

Intergenerational transmission of gender roles in the household¹

Marc Ajenjo Cosp*

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics

Joan García Román

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics

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Abstract

This paper studies parent-child transmission of gender roles in Spain using the 2009-2010 Time-Use Survey (National Statistical Institute). Drawing from an indicator based on differences in unpaid work between siblings of different genders, we analyse the effects of parent characteristics – such as the mother's occupation, the father's participation in household chores, household income and parents' education – on the extent to which gender roles are transmitted. These variables are shown to explain much of the variation in child gender roles, supporting an important child-parent mimicry effect in gendered behaviour.

Key words: time allocation, gender roles, intergenerational transmission, Spain.

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* Contact address: Marc Ajenjo. [Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics](#), Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Ca n'Altayó, Building E2. 08193 Bellaterra, EU. E-mail: majenjo@uab.cat.

1. Introduction

Until quite recently, the traditional family model predominated. Specifically, the gender roles were highly compartmentalised between the members of the couple, such that the man was the sole breadwinner while women were in charge of unpaid work. The revolution brought about by the massive influx of women into the job market shattered this clear distinction, and the model of dual-income couples in which both members participate actively in the paid job market is now in the majority today. Despite this change, in many couples the man is still primarily in charge of paid work, while the woman still bears most of the burden of unpaid work. Indeed, while the influx of women into the job market has been massive, men's participation in household chores has grown at a much slower pace. Some authors have called this fast pace of women's emergence in the public sphere coupled with the slow influx of men in the private sphere 'adaptive delay' (Hochschild, 1989; Gershuny et al., 1994; Gershuny, 2000), a name that clearly exudes optimism.

Household work is a symbolic sphere where gender roles are reproduced, such that the division of labour at home has often been regarded as a solid barometer of equality within the couple (West & Zimmerman, 1987). In this article, we use household work in a similar sense, in that we evaluate the different behaviour of sons and daughters as an indicator of the transmission of traditional gender roles. The behaviour of sons and daughters at home will also provide us with a glimpse of the future organisation of households; that is, with due caution, it will allow us to predict whether couples of the future will be more egalitarian than couples today.

As we shall see below, even though the transmission of gender roles via time allocation has been studied by different authors in countries characterised by greater male-female equality (Blair, 1992; Cunningham, 2001a & 2001b; Gupta, 2006; Evertsson, 2006), there are many fewer studies performed in places like Spain or Italy, where the male-female differences are the most pronounced on the European continent (Aliaga, 2006). However, we should mention the study by Álvarez and Miles-Touya (2011) with information from the Time-Use Survey of the National Statistical Institute (INE) from 2002-2003. The new version of this survey, from 2009-2010, offers an opportunity to examine the issue with more recent data.

2. Background

The household is the first place where the individual's process of gender identity takes place. The family is the place where children are first exposed to gender differences (Berk, 1985) and where, by observing and imitating their parents, they learn and develop behaviours relative to their own gender (Bandura, 1977). The formation of gender identity and the behaviours typical of each sex takes place during early childhood, when the family setting exerts a vital influence on individuals (Bem, 1993; Fagot & Leinbach, 1993; McHale et al., 2003). Nonetheless, we cannot ignore the influences received during puberty, which are also important and play a part in an individual's forming attitudes on their own gender (Cunningham, 2001a).

According to socialisation theories, gender roles are learned at quite a young age and become fixed and inalterable (Wight, 2008). In the opinion of

Cunningham (2001b), by observing some behaviours that their parents demonstrate, sons and daughters learn a series of gender symbols which they will later reproduce to represent themselves as male or female in similar contexts. That is, the behaviours are learned in childhood and reproduced when adulthood is reached, specifically when a new couple is formed.

