

DISSERTATIONES SOCIOLOGICAE UNIVERSITATIS TARTUENSIS

6

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MARRE KARU

Fathers and parental leave:
slow steps towards dual earner/dual
carer family model in Estonia



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CONTENTS

LIST OF ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS	6
AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION.....	7
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	8
INTRODUCTION.....	9
1. SETTING THE PROBLEM.....	12
1.1. Parental leave policies.....	12
1.2. Parental leave in Estonia.....	14
1.3. The gendered impact of leave policies.....	17
1.3.1. Impact on female employment	18
1.3.2. Fathers' involvement in care and parental leave	21
2. THE THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOUR: HOW ARE THE DECISIONS FORMED?.....	24
2.1. Attitudes towards the behaviour: Consequences of the leave.....	27
2.2. Subjective norms: Masculinity and fatherhood.....	29
2.3. Control beliefs: Mothers as gatekeepers	31
3. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	33
3.1. How to measure the developments towards the dual carer model?	33
3.2. Data and methods.....	34
4. FINDINGS	37
5. DISCUSSION	39
5.1. Slow steps of leave policies towards dual carer family model	39
5.2. How can childcare be incorporated into hegemonic masculinity?.....	41
5.3. The image of parenthood as a source of reluctance	43
5.4. Can dual carer politics defamilise mothers?	44
CONCLUSION	47
REFERENCES.....	49
SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN Lapsehoolduspuhkusel isad Eestis: esimesed sammud kahe leivateenija/kahe hoolitseja peremudeli suunas	56
PUBLICATIONS.....	63
CURRICULUM VITAE	123

LIST OF ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

This dissertation is based on original publications which will be referred to in the dissertation by their respective Roman numbers.

- I Karu, M.,** Pall, K. (2009) Estonia: halfway from the Soviet Union to the Nordic countries, in Kamerman, S.B. and Moss, P (Eds.) *The politics of parental leave policies: Children, parenting, gender and the labour market*. Bristol, UK; Portland, U.S.A: The Policy Press. pp 69–85
- II Karu, M.,** Kasearu, K. (2011) Slow Steps towards Dual Earner/Dual Carer Family Model: Why Fathers Do not Take Parental Leave. *Studies of Transition States and Societies* 3(1): 24–38.
- III Karu, M.** Parental Leave in Estonia: Does Familisation of Fathers Lead to Defamilisation of Mothers? *NORA – Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*. (accepted for publication)

The articles are (re)printed with kind permission from the respective publishers: The Policy Press (Study I), Tallinn University Institute of Political Science and Governance and Tallinn University Institute of International and Social Studies (Study II) and Taylor & Frances Group, Routledge (Study III).

AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

The author of this dissertation made a major contribution to the three studies listed below:

- Study I:** The author played a major role in formulating the research questions, compiling and working through the information sources, especially chapters concerning the gender equality ideology and father's rights, and drafting the article.
- Study II:** The author was the leading contributor to all phases of the study: formulation of research questions, research design, data collection and analysis. Writing of the article was a responsibility of the author.
- Study III:** The author was fully responsible for all parts of the article.

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INTRODUCTION

The past century, especially the last few decades have faced rapid and drastic changes in all aspects of life. European societies and economies have moved from industrialism towards a service centred society which, together with the emergence of the female rights movement, has brought along changes in the traditional gender division between work and family. The equality and equal treatment of men and women has become a human right that all contemporary and democratic societies strive for. As a part of this ambition, there is an ideal of the dual earner/dual carer family model.

Gornick and Meyers (2003: 93) define the dual earner/dual carer family as a family where both men and women participate equally in paid work and care giving. Most Western societies have taken significant steps towards the dual earner model and full employment of both men and women has become widely accepted. Therefore, it can be said that there has been remarkable progress towards gender equality when it comes to women entering the labour market. The changing status of women in Europe has even been estimated to be *revolutionary* by several scholars (Goldin 2006, Esping-Andersen 2009). The revolution, however, seems to have stalled (Hochschild 1990) or is incomplete (Esping-Andersen 2009). Undoubtedly, the life-courses of women have been changed radically while paid employment outside home became a normal part of their lives. Contrary to expectations, an accompanying change in the family sphere has not occurred to the same extent – families seldom exercise the dual carer part of the model. Although the welfare state has stepped in with its extensive childcare and family policies, there is still a remarkable share of family-related responsibilities left to be carried by women. While women have entered the traditionally masculine world of employment, men have not made a similar entrance to the traditionally feminine world of family and care. Therefore, carrying the double burden of work and family is expected of women.

The European welfare states have introduced childcare services and parental leave schemes in order to assist women in bearing the double burden and to prevent them from being sanctioned by losing their jobs when fulfilling their maternal responsibilities. Despite providing women with job and income protection, the leave policies have not protected women from all the consequences of being absent from their jobs due to care responsibilities (Budig and England 2001) – most European societies are facing remarkable gender inequalities in the labour market (e.g. O’Dorchai 2008, Gornick 2004, Wharton 2005, Klerman and Kleibowitz 1997). One of the reasons behind the gender inequality is the long career breaks created by the parental leave schemes. Parental leave acts as a familiser of care, i.e. the care is provided within the family and the parent, usually the mother, stays at home taking care of the child, and out of employment for the period of parental leave.

Researchers and policy makers in Nordic countries have argued that it is time for men to become more active in childcare in order to lessen the

asymmetrical division of care. There seems to be a consensus that familising fathers to a greater extent is necessary in order to achieve gender equality (e.g. Esping-Andersen 2009, Moss and Deven 1999) not only for the benefit of women but also for men themselves. The dual earner/dual carer model has been promoted in Nordic countries since the second half of the 20th century and has been a quite remarkable success (Leira 2006: 29). Promoting the dual earner component of the model has been more successful than the dual carer component. The father's contribution in childcare and parental leave remains modest in most of the European countries and Estonia is not an exception.

The movement of women to employment was especially fast in the former Soviet countries – with an aim of achieving full employment, women were forced to work equally with men. Although in the 1990s the employment rate of women in Estonia dropped somewhat, the tradition dual earner family model persisted. This is reflected in the female employment rate which is higher than the European average – therefore the dual earner model is developing. The progress in achieving the dual carer part of the model, however, is lagging behind. The attitudes of people (see, for instance, Vainu *et al.* 2010) have come to support the dual earner/dual carer model and the contributions of fathers to childcare.

This issue of work and care affects the parents of very small children most, as in the latter stage of children's lives the state steps in to carry a significant part of the care responsibilities in order to enable parents to contribute to the labour market. In Estonia, the parental leave lasts for a maximum of three years, after which children usually attend kindergartens. According to the Estonian educational information system (EHIS), most of the children over three years old are in public childcare. In 2010, 86% of three-year-olds and 90% of four- and five-year-olds attended kindergartens, while 21% of one-year-olds and 69.5% of two-year-olds also did. The current study concentrates on the period of parental leave where the care needs are most intense and where the care provided by parents is most time-consuming, and thus influencing the career and labour market possibilities the most.

The Estonian parental leave package is one of the most generous in Europe, creating good preconditions for fathers to contribute to parental leave. Nevertheless, their contribution remains low and the prevailing model is still the dual earner/female carer or dual earner/state and female carer. Therefore the question remains what has stalled the revolution? Why are the steps towards the dual earner/dual carer model so slow?

