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Paternity and Maternity Leaves: Equality

ABSTRACT

This research paper deals with maternity and paternity leaves' equality in India in relation to western countries. With the passage of time there have been various changes in the corporate world, the change is quite visible like increase in women at work places, colleges, universities which further takes to the benefits given to the employees and there comes the issue of gender equality. One of which is maternity and paternity leaves. What scholars' questions about is that this pace in which women entered the paid work culture why the pace too so in case of men entering the unpaid work. This paper studies the research and the experiment being done in the western countries in relation to the leaves provided to both men and women. Then it discusses about the leaves and gender gap. Followed by review of literature, suggestion, and research methodology.

INTRODUCTION

The metamorphosis to parenthood, a dramatic change for a couple. Women often exit the workplace, for a time being to recover from birth and to adjust to their new phase of life. The temporary exist, maternity leave have been experienced in United States and Canada over a period of time, whether state or employee sponsored.¹ Whereas fewer men experience a temporary absence from the workplace at transitions to parenthood. Instead, new fathers typically maintain or strengthen, their employment ties in the post birth period. Therefore, men and women experience different pathways to parenthood and contribute different understandings and enactment of parenting. The said is supported by a survey done by, Boston college center for work and family. In which they said, "On average, 'the greater the support for fathers taking time off after the birth of their children' by the workplace culture and immediate manager, the more time that fathers took off". Although parental leaves have become a tradition in labor relation but

¹ Allen, Sarah, and Alan Hawkins (1999). Maternal gatekeeping: Mothers' beliefs and behaviors that inhibit greater father involvement in family work. Journal of 'Marriage and Family'.

this took various researches by different scholars in different countries to reach this tradition. It was not until 1970s that it began to be regarded as way of balancing work, family as well as gender equality. Countries like Sweden, Norway, introduced different plans of parent leaves with different time period and salary for both men and women over a period of time. Such measures aim to remove the feminine qualities; the use of parental leaves and equalize men's and women's opportunities to ensure that maternity and the use of parental leave as a resource for balancing work and family life does not translate into labor market discrimination.² Similar measures were adopted in other European countries in an attempt to encourage men's involvement in parental leaves. Some countries made revolutionary changes in their leaves for parents of newborns, replacing maternity leave with leave that foresee gender institution of more family-friendly workplaces. The furtherance of paternity leave is also assumed to encourage fathers' socialization as care providers. During such leaves, fathers not only involve in instrumental tasks, but also involve with their children emotionally, laying the groundwork for greater dedication to subsequent child development.³

Much of the research on parental has focused on three questions. The first is: If the institution of the father's quota has actually fostered men's use of parental leave, what factors further or hinder its use? The second: To what extent do men and women share parental leave equally? And the third: Which features of parental leave favor its wider use by fathers?⁴ The assumption on which the whole much of the research was based is that greater the use of leave by men translates into their greater involvement in unpaid household work, particularly in childcare. However, research came with empirical evidence that concluded, relationship between leaves and involvement in household work is barely evident.

A small study done in the United States in 1998, for example, studied 38 men with youngsters from 9 to 19 months old at that point, fathered or adopted after 1994. The entirety of the respondents were breadwinners inside enormous organizations or open establishments, a considerable extent of whom (approx. half) had taken at any rate multi week off from work for child care, utilizing off the clock days, occasions or leaves. The review demonstrated that a large

² Burgess, Gregg, Propper and Washbrook, 2007; Haas and Rosgaard (2011).

³ Hass and Hwang, (2008); Tanaka and Waldfogel, Effects of parental leave and work hours on fathers' involvement with their babies. Evidence from the millennium cohort study. Community, Work and family, 2007.

⁴ Duvander and Johansson, are the effects of reforms promoting fathers' parental leave use? Journal of European Social Policy, 2012; Hass and Rosgaard, 2011; OECD, doing better for families, 2011.

portion of that took time off, performed more childcare undertakings than the other half, albeit by and large, they neither gave additional time nor accepted more accountability for childcare than did the men who withdrew.⁵

“Research has been conducted in a number of countries, in an attempt to determine whether these reforms have intensified men’s use of paternity leave and whether that, in turn, has signified their greater involvement in childcare. The present study, based on data from countries across Europe, United States and Canada, aims to determine whether men’s use of paternity is associated with their greater involvement not only in childcare but also in housework. The article is organized as follows. The first section reviews the literature on the effect of fathers’ use of leave on their participation in childcare and housework. This is followed by a discussion of the analytical strategy implemented and the characteristics of the different survey from which indicators can be drawn to address the objectives pursued. Finally, the results are presented and discussed.”