Yet contrary to socialisation theory, some authors cite the existence of changing times and the general tendency towards gender equality to show that the newer generations are tending to be more egalitarian than previous ones, and that there are indeed changes in individuals' attitudes over time (Bolzendahl & Myers, 2004). From this vantage point, it is argued that if roles are learned in childhood and are fixed and inalterable, they should be reproduced throughout the entire life cycle, and that this does not always happen; instead, major changes can be seen depending on the family context and circumstances at any given time (Gupta, 2006). For example, just as single men and women show similar behaviours in terms of the division of household chores, when they enter into a union this behaviour changes and inequalities increase (South & Spitze, 1994; Gupta, 1999), just as behaviour changes suddenly upon the arrival of the first child (Ajenjo & García, 2011). Nonetheless, there is plentiful empirical evidence showing that gender roles are transmitted (Blair, 1992; Cunningham, 2001a & 2001b; Wight, 2008; Weinshenker, 2005; Carriero & Todesco, 2011; Álvarez & Miles-Touya, 2011) and households can actually be considered 'gender factories' (Berk, 1985).

The division of household chores has been regarded as one of the symbolic fields where gender differences are reproduced (West & Zimmerman, 1987), and the family is where the individual learns the symbolic value of gender behaviour related to household chores (Berk, 1985). Likewise, the division of household chores is where children observe how their parents negotiate and divide the tasks following certain gender roles (Wight, 2008; West & Zimmerman, 1987). As mentioned above, there are many studies that show how more traditional attitudes in parents serve as predictors of more traditional behaviour in children. And in this sense, the division of unpaid labour within the household is often used as an indicator of more or less traditional behaviour. If the parents show more egalitarian attitudes in the division of household chores, this means a less asymmetrical division of these chores between sons and daughters (Cunningham, 2001a; Weinshenker, 2005; Álvarez & Miles-Touya, 2011).

Parents with more traditional gender attitudes are associated with an increase in household chores for daughters and a decrease for sons (Blair, 1992). But it does not end there, as not only do the daughters have a higher burden of household chores but they also tend to be responsible for different chores (Blair, 1992; Wight, 2008). Evertsson (2006) found in Sweden, one of the countries considered the most egalitarian, that girls did more chores inside the home as well as providing more family and personal care, while boys did more chores outdoors. This unequal division in the kinds of chores reproduces the unequal division in adults (Ajenjo & García, 2011).

In this sense, more participation by the father in household chores during his children's childhood is accompanied by more participation in household chores when the man reaches adulthood (Cunningham, 2001b; Evertsson, 2006; Weinshenker, 2005; Álvarez & Miles-Touya, 2011). Previous studies also

show that the greatest influence comes from the parent of the same sex (Cunningham, 2001a; Blair, 1992; Evertsson, 2006).

Working mothers frequently appear as a determining factor in equality in the transmission of gender roles. The fact that the female partner is involved in the job market is already an initial indicator of equality within the couple (Stephan & Corder, 1985; Bolzendahl & Myers, 2004; Ajenjo & García, 2011). This leads to the transmission of more egalitarian values, first because working women spend less time on unpaid work than unemployed women do, which means that the children see their mother spend less time on stereotypical household chores (Wight, 2008). Secondly, closely tied to the first factor, the woman's employment necessitates the participation of other family members in the household chores, which means more participation by both the father and the children. In the sense, household chores lose some of their association with a given gender and become perceived as a family affair to which all members must contribute. In consequence, working mothers lower – either directly or indirectly – the children's view of paid work as the man's domain and unpaid work as the woman's (Wight, 2008).

However, we should bear in mind that there are two effects whose interconnection leads them to be confused as the underpinnings of the transmission of roles. Women's influx into the job market and men's greater participation in unpaid household chores are phenomena that tend to go hand-in-hand, a circumstance which can confuse their net effects (Gupta, 2006).

The parents' educational level, especially the mother's, is another factor that the literature cites as important in the transmission of more egalitarian attitudes (Wight, 2008). Generally speaking, more education exposes one to more egalitarian ideas and encourages one to question oneself and to engage in more critical evaluation, and therefore distance oneself from gender stereotypes (Bolzendahl & Myers, 2004). Consequently, higher education lowers the amount of time women spend on unpaid work and increases the amount that men spend on it (Bianchi et al., 2006; Brines, 1994).