The aim of the current doctoral dissertation is to shed light on the slow progress towards the dual earner/dual carer model. The dissertation is based on three interrelated, original studies focussing on different dimensions of parental leave and its gender implications. First, the question is how do the parental leave policy and the general social and historical context shape family decisions concerning care and employment arrangements? Second, the thesis aims to explore why the number of fathers who take parental leave remains low in

Estonia. The third question concerns one of the possible impacts of fathers taking leave – the impact on mothers’ employment. Even if the fathers take parental leave, does this have an expected impact on the employment of mothers? In other words, does familising fathers really automatically lead to the defamilising of mothers?

The objectives and respective research questions of the dissertation are:

- I. To provide a historical and societal background to parental leave in Estonia.
What are the historical developments of parental leave in Estonia from a gender perspective? What are the historical developments and gender equality attitudes that have shaped the context for parents to make their decisions regarding the parental leave? How has the gender ideology regarding the father’s involvement in care developed throughout the years? **(Study I)**.
- II. To find out what are the obstacles preventing fathers from taking parental leave.
What are the beliefs that fathers hold regarding parental leave? How do these beliefs shape the father’s intention to take parental leave? **(Study II)**.
- III. To explore the consequences of the father’s parental leave on the mother’s employment.
To what extent has the familisation of fathers lead to the defamilisation of mothers? What are the factors influencing the mother’s return to the labour market while the father is on parental leave? **(Study III)**.

The structure of the introductory article is as follows. First, I will set the problem by introducing the parental leave policies in general and in Estonia together with the introduction of the gendered impacts of leave policies. The theory of planned behaviour and the reasons for the father’s low take up of parental leave are then explored. Section three provides some methodological considerations and describes the data used in the studies. This is followed by a short summary of the findings and the introductory article ends with a discussion, some concluding remarks, and a summary in Estonian.

I. SETTING THE PROBLEM

According to Strohmeier (2002), a family is a multi-level system. Therefore, family decisions can be described as micro-processes which are happening in the context of macro-processes such as different policies. Macro-factors define the “frame” of options available to micro-actors. Researchers who focus on leave policies, care arrangements and the gendered division of work and care tend to emphasise two levels of factors as well. Haas (1993), for instance, points out that there are social-psychological and social structural barriers inhibiting the father’s leave taking. Researchers studying parental leave policies emphasise structural factors and their role in forming parental practices and creating childcare arrangements. Ellingsæter and Leira (2006:5) state that “mothers’ and fathers’ practices are generated in the interplay of policies, economic structures, cultural norms and historic trajectories.” Other researchers (e.g. Day and Lamb 2004, Pleck 1993) have distinguished two types of barriers when talking of taking up parental leave and being involved in family life: economic conditions and cultural expectations. Strohmeier (2002: 350) states that there is a high degree of correspondence between national family profiles and the forms of family life.

The psychologists who discuss the father’s participation in caretaking observe the role of several family and individual level factors. For instance, the responsible fathering model proposed by Doherty *et al.* (1998) suggests that fathering is influenced by individual characteristics of the mother, father, and the child, relationship factors between the mother and father, and contextual factors. The influence of contextual forces are that fathering can change in response to the shifts in cultural, economic, institutional, and interpersonal influences. Therefore, the choices regarding gendered work and division of care that are made in the family framework can be studied as processes that are affected by factors on two levels. The following will give an overview about the leave policies as the most direct policy measure defining the “frame” for families in general and in Estonia. Secondly, the micro-process of family decision-making will be examined in the framework of the theory of planned action.

I.1. Parental leave policies

The main starting point of the current study is the assumption that parental leave is one of the policy measures contributing to gender equality policies by supporting a family and work reconciliation that has a great potential for advancing gender equality. Parental leave is an important component of child and family policy and is increasingly becoming a tool in gender equality policies. Referring to the ILO recommendations and European Commission directives, Moss and Deven (1999: 3) give following definition of parental leave:

“a leave granted to fathers and mothers during a period after the termination of maternity leave to enable parents in employment to look after their newborn child for a certain time, whilst giving them some degree of security in respect of employment, social security and remuneration”

A report by the International Network on Leave Policies and Research (Moss 2010) emphasises the following aspects of parental leave: it is a leave available equally to mothers and fathers, either as: (i) a non-transferable individual right (i.e. both parents have an entitlement to an equal amount of leave); or (ii) an individual right that can be transferred to the other parent; or (iii) a family right that parents can divide between themselves as they choose.

Parental leave schemes, although very common in contemporary welfare states, do not have a very long history. The first country in the world which implemented a parental leave scheme was Sweden in 1974 (Chronholm 2009: 227), followed by Norway in 1977 (Brandth and Kvande 2009). This was the first time when the leave was addressed to both parents, not only to a mother, as was the maternity leave which was already implemented in 1900 in Sweden (Chronholm 2009: 228) and 1909 in Norway (Brandth and Kvande 2009). Parental leave policies have now become an intrinsic part of European social policy, but it is not limited only to Europe. By 2007, 66 nations in the world already had a paid entitlement to paternity leave or a parental leave provision to which fathers had access (Heymann *et al.* 2007).

While maternity leave aims at protecting the mother's and child's health, parental leave is concerned with family and work reconciliation and gender equality issues. In Sweden, the support for dual earner families as a way of tackling poverty had an important place when the implementation of parental leave was discussed (Chronholm 2009). Sweden was the first country in Europe to acknowledge the need for the abolition of separate spheres for men and women and encouraging a more equal division of care. The Swedish government submitted a report on the status of women to the United Nations in 1968 (Haas 1993). As Haas (1993) points out, this view was reflected later in governmental, political party and trade union policy and has led, according to Leira (2002: 76), to a redefinition of gender equality. Since then it has included not only paid work but also unpaid work and care. It led to a redefinition of norms for fathering and being a “good” father. In contrast, **study I** notes that at that time fathers living in the Soviet Union had no rights for care policies or family related leave until the beginning of the 1990s when the Soviet Union collapsed.

Parental leave schemes in different countries have some common characteristics (e.g. job protection), especially in the European Union where common aims and characteristics of the parental leave have been agreed upon. Nonetheless, there is a remarkable variation in the detailed regulations of leave policies cross-nationally (Moss and Deven 1999, Wall 2007). There are differences in the length, payment levels and scheme specifications, eligibility rules, requirements for the labour market attachment and previous employment, the flexibility, etc. (for a detailed overview of national parental leave schemes,

see Moss 2010, OECD 2011). Due to such variation, the leave policies create different conditions and possibilities for parents to organise their work and care arrangements and therefore the effect of parental leave schemes on gender equality is diverse across the countries.

The state is regarded as the main agent in constructing gender and fatherhood (Connell 1995, Hearn 2002) and therefore the role that the state policies places on fathers and on mothers is crucial in shaping the everyday practices of parenthood. Hobson and Morgan (2002: 14) remark that the state shapes fatherhood, fathering and father identities through laws and policies and turns men into fathers in different ways. Strohmeier (2002: 350) adds that policy profiles together with a common culture provide definitions of the “normal family” and the normal mode of family life. Wall (2007), for instance, observes that leave policies in different countries can either: 1) promote gender equality; 2) emphasise parental choice regarding the division of leave between men and women; or 3) emphasise maternal home care.

In addition to maternity leave for mothers and parental leave for both parents, many countries have paternity leave. This is a short leave addressed to fathers with the expectation that they are able to support mothers before or after the child’s birth during the mother’s maternity leave. It is important from a wellbeing point of view and promotes father-child closeness. From the gender equality or dual carer point of view this scheme does not have much significance. Instead of leading to a more equal division of care, the scheme places fathers second after the mothers, as the helpers of mothers (Haataja and Nyberg 2006, Lammi-Taskula 2006). Therefore, paternity leave is not discussed in the current thesis.