PATERNITY LEAVE AND GENDER GAP

To understand the key of the meaning what paternity leave mean to working women is by understanding the disadvantages that are faced by mothers. For varies researches it has been proved that women earn comparatively less than men by 20%.⁶ A survey, by survey monkey, in 2019 concluded that 46% of American men believe the gender pay gap is true, or “made up to serve a political purpose.” What's more, despite changing attitudes toward gender roles, the younger the respondent, the more likely they were to believe that men and women are paid equally.⁷ This can indicate to some underlying problem that have already been solved. After all, women going to colleges and getting degree is more likely than men, thus equal pay act. The act was developed by U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Moreover, Economists also noted a widespread misconception in which the pay gap represents: “Women as a whole earn 80 cents for every dollar earned by a man, but that's not controlling for job type or education level. Indeed, low-level male and female workers tend to earn very similar wages, while the highest levels of management tend to have the widest pay gap, with female MBAs earning 74

⁵ Seward, Yeatts, Amin, and Dewitt, 06). Employment leave and fathers, ‘involvement with children: According to mothers and fathers’. Men and Masculinities, 2006.

⁶ Siri Hedreen, the “motherhood penalty may be inevitable, but fathers can share some of the burden”.

⁷ Jillesa Gebhardt, Survey Monkey, ‘On Equal Pay Day 2019, Lack of Awareness persists’.

cents on the dollar.”⁸ Over they came up with a result that women earn 98 cents on a dollar earned by men in case of controlled gap (equal qualification) and 78 cents on a dollar (in case of uncontrolled gap).

The introduction of the paternity-leave quota led to a sharp increase in uptake rates. Based on analytical sample of full-time employed fathers, Fig. 1 shows that under 3 % of the dads whose kid was brought into the world preceding 1993 utilized parental leave. After the paternity-leave amount was presented in 1993, around 30 % of fathers utilized their entitlement to paternity leave, expanding to 51 % in 1994 and 59 % in 1995. In 2000, more than 70 % of full-time utilized dads took paternity leave. As Fig. 1 uncovers, the paternity-leave amount had low take-up during the primary years after usage, especially for youngsters conceived in 1993 and 1994. We will thus allude to the dads of these two accomplices as treated in the stage in period. Fathers were entitled the youngster turned age. However, approximately all (95 %) dads who used their right to paternity leave took leave in conjunction with the mothers’ leave during the child’s first year of life. Among fathers taking paternity leave, around 70 % were on leave for four weeks, 20 % took less leave, and the remaining 10% took more than the designated four weeks of leave.⁹

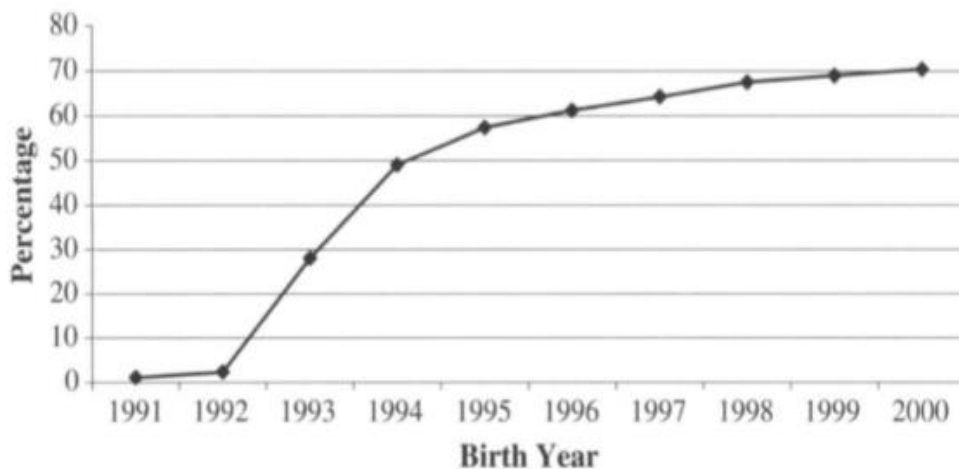


Fig. 1 Percentage of fathers in our analytical sample taking paternity leave, by birth year of child

⁸ payscale.com, ‘the state of the gender pay gap in 2019’ .

⁹ Numbers were obtained from the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration.