However, education is also related to a variety of factors which all run in the same direction, so it is difficult to extricate their separate effects. A higher educational level in women is closely related to employment, and both have a similar effect on attitudes towards gender roles. Likewise, it is difficult to disentangle educational level from income; higher income allows services to be purchased from outside the home, which makes it possible to disassociate the family members from unpaid household chores (González & Jurado, 2009).

3. Objectives and hypothesis

The purpose of this article is to draw from the information from the Time-Use Survey to evaluate the transmission of gender roles from parents to their sons and daughters. If this transmission is found, it seeks to analyse under what conditions it is stronger and what factors lead more traditional values to be transmitted.

We start from the hypothesis that from a young age, children reproduce their parents' roles. In this sense, and since today the majority of adult couples

show traditional behaviours, especially in relation to household chores, children will imitate these behaviours and show highly distinct gender roles.

As mentioned above, the greatest difference within couples today comes from participation in unpaid work and specifically the amount of time that men and women spend on it. Thus, we have considered that a couple shows traditional behaviour when the difference in the amount of time that the two partners spend on unpaid work is very high and the woman spends more hours on it. Likewise, the traditional or egalitarian transmission of gender roles shall refer to the amount of time that daughters and sons spend on these chores.

It is taken for granted that, just as in many countries in central and northern Europe, the transmission of roles depends on both the characteristics of the couple and the characteristics of the partners individually, and that equality within the couple is what more strongly determines the more egalitarian transmission of roles. Along the same lines, the woman's active participation in paid employment and the man's in unpaid work should be associated with a more egalitarian line of transmission, as should couples with similar educational levels. Likewise, as the literature shows, other variables such as the children's educational levels or income level should also point in the same direction.

However, we should not forget that all of these variables are closely tied together. A higher educational level in the woman tends to mean higher participation in the job market; in consequence, the higher the income level in the couple, the more time the father spends on unpaid work, and so on. What we shall examine in this article is which of these variables are the most important, and we shall attempt to evaluate their net effect.

4. Source and methodology

This study was carried out using the new edition of the INE's Time-Use Survey (2009- 2010). The main purpose of this survey is to obtain primary information on the dimension of unpaid work, the distribution of family responsibilities within the household, the population's participation in cultural and free-time activities and the use of time (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2011).²

The survey gathers information on the population's routine activities through personal logs and individual and household questionnaires, and an activity diary is the core element. It is used by all members of the household aged 10 and over on a given day, the same day for everyone. And this is the major advantage of this source: that it provides comparable information on all the members of the household. The diary encompasses all 24 consecutive hours in a given day, from six in the morning until six am the following day, in ten-minute stretches. In each of the intervals, the interviewee must jot down the main activity they are performing at that time, along with other information.

The activities are codified according to the harmonised list developed by Eurostat, which consists of up to ten major groups. In this article, we are

² Between 1998 and 2004, under the directives of Eurostat, the first set of time-use surveys were administered in different European countries, among them Spain (Harmonized European Time Use Surveys). Recently, the second edition of this survey was administered. Specifically in Spain, the data were gathered between October 2009 and October 2010.

analysing unpaid work, which appears under the section “Household and family” and encompasses culinary activities, household maintenance, making and caring for clothing, gardening and care of household pets, household construction and repairs, shopping and services, household management, care of the children in the household and assistance of adult members of the household.

In order to evaluate differences in the transmission of gender roles between sons and daughters, we chose households made up of a couple consisting in one man and one woman and at least two children between the ages of 10 and 19, one of each sex, both of whom stated that their main activity is studying. Even though these requirements led to a steep drop in the sample size, it was deemed that analysing this kind of household, where the boys and girls share the same environment, would enrich the analysis.³

Thus, despite the fact that the sample as a whole consists in 25,895 individuals from 9,541 households, 2,163 of which are made up of a father, a mother and at least one son and one daughter, the sample was considerably diminished, in that only 674 provided information on both children and have at least two children. What is more, in approximately half the households, is there at least one child of each sex, and only 126 households are they both students between the ages of 10 and 19. Indeed, the final sample size was 126 families. As we shall see below, this circumstance will condition how some variables were processed.