1.2. Parental leave in Estonia

The history of child-related leave in Estonia is not significantly shorter than in the Nordic countries – the first child-related leave in Estonia was implemented in 1913 when women working in industry gained the right to maternity leave. The further development of leave schemes together with social-political developments took a specific root in Estonia and other Soviet countries. While in the Nordic countries the gender equality aspirations brought along expansion of leave rights to fathers already in the 1970s, the Soviet fathers were kept away from childcare. The maternity leave scheme in Estonia remained an exclusive right for women throughout the Soviet Union period, until 1991 when Estonia regained independence and fathers were given the right to parental leave – first as secondary carers, later on in equal terms with mothers (see also **Study I**).

Over the years, the Estonian parental leave scheme has extended. **Study I** documents the improvement of leave rights for mothers. While the leave in 1959 lasted six months, by 1982 mothers had a right to one-year leave with compensation equal to the minimum wage. By 1989 the leave was extended

further to three years. **Study I** notes that with re-independence the previous leave scheme was preserved with only marginal adjustments. The most significant change was granting fathers the right to parental leave.

Nowadays, there are three childcare related leaves in Estonia – maternity, paternity, and parental leave (see Table 1). Maternity leave lasts for 140 days at 100% of earnings with no ceiling. For fathers, an unpaid leave of ten working days is available in a period of two months before or two months after the baby’s birth. Maternity leave is followed by a long parental leave available to one of the parents or other carers until the child’s third birthday.

Table 1. Leave schemes in Estonia, 2011

	Duration	Payment	Eligibility
Maternity leave	140 days	100% of previous earnings	Mothers only
Paternity leave	10 working days	Unpaid*	Fathers only
Parental leave	Up to 3 years	<i>Parental benefit</i> for 435 days 100% of previous earnings**; 18 months for non-working parents	Both parents; not available for fathers until child is 70 days old
		after parental benefit a flat rate <i>childcare allowance</i> , 38,35 eur per month	Both parents

Notes: * 100% of previous earnings will be paid starting from 01.01.2013

**see table 2 for exceptions in the parental benefit

Parents are granted a parental benefit at the level of 100% of previous earnings for 435 days after the maternity leave ends or until the child is 18 months old. After that, a flat rate benefit is paid to those on parental leave. Thus, there is a three-year leave divided between maternity leave and parental leave, half of which is compensated fully, while the other half is covered only by a flat-rate benefit. The attention of the current doctoral study is focused on the first half of the leave and on the parental benefit which was established in 2004.

What is peculiar about the newly implemented parental benefit is that it is not tied to parental leave – one does not have to be on parental leave to be eligible for the benefit. It is allowed to continue working while receiving the parental benefit, although the amount of the benefit is reduced, depending on the amount of income earned.¹ In case one of the parents is on parental leave, he or she only has the right to the parental benefit, not the other parent. At the same time, there are no possibilities for part-time or flexible leave – the period

¹ The benefit is reduced according to the formula: new benefit = (benefit + earnings – minimum benefit level)/1.2 – (earnings-minimum benefit level). The minimum benefit level is set each year and in 2011 was 278 euros.

of parental benefit cannot be extended and the amount reduced due to earnings from work are lost for the family. Therefore, in order to profit from parental benefit, it is rational either to stop working or at least reduce working hours considerably.

Despite its short existence, the parental benefit scheme has been adjusted several times. In 2004, the parental benefit provided parents a full income replacement for 225 days after the maternity leave. Maternity and parental benefits together guaranteed 365 days of full income compensation. **Study I** notes that the birth rates had turned to increase and the policy makers believed that it was due to the new policy measure. This gave policy makers the impetus to invest further in parental leave policy. First, the duration of the parental benefit was increased for an additional three months (90 days) in 2006 and for another four months (120 days) in 2008. As a result of the extensions, since 2008 maternity leave benefit and parental benefits together provide a full income replacement for 575 days (see table 2).

Although the general rule of parental benefit is that the parents are granted 100% of their average monthly earnings of the previous calendar year there are several exceptions for parents with no earnings, very low earnings and very high earnings. First, there is a ceiling set to the level of three times the national average wage of the previous calendar year (see table 2). Second, for all working parents a minimum level is set to the minimum monthly wage with the purpose to encourage parents to take up employment before the birth of the child, even if the job tenure is short or the monthly income low, for instance, due to a part-time job. Working in any form or extent, thus, is encouraged and rewarded. Third, an exception concerns non-working parents who are eligible for a flat-rate parental benefit, the amount of which is set every year in the state budget and which remains below the national minimum wage.² Overall, in December 2010, 64% of beneficiaries received benefits in the amount of their full earnings.

As in most European countries, there is a family entitlement to parental leave in Estonia and the actual carer of the child(ren) is eligible for the parental leave and parental benefit – this may be the mother, the father, the grandparent or any other person who is actually taking care of the child(ren). It is a gender-neutral policy giving the family a choice regarding the care. In practice, however, the *parental* leave operates as the *mother's* leave which is very seldom taken up by fathers (see chapter 1.3.2). The tendency that the gender neutral policies (which include fathers implicitly, not explicitly) can have gendered effects has been pointed out by several researchers (Ellingsæter and Leira 2006b: 271, Leira 2002, O'Brien 2009).

² However, in 2009–2011 it is set at the level of minimum income as increases in the minimum wage have been frozen due to the economic crisis.

Table 2. The characteristics of parental benefit scheme in Estonia, 2004–2011

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Duration (days)	365	365	455	455	575	575	575	575
Minimum monthly benefit (EUR)	140	140	159	172	230	278	278	278
Minimum monthly wage (EUR)	159	172	192	230	278	278	278	278
Maximum monthly benefit (EUR)	1,006	1,117	1,227	1,382	1,611	1,963	2,257	2,157
Duration of maternity and parental benefit (days)	365	365	455	455	575	575	575	575
...for nonworking parent (months)	11	11	14	14	18	18	18	18

Source: Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs

The characteristics of parental leave in Estonia are not exceptional but are similar to most Post-Soviet countries, especially concerning the long duration of the parental leave (for different leave schemes see Aidukaite 2006, O'Brien and Moss 2010, Ejmaes 2011, Valentova and Zhelyazkova 2011). What makes the Estonian system stand out is the generosity that lies in the combination of a very long leave and full income compensation, a very high ceiling and coverage of those parents with no previous employment record. The implementation of the parental benefit scheme in 2004 was a remarkable improvement in the leaves' package. Before the reform, Estonia was what Karin Wall (2007) called the long leave mother home-centred policy model which was characterised by very long and low paid leave, only taken up by mothers. Szelewa and Polakowski (2008) showed a remarkable diversity among Central and Eastern European countries' childcare and leave policies categorizing Estonia together with Latvia as having a *female mobilizing type policy* where the parental leave generosity was low and the provision and quality of childcare services high.

1.3. The gendered impact of leave policies

The following sections will discuss how the parental leave schemes contribute to the dual earner/dual carer model and what are the expected and actual gendered impacts on care and employment of parents. It is commonly believed that parental leave as an institution leads to care-sharing parenthood (Leira 2006: 29). Furthermore, it is assumed that changing the gendered childcare practices of the families should lead to larger gender equality both in the family and public sphere, and particularly in the labour market (Moss and Deven 1999:14).