Taking three months of maternity leave has ruffle effects for women when it comes to their own development in the workplace. Aside from the stigma and discrimination women face for “having misaligned priorities” or “having too much on their plates to juggle real responsibilities,” there are some abiding effects of being out of the office for a significant period of time. Women earn 1/3rd than the men after returning from maternity leave. Their salaries and promotion opportunities begin to plateau around this time¹⁰. Women with children also receive fewer calls for interviews and receive an average of \$11,000 less for the same roles that women without children attain. Overall, childbearing moms make 5% less per child than do women who don't have children.

Ironically, men benefit from having children in the workplace. Men's earning increase by more than 6% when they have children, and they don't experience the same level effect as women.¹¹ This difference may be because fathers are perceived as caring individuals who work to provide for their families. Normalizing the idea of being on leave for childcare may reduce the stigma. In countries that have extended paternity leave programs, most fathers take full allotted time, especially when their co-worker taking advantage of the program.¹²

Of the ladies taking maternity leave, just 74% return to their occupations, and just 40% keep on working all day.¹³ This is for the most part in light of the fact that the work environment doesn't organize familial consideration, and guardians don't really have the adaptability they should be the two guardians and experts. The exploration shows that new dads who remain at home, in any event, for about fourteen days after the introduction of their youngsters, end up increasingly associated with the kid's consideration nine months after the fact. This research even accounts, the most day-to-day tasks, like feeding, bathing, and changing diapers. The idea is that, being involved from the onset allocates an equal amount of responsibility and sets both parents up to be competent and committed caregivers. When it comes down to it, equal opportunity cannot be achieved when fundamental expectations are different among groups.

SUGGESTIONS

¹⁰ Tim Wallace, ‘Gender Pay gap: mothers returning to work earn a third less than men’, august 2016.

¹¹ Claire Cain Miller, ‘the motherhood penalty vs. the fatherhood bonus’, 2014.

¹² Bryce Covert, ‘how everyone benefits when new fathers take paid leave’, 2015.

¹³ Paulette Light, ‘Why 43% of women with children leave their jobs, and How to get Them Back.’ (the atlantic).

As discussed above, my researches were conducted in various countries, the process and methods used were different but the result the came with is almost the same, that is men may get a long leave as child care or may not be given a single leave it makes merely a difference since the research clearly says that the participation of men in unpaid work, i.e. household or child's work is same as if they would have done along with paid work. However, there is no 100% support to the above said, as there is some parent who actually do get work or get themselves engaged in childcare. Not like women, who have some 'surrogate' parenting experiences prior to becoming mothers, men are more limited to that experience to infants' care. As one of the persons from the research said, the experience he got while becoming a father was insane and was filled with a lot of emotions added, five weeks of paternity leave was an eye-opening experience, one that he felt really showed. Thus, there are many more fathers who want to experience this experience but this will only be possible if they are given paternity leaves. From this what the suggestion is that the paternity leaves provided are necessary but getting equal leaves is not important as the paths to enter parenthood are completely different for both men and women. Men require less holidays than the women.

CONCLUSION

With the topics that we have covered in this research paper, we can conclude that maternity and paternity leaves should be provided but there is no need of it to be gender equal since both genders have different work and path to enter parenthood, therefore providing equal leaves in vague. It can be that men require more leaves or women but according to our research it can be clearly said that women require more leaves and men require less. The research done in United States, Norway, Sweden and many countries is clear evidence that the length of leave provided to men as childcare is not important, since the work they do being on leave is same as they would have done without leave. A speedy come back to work by fathers, then again, builds up a pattern of care that fixates on moms. Research keeps on reporting that men's obligation lingers behind women's, even as fathers have gotten progressively connected with and available to their youngsters. Since ladies leave the workforce, anyway quickly, during this underlying progress period, new mothers can create child rearing aptitudes as well as an awareness of other's expectations also. Since obligation is frequently established in imperceptible manners, it stays missing from how fathers comprehend and sanction child rearing when they themselves are not

situated to build up this awareness of other's expectations. Nonetheless, right now it has been contended that organizing men's underlying experience of child rearing in a manner like how it is regularly organized for ladies - in other words, liberated of work environment duties and completely occupied with child rearing permits men to build up the sort of parental duty that empowers them to be dynamic co-guardians. Thus, it can also be said that if the couple share their task and responsibilities, they can shift the gender dynamics in a couple in the direction of equality. Thus it can be concluded, whether father's leave for child care is important or not, completely depends on the working of men and understanding in couples.