The design of the analysis allowed us to work with a single dependent variable, namely the difference in the amount of time that girls and boys spend on unpaid household chores. Since this is a quantitative metric variable, it was analysed based on fixed effects variance analysis models. Since the independent variables are qualitative, they determine a series of groups in the dependent variable. The model measures the statistical significance of the difference between the means of the groups determined in the dependent variable by the values of the independent variables. The specification of the model is the following:

$$y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * X_1 + \beta_2 * X_2 + \dots + \beta_p * X_p$$

In which y_i is the difference in the amount of time spent on unpaid chores between the daughter and son of a given couple with the characteristics X_{i1}, \dots, X_{ip} . Given that the explanatory variables are categorical, for each of the p variables introduced into the model, a reference category was determined. The terms β_j correspond to a vector with $k-1$ elements, k being the number of categories of the explanatory variable X_j , which has a value of 0 if the couple does not fulfil the characteristic and 1 if it does. Thus, each element in the β_j vectors corresponds to the effect of the characteristic j on the dependent variable.

³ Much of the loss in the sample size was because in many households one member did not fill out the entire questionnaire, especially the children, who did not fill out the most time-consuming part, the activity log. Because of the characteristics of the analysis we wish to undertake, if any member did not fill out the diary, the household could not be analysed.

The tables show the estimated coefficients for the model, which are interpreted in the same way as the coefficients obtained in a regression that uses categorical variables, given that this analysis is simply a specific case of general linear models. For example, the information we get if we examine the variable “Kind of couple” in the one-variable model (Table 2) is twofold. The first is the constant (0.339), which corresponds to the difference between the amount of time daughters and sons spend on unpaid work when the parents are a dual-income couple (reference category), while the second is the value corresponding to traditional couples (0.632), which indicates the increase in the difference because of this characteristic. In the case of the multivariable model (model A on Table 2), the constant should be read as the difference in those couples that show the characteristics established as reference (dual-income couples, high income level, woman’s educational level equal to or higher than the man’s, etc.), while the coefficient corresponding to the traditional couples (0.612) should be interpreted as the difference from dual-income couples, with the remaining variables the same.

Specifically, different kinds of analyses were performed. The first were two-variable models, by incorporating each of the independent variables separately (see the one-variable model in Table 2). Secondly, in order to evaluate the contribution of each variable by eliminating the effect of the others, we added the set of variables (see Model A on Table 2). Finally, with the goal of estimating the influence of other variables, we created different models which could also provide clues as to why some variables were more or less important (see Models B and C in Table 2).

The small sample size led to a loss of detail in the information provided by the independent variables, which we had to reduce to only two categories in the majority of cases. In order to carry out this reduction, we took two criteria into account: there should be no category with too few cases, and the categories where the differences between boys and girls was the most pronounced should not be lost.

The independent variables used in the models were: educational level of the mother and father, educational homogeneity, income level of the household, kind of couple according to their employment status, and amount of time the father spent on unpaid work. In addition to these variables, we added the time when the information was gathered, that is, the day of the week when the activity log was filled out, as a control variable.⁴

For the educational level of either the father or mother, we were left with two categories: having university studies or not. On the other hand, to define educational homogeneity, we bore in mind the variable’s nine initial categories and evaluated whether the father and mother had the same or different educational level. Ultimately, these three categories were reduced to two: couples in which the man has a higher educational level than the woman, and couples in which the woman has the same or a higher educational level than the

⁴ In this sense, in the sample design we considered that the days of the week with the most variability in activities carried out by the population should be overrepresented, which were considered to be Friday, Saturday and Sunday. This criterion was maintained in the article, such that when we speak about workday (or school day), we are talking about Monday to Thursday, while when we speak about weekend we are referring to the other three days mentioned above.

man.⁵ As can be deduced, this homogamy is closely tied to the children's educational level, such that both variables are never included in the models.