1.3.1. Impact on female employment

The impact of the parental leave scheme on female employment depends on the specification of the scheme and also the way it is used. In the situation where the parental leave scheme does not question the gendered division but allows parents to choose freely – as is the case in Estonia – and if the care responsibilities are mainly carried by women, we can talk about two kinds of consequences on gender equality in the labour market. Leira (2002) points out there are positive consequences on the female employment rate and negative consequences on equal opportunities, for example with respect to career advancement and income.

Among other researchers, this controversy in the impact of parental leave has been described by Klerman and Leibowitz (1997). They state that well-organised leave with high replacement levels strengthen the mother's labour market attachment in the short run. There is an equality advancing impact as the parental leave provides protected employment which has been proven to have a positive impact on the employment rate of women. Parental leave is a policy providing parents with a right to take time to care for children (Knijn and Kremer 1997). Mothers can lawfully take time out to care for their infants without leaving their jobs. Additionally, generous income-related schemes encourage mothers to take up work before giving birth in order to earn a higher parental leave (see Rønsen 1999, Ruhm 1998, Leira 2002).

The latter effect has been found in Estonia – after introducing the generous income-related parental leave scheme, more women than before started to enter employment before giving birth (Vörk *et al.* 2009). The fact that a relatively generous flat-rate parental benefit in Estonia is available to those with no previous work experience may somewhat constrain the positive impact on female employment by reducing the motivation to enter the labour market, especially in the case of those with the lowest earnings potential. This is why working prior to the birth is encouraged by granting benefit in the amount of the minimum wage to all who have worked but whose monthly average earnings remain below the national minimum wage, for instance, due to having a part-time job or a short employment history.

At the same time, extending paid parental leave has a negative effect on female employment (OECD 2011). As the long leave periods are taken mainly by women, the leave is regarded as problematic. The labour market position of women remains more precarious in comparison with men and the pattern of gendered housework and care division remains unchanged. Although both parents are eligible for parental leave, the gender-neutral leave with family entitlement has produced a gendered impact everywhere and thus put women into the traditional care provider's position. Several Nordic studies have noted that the unequal use of gender-neutral parental leave may negatively affect women's opportunities in the labour market (Leira 2002). The main effect of the

gender-neutral leave is the familising of maternal care for the very young children (Leira 2002: 102). In Estonia, over 62% of leave takers³ were on parental leave over 1.5 years in 2010 (i.e. longer than the parental benefit was paid): 27.5% were on parental leave for 1.5 to 2 years (Statistics Estonia)

Study III emphasises that the parental leave functions as a familiser of care as it familises the person who is taking the parental leave. The use of the terms familisation and defamilisation is inspired by Arnlaug Leira, who uses them in the analysis of childcare policies. According to her policy measures that support parental care for children at home lead to familisation of childcare (Leira 2002: 42) i.e. the childcare is provided within the family as opposed to outside, by the public childcare facilities. Therefore, I argue, as a result of familising policies, one of the parents becomes familised. A person in the opposite situation can be described as defamilised. In this context, a defamilised person is someone who is free of childcare responsibilities and is active outside the family, in the labour market.

In case of parental leave with long duration, the parent (usually the mother) becomes familised for a long period and the long-run employment prospects of the mother may be at risk, particularly regarding the promotion and training opportunities which in turn will decrease their earning capacity (Klerman and Kleibowitz 1997). Providing paid leave increases the probability of remaining at home during the first year of life of the child (Pronzato 2009). While the impact of parental leave on the employment rate is usually short term and women leave the labour market only temporarily as the Finnish (Salmi 2006: 162) and Estonian (Võrk *et al.* 2009) experiences show, a generous leave may prolong women's career breaks (Rønsen 1999) and affect the gap between female and male labour market outcomes (Ruhm 1998). A study carried out by the OECD (2011) analysed the gender employment gap in 30 countries from 1970 to 2008 and found that the extension of paid leave entitlements had a negative effect on the employment rate of women aged 25 to 54 years and on the gender gap (OECD 2011: 141).

Labour market segregation (Bettio and Verashchagina 2009, Wharton 2005) and gender pay gap (e.g. O'Dorchai 2008, Gornick 2004, Mincer and Polachek 1974) are only a few of the inequality indicators that are explained by career breaks and care responsibilities. Women are regarded by employers as less reliable employees due to their expected leave-taking which makes their labour market position precarious (Salmi 2006). The negative consequences altogether could be called "penalty of motherhood" (Budig and England 2001).

The penalty of motherhood can also be detected in Estonia. Although in comparison with other European countries the employment rate of women in Estonia is relatively high, Estonia lags behind regarding many equality indicators. For instance, Estonia is a country with the highest gender segregation on

³ Persons aged 15–64 with children less than eight years old in their family who took parental leave and whose parental leave had ended.

the labour market, both vertical and horizontal (Bettio and Verashchagina 2009), and the highest gender pay gap reaching as high as 30.9% in 2007 (while the EU average was 17.6%). There are several indicators and studies demonstrating that motherhood is one of the significant reasons behind this inequality. For instance, a recent study by Anspal *et al.* (2010) confirmed that motherhood is one of the significant explanations of the pay gap in Estonia. The impact of parenthood in Estonia (measured in the employment gap of women (age group 20–49) with and without children under 7 years old) was also among the largest in Europe in 2009 after the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary reaching 25.8 percentage points (the EU27 average was 12.1percentage points) (European Commission 2010). The long parental leave period is one of the main reasons, as about 15 thousand women every year give birth and stay at home for up to three years. In 2006, the average length of parental benefit payments was 338 days for women (Võrk *et al.* 2009). A comparative study by Maron and Meulders (2008) showed that the presence of a child aged three to five years old has a high impact on both female inactivity and part-time working in Estonia. Pollert (2003: 336) emphasises that the transition to capitalism “not only failed to maximise the female human resource legacy left by the Communist regimes, but damaged it.” Valentova and Zhelyazkova (2011) have found that women in Central and Eastern European countries were more likely to experience negative consequences from employment breaks due to childcare after the transition than before.

The consequences analysed above could be regarded as expected and the “normal” consequences of choices people make when deciding their use of time between family and work and compromises they make. Taking time out of work has its consequences in terms of skills, professional development, etc. and the fact that it has impact on people’s career and earnings can be regarded as rational and justified. However, from a gender equality perspective the question is why it is systematically women who compromise their careers for the family. Therefore, it is necessary, as Esping-Andersen (2009: 83) points out, to feminise the male life course in order to achieve a “positive equilibrium.” There is a general agreement that changing father’s care practices and taking up parental leave may have gains for gender equality (Leira 2006: 47, Moss and Deven 1999: 13). The impact may be expected to be twofold – directly, via a more equal distribution of career breaks and indirectly, via reshaping the gender roles and norms for good fathers and mothers, and thus diminishing the statistical discrimination. Haas (1992: 9), for instance, suggests that if the leave would be more equally divided, it would increase the respect for women and make employers more willing to invest into their occupational potential.

1.3.2. Fathers' involvement in care and parental leave

The father's role in the family is relatively new stream of research. As Day and Lamb (2004) remark, until the 1970s, only the impact of the absence of the fathers on children was researched. The quality of the relationship with fathers was not analysed, the presence itself was assumed to have a positive impact. During the 1980s negative effects of divorce on the family economy, housework burden, stress, etc. were studied. The late 1970s brought along studies on the interactions between fathers, mothers and children, finding that the presence of fathers can vary in ways and degrees. The impact of fathers and their involvement with children has been much studied and it has been found to have a considerable impact on child development (Lamb 2010). Therefore, the father's involvement is regarded as beneficial for father-child relationships and child welfare from a gender equality perspective.

