wife re-entering the labour market by 9 per cent. So although this effect is significant, it is not very strong.

Full-Time versus Part-Time Work, Given Re-entry into the Labour Market

The last analysis of this chapter regards the choice of full-time versus part-time work, given the decision to re-enter the labour market (see Table 4.8). In this case, only period has a significant effect. Until 1970, part-time work was not really an option and the positive value of the parameter for the 1970s versus the pre-1970s indicates that women tended to choose full-time work. This changed in the 1980s when part-time jobs became widely available. The parameter for the 1980s versus the 1970s is negative and significant. Women in the 1990s are even more likely to choose part-time work, but the difference to the 1980s is no longer significant. None of the other variables had significant effects on the choice of full-time versus part-time work for women re-entering the labour market.

Conclusions

In this chapter, we analysed the effects of cultural and economic characteristics of women and their husbands on the woman's participation in the labour market. Decreases in participation were analysed in the form of transitions from full-time employment into either part-time employment or housekeeping, and from part-time employment into housekeeping. Increases in participation were analysed as re-entry into full-time or part-time employment after a period of housekeeping. The analyses of decreases in participation were restricted to women with no or pre-school children, the analyses of increases were restricted to women with at least one child. Economic characteristics of the wife were hypothesized to increase participation, whereas the husband's economic characteristics would tend to decrease the wife's participation. Cultural indicators of traditional values of both husband and wife were hypothesized to decrease the wife's labour-market participation. In addition to cultural and economic characteristics of the partners, family cycle and period

Table 4.8. Full-time versus part-time employment, for women re-entering the labour market

	Multiplicative effect	B	Wald
Family cycle	—	—	0.4
youngest < 12 (youngest < 4)	1.04^{-1}	-0.04	0.0
youngest < 18 (youngest < 4)	1.07	0.07	0.0
empty nest (youngest < 4)	1.37	0.32	0.3
Period	—	—	8.4
1970s (< 1970)	1.28	0.25	0.2
1980s (1970s)	1.84^{-1}	-0.61	4.5
1990s (1980s)	1.38^{-1}	-0.33	1.2
Education	1.04	0.04	0.8
Occupation	1.19^{-1}	-0.17	1.8
Experience	1.01^{-1}	-0.01	0.0
squared	1.01^{-1}	-0.01	0.3
Duration of non-employment	1.01	0.01	0.2
Religion	—	—	1.0
irregular attendance (no religion)	1.28	0.24	0.9
regular attendance (no religion)	1.02^{-1}	-0.02	0.0
Relationship status: married (cohabiting)	1.81^{-1}	-0.59	2.1
Mother's employment status	1.94^{-1}	-0.66	2.6
Husband's education	1.05^{-1}	-0.05	1.5
Husband's occupation	1.00	0.00	0.0
Husband's unemployment history	1.01	0.01	0.0
Source of record, HIN (NFS)	1.01^{-1}	-0.01	0.0
Constant	1.97	0.68	0.4

were included to model the effects of time. In order to capture the dynamic aspects of women's participation in the labour market, the analyses were performed using event-history models.

The time-related factors, family cycle and period, had the strongest effects on women's labour-market decisions. Having a pre-school child versus no children has an enormous impact on the decision to reduce labour-market participation, and having a pre-school child versus school age or older children strongly affects increases in participation. Period also has strong effects, both because of the steady increase in women's labour-market participation from 1970 onwards, and because of the increasing prevalence of part-time work from that point on.

The main interest of these analyses was the impact of economic and cultural characteristics of both the wife and her husband on her labour-market decisions. Of the wife's own characteristics, work experience had the most consistent impact, with significant effects in all models except the choice of full-time

versus part-time work for women re-entering the labour market. The more human capital a woman accumulates through work experience, the less likely she is to reduce her labour-market participation. On the other hand, experience reduces the likelihood of the women increasing her participation through re-entry into the labour market. This effect is due to the fact that women who have children at a young age are more likely to re-enter the labour market, whereas women who have children later in their careers tend to leave the labour market permanently. We found that a higher occupational status tends to keep women in the labour force, but does not induce them to re-enter the labour market once they have left.

Since the economic aspects of education are interpreted via occupation, the independent effects of education can be attributed to its cultural aspects. Education tends to reduce the likelihood of women leaving full-time, but not part-time work and does induce them to re-enter the labour market once they have children. With regard to other cultural characteristics, religion had the unexpected effect of keeping women in full-time employment, particularly if the woman did not attend church regularly. Religion also impedes women's re-entry into the labour market, which is in the expected direction. Having a mother who also worked inhibits departure from part-time work, but does not affect other transitions. Being married rather than cohabiting generally had a negative effect on participation in the labour market. This could be because cohabiting women are more modern or because married women have greater economic security.

Whereas the wife's economic and cultural characteristics had many strong effects, there were only two significant effects of the husband's characteristics on the wife's labour-market choices. First, the more the husband is unemployed, the less likely the wife is to leave full-time employment. Second, the higher the husband's earnings potential, the less likely the wife is to re-enter the labour market once she has children, which parallels the results for Germany (Chapter 3 above) but contradicts, for example, the Swedish case (Chapter 10 below). Both effects are significant, but relatively small. It is interesting to note that these are both economic factors. There were no effects of husband's education and earlier models (not presented here) showed no effects of husband's religion either. There is no evidence of enlightened husbands furthering their wives' careers.

In summary, it appears that women's decisions on leaving and re-entering the labour force are determined for the main part by their stage in the family cycle and by the historical period in which the decisions were made. Women's aspirations and opportunities are also moulded by their own human capital and norms and values, but the human capital and the norms and values of their partners do not seem to play a very important role in women's employment histories.

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