The variable "household income" was initially found in four valid categories, plus one for those who did not answer it. The cut-off was set at 2,000 net euros per month, such that two categories are analysed, above and below this amount, plus a third one with no response.⁶

Based on the couple's work status, four kinds of couples can be defined: traditional couples, in which only the man works; dual-income couples, in which both work; couples in which only the woman works; and couples in which neither member works. Because of the characteristics of the sample, the last category was non-existent. Of the other three, we chose to consider dual-income couples and couples in which only the woman works within a single category due to the similarity of their behaviour, while traditional couples were in a second group.

The last variable taken into account is the amount of time the father spends on unpaid work. Just as in the other variables, in this one we only had two categories: fathers who do no unpaid work or do less than one hour per day, and fathers who do an hour or more of unpaid work per day.

Even though the literature shows that there are other variables which may be important, they were discarded, among other reasons because of the sample size. However, let us examine them in further detail.

Even though previous studies show that cohabitation has a positive effect on gender equality (Baxter, 2005; Batalova & Cohen, 2002; Ajenjo & García, 2011), it was impossible to add it to the model not only because there are very few cases of cohabitation, but also and more importantly because they were not adequately reported in this sample, which is the reason for the lack of cohabitants in the sample.⁷

One of the variables which is often presented as the most important in grasping the differences between the members of the couple is the presence of small children in the household. Thus, while in some specific groups the difference between the man and the woman is practically non-existent, when a small child is around this logic is completely ruptured, and the mother starts to spend much more time on unpaid work than her partner (Gershuny et al., 2005; Dribe & Stanfors, 2009; Ajenjo & García, 2011). However, despite the interest in analysing this variable, in all the households in the final sample there was a scant presence of children under the age of 10. The same holds true with the availability of domestic help in the household, which tends to lead to a reduction

⁵ This grouping was made after constructing the models with the three most logical categories of this variable and concluding that there were never significant differences between couples in which the woman had a higher educational level and couples in which both partners had an equal educational level.

⁶ A brief exercise was conducted with the goal of evaluating those who did not respond. We found that generally speaking, their behaviour is more similar to those who earn more than 2,000 euros per month than to those who earn less.

⁷ People who cohabit but are not registered as such had to mark the marital status question as married.

in the differences between men and women (González & Jurado, 2009); however, we were also unable to analyse this variable.

The literature also shows that the mother's age is important, in that younger couples are more egalitarian than older ones (Macinnes, 2005; González & Jurado, 2009; Ajenjo & García, 2011). In this case, the problem was not the sample size but the fact that the mothers in the sample analysed all had very similar ages: almost 90% were between the ages of 40 and 49.

5. Results

The fact that the unit of analysis is siblings ensures that many of the characteristics of the boys and girls are the same in terms of the characteristics of both their parents and the children themselves. In this sense, we shall make a brief note on age: although a homogeneous group was chosen, we found certain differences in the age difference at which boys and girls leave school. They are minimal, yet they do exist: the mean age for boys is 15.0 and for girls it is 14.5 ($\alpha = 0.074$).⁸ In contrast, the difference in the kind of studies they pursue is negligible.

Regarding the first results and the hypothesis that sons and daughters usually show different behaviour, we can see that this is indeed true: the girls in the sample spend more time on unpaid work than the boys. Specifically, the girls spend an average of one hour per day, while the boys spend a little over half an hour (see Table 1). This difference is almost entirely found at weekends (Friday to Sunday), while on workdays it is virtually unnoticeable: the difference is only two minutes on workdays, while it is almost one hour from Friday to Sunday. In this sense, and except for the distances, the behaviour of sons and daughters resembles the behaviour of men and women in a dual-income couple, in that the differences in what some authors call the workload (Ramos, 1990), that is, the amount of time spent on both paid and unpaid work, is relatively similar on workdays but quite different at weekends (Ajenjo & García, 2011).