The Nordic countries are forerunners in striving for gender equality in general and in achieving the dual earner/dual carer family model by promoting equal parenting. The latter is being reinforced politically through parental leave schemes. More precisely, fathers' participation in care is encouraged by implementation of the individual right for fathers which cannot be transferred to the mother. The so-called daddy's month or fathers' quota was firstly implemented in Norway in 1993, two years later in Sweden, in 2001 in Iceland and in 2003 in Finland. The fathers' quota increased the fathers' take up in Norway from less than 4% of fathers to 89% (Brandth and Kvande 2009: 191) and in Sweden 90% of fathers took some parental leave already in 1998 (Duvander *et al.* 2010). However, the leave is still not equally shared between the parents as mothers still take significantly more days of leave than fathers (Chronholm 2009, Brandth and Kvande 2001).

Additionally, the flexibility in the parental leave scheme is believed to encourage fathers' take-up of the parental leave (Rostgaard 2002). Moss and Deven (2010: 24) analysed different schemes and summarised the ways parental leave can be flexible. They concluded that most common possibilities are part-time leave and being able to choose when to take leave until a child reaches a certain age. These possibilities are provided not only in the Nordic countries but also in a number of Central and Eastern European countries (e.g. Slovenia, Croatia and the Czech Republic). Additionally, in some countries there is the possibility to take leave in several shorter blocks or to choose to have a longer leave with lower benefit or a shorter leave with higher benefit. In Estonia, the flexibility of the scheme is low – it is only possible to divide leave into several blocks and therefore be on leave during several turns.

In Estonia, fathers have had an equal right with mothers to the parental leave only since 2007, with no daddy's months and very little flexibility in choosing the leave arrangements. Therefore, it is not surprising that the share of fathers among parental leave takers is still marginal. According to the Estonian Labour Force Survey 2010, 4,300 (5.4%) fathers of children younger than 8 years old took parental leave after their youngest child was born (87,400 or 90.1% of

mothers) (Statistics Estonia database). More detailed administrative information is available on parental benefit. Immediately after the implementation of the scheme, the take-up by fathers remained very low – only about one per cent of beneficiaries were fathers from 2004–2006. The proportion of fathers started increasing somewhat in 2007 when the eligibility conditions for fathers were loosened. Since then, fathers can take parental leave immediately after maternity leave or 70 days after the birth of the child. Until 2007 it was the exclusive right for mothers until the child is 6 months old. By April 2008, the share of fathers among the beneficiaries had increased to 3% and in July 2009, 6% of beneficiaries were men. From November 2009 to May 2010 the share even somewhat exceeded 6% but then started to drop slightly to 5% as at March 2011.

Therefore, it is too early to conclude that there is a trend of increasing father's involvement in parental leave. The fastest increase coincided with the 2008 global financial crisis followed by a downwards trend until the economy started to recover. The share of the parental benefit days that the fathers take up remain significantly below the mothers'. A study carried out by Võrk, Karu and Tiit in 2009 showed that in 2005, fathers used 127 days of parental benefit on average while the average for the mothers was 308 days (162 and 338 respectively in 2006). Taking into account the very small number of fathers among the beneficiaries, the share of total days of parental benefit that the fathers took was 1% in 2005 and 1.4% in 2006. Therefore it is too early to speak about real changes in the gender division of parental leave.

Due to changes in father's involvement in care taking – larger in some countries than others – the changing nature and meaning of fatherhood has been the focus of research on fathers lately. There is a belief that the whole nature of fatherhood has been changing and a so-called “new-father” image is emerging. Brandth and Kvande (1998) estimated this conclusion to be somewhat too optimistic as there is a variation in fathering depending on social circumstances such as family structure, occupation, work orientation of wives and stages in the life span of the child. For instance, the practices of the Nordic countries show that the highly educated and white-collar fathers and those working in the public sector take the parental leave more often than others (Brandth and Kvande 2002).

The fathers' parental leave is expected to affect the gender equality and increase the equal division of care within the family. There is indeed evidence from previous studies showing that the leave-taking by fathers has a long-run impact on childcare – the more the fathers take leave, the more egalitarian the sharing of childcare becomes (Haas 1992). Pleck (1993) found that fathers with longer leave experiences were also more involved with their children later when their children became older. Nonetheless, the evidence on the impact of fathers' parental leave is somewhat equivocal. There are other studies that do not find fathers' leave experience to have the expected long-run impact on work and care practices. There are several studies not finding this impact or finding only

small changes in the care related behaviour of fathers who have been on parental leave (Eydal 2009, Kluge and Tamm 2009, Ekberg *et al.* 2005).

The current thesis emphasises that the impact of the fathers' parental leave depends on the way the leave is used. The leave-taking does not always bring along drastic changes in the fathering practices. It is not unusual for the mother to be at home during the father's leave, either taking annual holiday or sabbatical leave (Rostgaard 2002, Eydal 2009, Brandth and Kvande 2001) and therefore fathers do not become main carers of the child, as shown also in **study III**. Lammi-Taskula (2006: 95) concludes that policies aimed at increasing fathers' contributions in childcare are more meaningful on a symbolic level and less meaningful as measures serving the role of changing the actual division of labour between mothers and fathers. **Study III** searches for an answer to the question to what extent does the leave taking lead to the change in actual division of labour between parents and what are the factors influencing it.

2. THE THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOUR: HOW ARE THE DECISIONS FORMED?

The current thesis deals with the planned behaviour of parents and looks at different decisions regarding the division of parental leave between parents. Two kinds of decisions are examined: first, the father's decision to take parental leave (**study II**), and second the decision of the mother to enter or return to the labour market while the father is on parental leave (**study III**). Although both decisions occur within a social political context, the decisions are taken on an individual or family level. Therefore, a theory of planned behaviour that explains the individual level behaviour is used. In **study II** the theory of planned behaviour is directly implemented.

According to the theory of planned action, the most important determinant of the action is the *intention* to perform behaviour (Ajzen 2005). According to this theory, people behave in a rational manner, taking into account all available information and considering implicitly or explicitly the implications of their actions (Ajzen 1985). Their reasoning, however, is based on various beliefs (see figure 1). Ajzen (2005: 119) emphasises that beliefs do not have to be veridical; they may be biased, inaccurate or even irrational. Beliefs are created in and by the environment where people grow up and they are influenced by both personal experiences and information from other people. This information provides a basis for their beliefs about the consequences of their behaviour, expectations of others and obstacles that may prevent them from performing a behaviour (Ajzen 2005: 134).

According to the theory, there are three factors which shape the behavioural intention: 1) attitudes towards the behaviour; 2) subjective norms; and 3) perceived behavioural control (see figure 1). All the three elements are formed by the person's different beliefs.

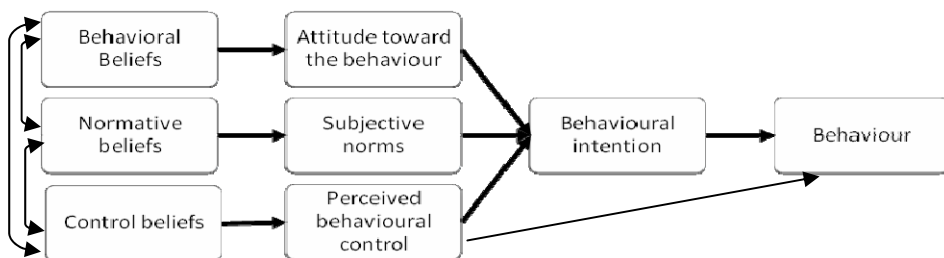


Figure 1. The theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen 2005: 126)

The theory of planned behaviour shows an individual level process of forming an intention to behave in one or other way does not directly take into account the macro level factors, but does indicate that they are there and important. As

described earlier, Strohmeier (2002) emphasises the importance of macro-processes such as policy in framing the options available to individuals, i.e. micro-actors. Therefore, the parental leave schemes and more general gender order of the society, which are described in **study I**, play a significant role in shaping the family decisions.