This difference between the two kinds of days means that the variable "Day of the week" was used as a control variable in all the models constructed: it was significant in all cases, and always in the sense of the most important differences being found at weekends.

Table 1. Amount of time spent on unpaid work by each member of the family. Workdays and weekends (in mean hours)

	Mother	Father	Mother-father	Daughter	Son	Daughter-son	Daughter/son
Mon-Th	5.27	2.27	3.00	0.33	0.30	0.03	1.11
Fri-Sun	5.06	2.36	2.30	1.37	0.44	0.53	2.22
Total	5.18	2.31	2.47	1.01	0.36	0.25	1.69

Source: Authors based on data from the Time-Use Survey 2009-2010.

⁸ This difference most likely comes because girls study long than boys, so some boys aged 16 to 19 have already joined the job market and have disappeared from the sample.

Regarding the variables analysed, we should stress that the majority show significant differences in transmission, meaning that what was found in other countries in Europe is also confirmed in Spain: transmission depends on the characteristics of the couple.

First of all, we should highlight the clear relationship between the transmission of roles and the educational level of the mother, a conclusion which cannot be drawn when analysing the father's educational level. Thus, the children of mothers with university degrees show significantly more egalitarian behaviours than the children of mothers without university degrees ($\alpha = 0.010$), such that we could posit total equality between boys and girls in the former ($\alpha = 0.856$). In contrast, the father having a university degree is not a guarantee of more equality ($\alpha = 0.530$).

Likewise, educational homogamy generates major differences, such that couples in which the woman has the same or a higher educational level as the man transmit more equality to their children than couples in which the man has a higher educational level ($\alpha = 0.006$). In the sample, we observed that the children of the former are about 55 minutes (0.914 hours) more egalitarian than the children of the latter, and that the former are verging on equality ($\alpha = 0.111$).

The relationship between household income level and the transmission of gender roles to the children is also quite clear ($\alpha = 0.008$): in the higher-income households, the transmission of traditional roles is lower. When the income is higher than 2,000 net euros per month, there are virtually no differences in the amount of time the sons and daughters spend on unpaid work ($\alpha = 0.699$), while in households under this threshold, the daughters spend almost one hour more per day on these chores than the sons do.

While the literature shows that dual-income couples are more egalitarian in terms of the amount of time that the men and women spend on unpaid work (Stephan & Corder, 1985; Bolzendahl & Myers, 2004; Ajenjo & García, 2011), we can see that they are also more egalitarian in the transmission of this work to their children. Thus, the children of traditional couples show a larger gap than the children of other couples ($\alpha = 0.054$). However, this does not mean that there are no differences between the sons and daughters of dual-income families ($\alpha = 0.054$), similar to in other circumstances, such as in the children of women with a university education and those of couples with an income over 2,000 euros.

The model of father who occasionally does household chores is also important in terms of the transmission of gender roles, even though it is the variable in which the two-variable models have the least explanatory power ($\alpha = 0.097$).

6. Discussion

Both educational homogamy and household income, the kind of couple and the father's involvement in unpaid work explain a higher or lower transmission of traditional gender roles in the children. These four variables, which are significant when analysed separately, are also significant when analysed as a whole (see Model A on Table 2), such that regardless of the remaining characteristics, there is a lower transmission of traditional roles in households

with higher income, when the woman has the same educational level as her husband or higher, when both couples earn an income and when the father spends at least one hour per day on unpaid work at home.

Thus, all the variables that the literature shows as crucial in greater or lesser equality between the father and mother are also important in the transmission of gender roles, and always in the expected direction; that is, those characteristics which lend themselves to greater equality in the couple also lead to the lower transmission of traditional gender roles.

The only variable which leads to a change in transmission of traditional gender roles when analysed separately, but does not when analysing the net effect, is the mother's educational level, and therefore it was not included in the model (see Model A on Table 2). The reason is its strong correlation with other variables, primarily income level. Thus, mothers with a university education end up living in households with higher incomes, which are also the households where more equality is transmitted to the children. However, if there is income parity, the mother's educational level loses most of its explanatory power (Model B).⁹ In fact, in a model that includes both income and the mother's educational level, not only is this second variable insignificant ($\alpha = 0.457$) but income level also loses its significance ($\alpha = 0.152$); indeed, both variables supply very similar information, so the presence of both detracts from it. Thus, both income and educational level (Model A and Model C) separately lead to changes in the transmission of traditional roles, but together they do not. We could say that income level acts as an intermediate variable, such that mothers with university studies achieve a higher income level for the household, which leads to a more egalitarian transmission of gender roles.¹⁰

Something similar holds true with educational homogamy, and even with the kind of couple. Regarding the former, we can see that educational homogamy loses part of its explanatory power ($\alpha = 0.092$) if it is evaluated along with income level (Model A), so if we generate a model without income, it once again gains predictive capacity. Indeed, couples in which the woman's educational level is equal to or higher than the man's also have the highest incomes, so if incomes are equal, the influence of homogamy dips slightly. Likewise, two salaries tend to mean a higher income, so including both variables somehow detracts from each other.

However, what does stand out more than this influence exerted by income level on the other variables, which partly lessens its influence, is that except in the case of educational level, the relationship remains in the other variables. Thus, we can conclude that if there is income equality, traditional couples transmit gender roles much more than other couples, since if there is equal income and equal types of couples, the woman having an educational level equal to or higher than the man leads to the transmission of more egalitarian gender roles.

⁹ As mentioned in the section on methodology, this variable cannot be kept with homogamy, such that it was analysed by generating a new model.

¹⁰ It is possible that what lies behind this last statement is the possibility of outsourcing some services which a higher income level allows; this is an effect which, as stated above, we were unable to evaluate.

Table 2. Different models of each variable's contribution to the different amount of time that sons and daughters spend on unpaid work

	One-variable		Model A		Model B		Model C	
	$\beta\beta$	Sig.	$\beta\beta$	Sig.	$\beta\beta$	Sig.	$\beta\beta$	Sig.
Weekday		0.006		0.001		0.000		0.001
Weekend (F-Su)	0.832	0.006	0.992	0.001	1.079	0.000	1.009	0.001
Workday (M-Th)		Ref.		Ref.		Ref.		Ref.
Constant	0.027	0.905						
Educational homogamy		0.006		0.092				
Man's educational level > Woman's educational level	0.914	0.006	0.534	0.092				
Woman's educational level > Man's educational level		Ref.		Ref.				
Constant	0.273	0.111						
Household income		0.008		0.037		0.152		
Don't know/No answer	0.152	0.743	0.147	0.740	0.145	0.747		
€2,000 per month or less	0.955	0.002	0.814	0.012	0.754	0.053		
More than €2,000 per month		Ref.		Ref.		Ref.		
Constant	0.093	0.669						
Type of couple		0.054		0.068		0.075		0.013
Traditional couple	0.632	0.054	0.612	0.068	0.601	0.075	0.808	0.013
Dual-income couple		Ref.		Ref.		Ref.		Ref.
Constant	0.339	0.054						
Unpaid work by the father		0.097		0.026		0.024		0.013
Less than one hour a day	0.518	0.097	0.674	0.026	0.699	0.024	0.750	0.013
One hour a day or more		Ref.		Ref.		Ref.		Ref.
Constant	0.359	0.046						
Mother's educational level		0.010				0.457		0.020
No university	0.784	0.020			0.270	0.457	0.684	0.020
University		Ref.				Ref.		Ref.
Constant	0.043	0.856						
Father's educational level		0.530						
No university	-0.192	0.530						
University		Ref.						