The following sections will provide an overview of the main factors and discussions regarding the obstacles fathers face when deciding whether to take parental leave or not. A description of the factors influencing father involvement in childcare is given, using on the one hand the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen 2005) and on the other hand a model of influences on father involvement which has been proposed by Lamb *et al.* (1987). Lamb *et al.* propose four factors: 1) motivation; 2) skills and self-confidence; 3) social supports and stresses; and 4) institutional factors and practices. The theory of planned behaviour is used to give a better insight into the role and functioning of the different factors that are proposed by Lamb and other researchers, more specifically, analysing the father's involvement in parental leave behaviour. The factors are divided into three groups:

- 1) The *attitude towards the behaviour* which is determined by *behavioural beliefs*, i.e. the beliefs on the consequences of the behaviour. This corresponds to factors Lamb calls *motivation*, or the extent to which fathers want to be involved with their children and *institutional factors and practices*, or the degree to which workplace practices and policies (which often are a reflection of broader societal expectations) serve to inhibit or facilitate the involvement of fathers in childcare. The concerns regarding the consequences on employment, career and pay levels are discussed.
- 2) *Subjective norms and perceptions of normative beliefs* regarding whether the specific groups or individuals approve or disapprove the behaviour and whether these referents themselves engage in this behaviour or not. In Lamb *et al.*'s (1987) model, it would correspond to social support and stresses, or the extent to which others in the social network are supportive or resistant to increased involvement of fathers. Masculinities and role of care in the image of fatherhood and motherhood are discussed.
- 3) *Perceived behavioural control* which is determined by the *control beliefs*, i.e. the beliefs regarding the control the person thinks he has over the behaviour and the actual control he has. In Lamb *et al.*'s model this corresponds to skills and self-confidence, or the actual physical skills and techniques needed to be successful and effective in providing care for children, and perhaps more importantly, the fathers' perceived competence and confidence in being able to develop and employ such skills. The perception of the parenting skills and the maternal gatekeeping as a determinant of the actual control are discussed.

According to the theory of planned behaviour, these three sets of beliefs are interconnected and there is an interaction between them. For instance, the

perception of behavioural control may influence the attitude towards the behaviour and vice versa (Ajzen 2005). The father's intention to take parental leave can be expected to occur if he evaluates this challenge positively, experiences social pressure to take parental leave, or believes he has the means and opportunities to do so. Similarly, regarding **study III**, the mother returns or enters the labour market while the father is on parental leave – if she evaluates this act to have positive consequences, experiences social pressure or at least approval to start or continue working, and she believes she has means and opportunities to do so.

Therefore, two parallel individual level decision-making processes actually happen – one for the mother, the other for the father. The father's expectations on the mother's behaviour, his work situation and expected consequences, and skills and willingness to stay home, are expected to influence the mother's decision and possibilities to return to work. Conversely, the mother's expectation on the father's behaviour, her job opportunities and expected consequences and her gatekeeper's role allowing the father to stay home, are important factors determining the father's decision and intention to stay home.

Referring to numerous studies, Ajzen (2005: 119) notes that the behavioural intentions predict the behaviour of people very well – much better than, for instance, personal and other background factors (age, income, values, experience, etc.). The approach developed by Ajzen helps us to understand the determinants of the behavioural intentions of fathers eligible for parental leave in Estonia. As Ajzen (2005: 117) emphasises, we must understand human behaviour, not merely predict it, and we must try to identify the determinants of behavioural intentions. It is necessary to explore “why people hold certain attitudes, subjective norms, and perceptions over a behavior” (Ajzen 2005: 123).

The focus of the current study is parental leave which is not directly an indicator of the parental involvement, but a prerequisite for fathers to be involved full-time. It can be expected that the majority of the fathers taking up the leave take the decision to be more involved in childcare. On the one hand it is a decision to take a break from work, but on the other hand it is a parenting decision to increase involvement in childcare.

Putting on the glasses of the theory of planned behaviour brings an additional dimension to the factors that are very commonly discussed in the literature and studies. Planned behaviour emphasises the importance of beliefs and therefore the subjectivity of all the factors. Without trying to lessen the significance of actual obstacles and consequences that a decision that deviates from the common practice brings along, the study emphasises that it is the beliefs regarding the consequences of parental leave, not only real consequences that influence the intentions and therefore the action. In addition to real control and explicitly expressed expectations by others, the belief and perception of consequences of the behaviour, perception of others' expectations or one's own behavioural control play a role in shaping the behavioural intention. Although researchers, using complex statistical methods, can disentangle the direct

impacts of different factors and consequences that one or another behaviour has, people themselves rarely have the information and skills to assess or predict adequately what their decisions will bring along or what are the causal relations between different aspects of life. Therefore, the current thesis adds the subjective aspect of beliefs which, as Ajzen (2005) emphasises, may or may not be veritable, to provide an additional dimension to the discussion.

2.1. Attitudes towards the behaviour: Consequences of the leave

According to the theory of planned behaviour, the attitudes towards the behaviour are one of the three factors shaping the behavioural intention (figure 1). The attitude towards the behaviour is determined by behavioural beliefs about the consequences of the behaviour (Ajzen 2005: 126). Therefore, what shapes the father's intention to take parental leave or not, is his perception and predictions of the consequences of the leave. In the case of fathers' parental leave, the consequences may concern all the family members; the mother, father and the child(ren). The father's attitude towards parental leave is most probably influenced by his assessment on the consequences of his leave on the general wellbeing of all family members. Breastfeeding has been pointed out as one of the counterarguments of the father's parental leave (e.g. Haas 1992, Salmi and Lammi-Taskula 1999). **Study III** showed that Estonian fathers too are concerned about the negative consequences that ending breastfeeding has on children. Most often, however, the researchers have pointed out the work situation of both parents and its impact on their work and career (see, for instance, Lamb *et al.* 1987, Pleck 1997).

The workplace situation of the father has been discussed and analysed from various aspects. It has been found that fathers find it difficult to be absent from their workplaces (Haas *et al.* 2002, Brandth and Kvande 2002, Näsman 1992). This may be due to the restrictive work environment attitudes of the employer and colleagues, fear of the negative impact on the future career or pay on the one hand, and by the previously described threat to male identity, on the other. Pleck (1997) concludes, based on several studies, that men's identification with the breadwinner's role and men's job characteristics (e.g. work hours) influence their involvement in childcare.

One stream of research has attempted to identify the characteristics of the job and the organization that play a role in the father's leave taking (Byrgen and Duvander 2006, Haas *et al.* 2002). For instance, the organisational culture with a company's commitment to caring values, father friendliness and commitment to equal opportunities support the father's decision to take parental leave (Haas *et al.* 2002). Christoffersen (2000) shows that if the father works at a predominantly female workplace or if he is a public servant, he is more likely to take parental leave. Byrgen and Duvander (2006) similarly find that fathers

working in the private sector or small male-dominated workplaces are less likely to use parental leave. The father's perception of the consequences of the leave on his work may vary depending on his job and characteristics of the organisation he is working. Since paternity leave in Estonia is still a relatively new phenomenon, very few men work in organisations where their male colleagues have taken parental leave. Therefore, they can predict the consequences of their possible leave taking on other organisational experiences and the general organisational culture and attitudes.

Several studies have shown that the income and economic situation of the family is one of the factors influencing the fathers' use of parental leave (see, for instance, Almqvist 2008, Sundström and Duvander 2002). This evidence is, however, not straightforward and it is most likely dependent on the leave policies of a particular country. A study carried out in Finland, for instance, did not find the parent's income or the income difference between partners to play any significant role (Lammi-Taskula 2008). In Estonia, the income differences within the family cannot have a high impact in the case of dual earner families, as the income is fully compensated. However, a study by Karu *et al.* (2007) indicated that fathers may not always be aware of the fact that the leave comes with full income compensation and they may regard family economy to be a reason for them not to take leave.

There has been some research carried out on the impact of the parental leave of a father on his career and pay. Haas and Hwang (1999) have summarised some earlier research on Sweden and concluded that parental leave does not seem to have a negative effect on most men's careers in the long term, while there are other cases where fathers on leave have found themselves replaced or with fewer opportunities for training, development and pay raises. Gupta *et al.* (2008) suggest that if very few fathers take up parental leave, there may be a negative "signal effect" and wage penalty. They suggest that the signalling and negative effects for men are in larger societies where there are only a few fathers taking the leave. Johansson (2010) showed that in Sweden, the father's parental leave had some impact on his latter pay level, but at the same time, a month of parental leave for fathers increased the yearly earnings of mothers by 6.7%.

As the decisions regarding parental leave are family decisions, it significantly influences both parents and therefore their employment status and prospects are taken into account when deciding the care arrangements. Indeed, the mother's attachment to paid work is a significant factor in deciding which parent should take the parental leave (e.g. Rostgaard *et al.* 1999, Reich 2010). Additionally, the mother's socio-economic status plays a role: a study carried out in Finland showed that the better the socio-economic position of the mother was, the more likely the father was to take parental leave, despite his own socio-economic position (Lammi-Taskula 2008). Therefore, the employment status as well as the type of work of both parents plays a crucial role. Hook (2006) shows that the connection is more general: women's employment increases fathers'

unpaid working time. This is where the importance of the fact that the father's parental leave is a family decision can be seen, concerning both men and women.

2.2. Subjective norms: Masculinity and fatherhood

According to the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen 2005) subjective norms (figure 1) are determined by normative beliefs regarding whether the specific individuals or groups approve or disapprove the behaviour; or whether the reference group engages in it or not. The father's perception on the others' evaluations and judgements of his possible parental leave are significant, but also what he perceives that the significant others expect from him. Moreover, the behaviour of the others in a similar situation influences what his perception of the subjective norms is.

In dealing with such a gender-loaded decision like involvement in childcare, one cannot overlook the questions of masculinity and femininity. Contemporary approaches treat gender, masculinity (e.g. Connell 1995) and femininity not as fixed and static roles that people have, but as dynamic processes. There is a focus on diversity which is reflected in the concept of "multiple masculinities." Connell (1995) distinguishes between the culturally dominant forms of masculinity or "hegemonic masculinity" and "subordinated" or "marginalised" forms. The hegemonic masculinity is the masculinity that corresponds to the "ideal" model in society. Despite to the fact that only few men actually correspond to hegemonic masculinities, the model still has an impact on the decisions and behaviour of men.

The question is if and how the caring role of fathers is incorporated into the contemporary hegemonic masculinity and to what extent the image of fatherhood and fathering involves active caring. David Morgan (1992) emphasises that in contemporary Western societies, hegemonic masculinities in general are strongly associated with paid work which is a central source of masculine identity. The masculinity dominant in Western societies usually does not include care. Brandth and Kvande (1998) point out that similarly to situations where men are forced to exit employment, parental leave can be a challenge to one's masculinity. Connell (2000) names the "transnational business masculinity", characterised by egocentrism and a declining sense of responsibility of others, as one of the dominant masculinities. In the hierarchy of masculinities, fathers who take parental leave are marginalised and regarded as less masculine. Merla (2008) points out that there is a tension between assigned norms and personal identity for fathers who stay at home and are responsible for childcare.

Work plays a very significant role in men's identity and the breadwinner's position remains significant in determining the fatherhood. Therefore, taking parental leave may be a threat to the masculinity. Pleck (1993) points out that the attitudes of other people in the workplace determine whether a man taking a

leave is perceived as a lack of commitment and un-masculine. There are studies which show that there is a significant variation in the father's take up of the leave depending on the *personal characteristics* of himself or characteristics of his work. For instance, fathers with a higher income, higher educational levels and a stronger professional identity are more likely to take parental leave. Brandth and Kvande (2002) believe this difference to be due to fathers' strong professional and personal identity that would not be threatened by their decision to take parental leave.

In most European societies, the prevalence of breadwinning ideology (Pfau-Effinger 2004) is still present, influencing the expectations and identity of men and fathers. Similarly, the cultural ideals of the fathering and fathers as well as mothering and mothers are dependent on the time and societal context. LaRossa (1988) states that since each generation creates its images of ideal fathers according to its own time and conditions, there is an "asynchrony between culture and conduct fatherhood." He points out that there has been a change in the ideal of the fatherhood, but not in the conduct. A similar situation can be seen in Estonia, where public opinion surveys (e.g. Vainu *et al.* 2010) show that the majority of people find it necessary for fathers to be more involved in childcare and are positive about fathers on parental leave, although, the actual share of fathers on leave still remains low. In 2009, 57% of women and 64% of men agreed that a man should be the main breadwinner in the family. At the same time, 89% of women and 78% of men thought that men should participate more in childcare and raising children.

At the same time, there is a belief that a woman's ultimate fulfilment is to be a mother (Lindsey 2011). Lindsay points out that the motherhood is idealised and mothers who work outside the home are filled with guilt. In Estonia, a qualitative study showed that mothers feel that motherhood is their defining role and they perceive social pressure as well as an inner need to place motherhood to the top of the role hierarchy. The proof of good fatherhood was seen in concentrating on work (Pajumets 2007). Moreover, Larsson (2008) showed that fathers in the life of children are exchangeable while mothers are seen as permanent.

In addition to the general perception of expectations from society for men and fathers, equally important, if not more, is the support from the surrounding people. Women's understanding of the father's role is a significant determinant of his participation. According to Bonney *et al.* (1999), it is unlikely that fathers participate in childcare without the support of their wives. Moreover, a study by Hoffman and Moon (1999) demonstrated that the mother's support for father's involvement with children is influenced, among other things, by their gender role attitudes. Non-traditional gender role attitudes contribute to women's support of the father's involvement. Additionally, the support and expectations of the workplace play a role. As the theory of planned behaviour suggests, the example of others may play a role in the father's decision – having previous

experience of fathers in the workplace to take parental leave would increase the likelihood for fathers to take parental leave (Bygren and Duvander 2006).

It has been suggested that the norms associated with fatherhood have become more relaxed and diffuse and individual have more freedom to construct their own “normative realities without relying on pre-existing templates” (Marsiglio and Cohan 2000). There is some visible change in hegemonic masculinity in some societies. For instance, Swedish fathers have started to include care in the hegemonic masculinity as they express child oriented masculinity (Almqvist 2008). In Sweden, however, this is a result of a long tradition of equality policies (see, for instance, Klinth 2008). However, as Almqvist (2008) claims, even in Sweden, more change has occurred on the level of rhetoric than on the level of real behaviour. Estonian society is making some slow progress on the rhetoric level, but significantly less on behavioural level.