	One-variable		Model A		Model B		Model C	
	$\beta\beta$	Sig.	$\beta\beta$	Sig.	$\beta\beta$	Sig.	$\beta\beta$	Sig.
Constant	0.636	0.008						
Constant			-0.971	0.002	-1.020	0.002	-0.966	0.003
R ²			0.237	0.000	0.221	0.000	0.195	0.000

Source: Authors based on data from the 2009-2010 Time-Use Survey.

This is a conclusion which can also be reached in the case of couples in which the father regularly performs household chores ($\alpha = 0.026$). The fact that the father's unpaid work leads to significant differences confirms the transmission of roles based on observation and example more than the other variables, and this is true for a variety of reasons.

First, as the literature states, the influx of women into the job market is viewed by the majority of the population as something entirely normal, such that the kind of relationship that is valued the most is when both members work (Dema, 2005; Macinnes, 2005). In this sense, dual-income couples are no longer the exception but the rule. In contrast, men's involvement in unpaid work is still far from widespread, such that men have not started working at home to the same extent that women have gone to work outside the home, so we can predict that a major swath of society still has the domestic role internalised as pertaining to females.

Secondly, the fact that this less traditional gender role transmission has not only a gross effect but also an important net effect is unquestionably an added value which can be interpreted in terms of mimicry. That is, if we consider that there is a series of factors which comprise a more egalitarian whole – and that they are income and woman's educational level and participation in the job market – the fact that if there is equality in this whole the man's unpaid work still contributes significantly to the transmission of less traditional gender roles is because of the model that the children adopt from their parents.

7. Conclusions

The influence that the model of couple exerts on their children has been measured by the former's transmission of traditional gender roles, evaluated from the perspective of the amount of time that the sons and daughters spend on unpaid work. Generally speaking, we should first stress that gender differences appear at very young ages, in that in the period between pre-adolescence and young adulthood the amount of time girls spend on household chores is significantly higher than the time spent by their brothers, and the most important differences occur at weekends more than on workdays: from Monday to Thursday neither boys nor girls participate very actively in unpaid chores at home, while at weekends they contribute more, and this contribution is much less equal.

However, despite this behaviour clearly marked by traditional gender roles, the characteristics of the couple – either the individual members or both

together – lead to some differences worth noting, because in some cases the differences between the son and daughter are negligible. The characteristics that lead to greater equality, in the sense of a lower transmission of the traditional roles, are having a higher income, both members of the couple working, the woman having university studies or an education level equal to or higher than the man, and the husband making a considerable contribution to unpaid work.

In fact, these variables – more than the others which we were unable to analyse here – are mentioned in the literature as closely associated with each other: much of men's involvement in household chores can be explained precisely by women's educational level, homogamy, the income level and the kind of couple according to the employment status of both members. Thus, everything seems to point to the fact that these four variables yield more egalitarian behaviour in couples, in this case measured by the amount of unpaid work done by the man.

If this unpaid work by the man is significant in itself but if the other variables are not the same, we would conclude that their significance is conditioned by the fact that it is yet another indicator of this equality within couples. However, the fact that the man's unpaid work is an important factor in explaining the lower transmission of traditional gender roles if the other variables that entail more egalitarian behaviour are equal, this leads us to posit that it signals an added factor, a new element that could be interpreted as mimicry, which would fall along the lines suggested by Cunningham (2001b). Thus, the attitude that the parents take is essential in a more egalitarian transmission of gender roles in that much of what is transmitted comes from 'practising what you preach'.

Do these results enable us to predict more egalitarian behaviour of couples in the future? If we pay attention to the theories of socialisation, yes, in that more egalitarian values are being transmitted to the new generations which they will presumably reproduce in the future. Therefore, when they enter a partnership, the division of labour will be less stereotyped by gender. However, there are other factors that are more difficult to predict which could counteract the positive effect of more egalitarian values. In this sense, one phenomenon that creates the most inequalities within the couple is the birth of a child (Ajenjo & García, 2011), and this happens largely because of the lack of work-family balance policies and measures, which affects equality. Thus, even though the transmission of more egalitarian values to children is important to the greater future equality of couples, it must be accompanied by other factors that facilitate this equality.

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