2.3. Control beliefs: Mothers as gatekeepers

The third component in the theory of planned behaviour is perceived behavioural control (figure 1) which is determined by the perception of control over the behaviour and the actual control the person has (Ajzen 2005: 118). In other words, the more confident the father is about possessing the resources to handle the parental leave and the fewer actual obstacles he anticipates, the greater his perceived control over the behaviour should be. The theory of planned behaviour is a suitable framework to analyse the decisions of parents as it concerns behaviour which is not always under the control, i.e. it deals with the situation of incomplete control over ones behaviour (Ajzen 2005: 117).

The role of the mother in the father’s parental leave has been discussed and studied. The mother’s wishes and preferences are often pointed out by the fathers when asked about their reasons for not choosing parental leave. For instance, Lammi-Taskula (2006) based on Brandth and Kvande (2003) notes that in Norway, nearly half of the fathers without parental leave experience said that the mothers’ intention to stay at home was a reason why they did not take the leave. A study showed that, in Sweden, among other things, the partner’s willingness to share parental leave was a significant predictor of the father’s decision to take leave (Haas *et al.* 2002).

Therefore, the attitude, willingness and preferences of the mother play a significant role in the father’s leave taking behaviour. In the studies of more general father involvement, the term “gatekeeping” is used to describe the role of a mother in the fathers’ fathering practices.

Allen and Hawkins (1999: 200) define maternal gatekeeping as “*a collection of beliefs and behaviours that ultimately inhibit a collaborative effort between men and women in family work by limiting men’s opportunities for learning and growing through caring for home and children.*” There is a large body of

research showing the active role mothers play in influencing fathers' approach to parenting and fathers' involvement (e.g. McBride *et al.* 2005, De Luccie 1995, Maurer *et al.* 2001). Maurer *et al.* (2001) point out that mothers may influence fathers' fathering by controlling their fathering behaviour, but it is possible that mothers influence men and their father's identity via appraisal.

The father's perception of himself as a father is connected to how people with whom he interacts evaluate and appraise him (Marsiglio *et al.* 2000). Beitel and Parke (1998) found that wives' perceptions of their husbands' skills at childcare were related to husbands' involvement with their infants. Therefore, the mothers' belief in fathers' ability to care may play a significant role in the fathers' decisions of taking up the leave. The decision is influenced by cultural conceptions of motherhood – it is difficult for the mother to return to work before the end of parental leave if the childcare is seen as a responsibility of the mother as it puts the status of a good mother at stake. In the framework of the theory of planned behaviour, the beliefs regarding one's skills corresponds to *control beliefs* which form the basis for *perceived behavioural control* – one of the most significant factors in influencing the behavioural intention.

Therefore, it does not have to be a conscious activity of directly controlling fathers, but may be conducted in a more subtle way via judgements, etc. Often it is said that the decision is a negotiation in families between the mothers and the fathers, often subtle and not explicit. Whether and how explicitly the negotiations really happen may vary according to the specific culture. For instance, a study analysing French and Swedish couples (Almqvist 2008) discovered that in Sweden couples negotiate and discuss parental leave more compared to French couples, regardless of whether the fathers finally take the leave or not.

Although the mainly negative impacts of mothers as mediators between the fathers and their children have been analysed, the newer approaches emphasise that in addition to an inhibitory function, the gatekeeping may involve facilitative behaviours of mothers in order to encourage fathers' involvement (Schoppe-Sullivan *et al.* 2008). The study by Schoppe-Sullivan *et al.* (2008) showed indeed that an encouraging behaviour does facilitate the father's involvement. Therefore, mothers play a significant role both in encouraging and discouraging fathers to take part in childcare, and developing their images of themselves as fathers. From the point of view of the theory of planned action, maternal gatekeeping mediates subjective norms and the underlying “normative beliefs” (see **study II**) which play a significant role in influencing the behavioural intention regarding the take-up of parental leave. Mothers are most likely to be the most significant people whose expectations, approval and disapproval are taken into account while fathers form their intentions.

3. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this chapter I will discuss some issues regarding the measurement of the dual carer model and the use of parental leave and parental benefit in Estonia as an indicator of parental care provided to children. Secondly, I will introduce the data and methods of the studies which form the empirical basis for my dissertation.

3.1. How to measure the developments towards the dual carer model?

The dual earner/dual carer family is a family where care and employment are symmetrically divided between men and women. Therefore in order to assess to what extent the families are following this family model, both time spent on employment and time spent on care should be measured. There are several indicators measuring the movement towards the dual earner model which is easier to measure as the employment is much better documented with surveys and data. The dual earner component of the model can be measured by employment rates and different gender equality indicators (gender wage gap, segregation, etc.).

The dual carer part of the model is somewhat more difficult to measure. Parental leave that is used in the current dissertation is an indirect indicator of parents' involvement with their children. Parental involvement within parental leave can take different forms of participation and from a child development and parent-child relationship perspective, more detailed information is needed. When talking of father involvement, the question of quality of time and quantity of time spent with children is also significant (Gadsden *et al.* 2004). The current study is concerned with the care division between men and women and therefore, the question of the quality of the care and parent-child relationship is not discussed. Take-up of parental leave by fathers is one of the most common indicators used to analyse the division of care in society and within families. With regular administrative data, it is a reliable, systematic and comparable way of describing the care. Nonetheless, there are several weaknesses to this approach.

First of all, using parental leave or not using parental leave is a simplistic dichotomy (involved-uninvolved) which does not adequately reflect the real extent of care provided. Gadsden *et al.* (2004) emphasise that using a continuum instead of dichotomous indicators would be more appropriate to reflect changes in the father involvement. A qualitative study, carried out in Estonia reached a similar conclusion as it was found that the adjustments that fathers make in their working life after the birth of the child may be significant even if they do not take leave (Karu *et al.* 2007). Pleck (1993) notes that the adaptations men make in their work-family life are less visible than the adaptations that women make. While women usually take parental leave, men use,

for instance, flexitime which is perceived to be motivated for other purposes; and informal paternity leave which are not noticed or their importance is minimised or misinterpreted (Pleck 1993: 233). Thus, father involvement does not necessarily have to take the form of parental leave and the change may be underestimated when using parental leave data. This indicator does not capture more subtle increases over time in father involvement and developments towards the dual carer model. As the Estonian system lacks the flexible arrangements and allows making only either-or choices, fathers may be especially inclined to find alternative solutions to achieve the balance between work and family. The Estonian Labour Force Survey 2010 showed that there were 1,300 fathers (1.7% of fathers) who gave up working at least for one month after the youngest child was born to take care of the child (not counting parental leave) and 5,700 fathers (7.6%) state they had shortened their usual working time for at least one month after the child was born (Statistics Estonia database). A More precise measurement of father involvement is needed to record the overall amount of time fathers spend with their children, either in absolute time or proportionately with mother's time (Fulgini and Brooks-Gunn 2004).

Using parental leave as an indicator of the dual carer model has some other shortcomings. The parental leave period is much shorter than the need for care. Parental leave covers at most the first year or few years of the child's life, but not the later need and provision of care. At the same time, the first years of children's life are the most care-intensive and usually require one of the parents to leave work, also there are usually no childcare services provided for newborns.

At the same time, the parental leave data do not show what people actually do when they are on parental leave. The parent may use childcare facilities; there may be alternative carers available – childminders, grandparents, etc. Therefore there is a possibility of overestimating the care provided by the parent and the change in fathers' behaviour. Nevertheless, gender aggregated data on parental leave users is a relatively good indicator of the care and work arrangements between men and women during the parental leave period, where one of the parents is most likely familised to provide care.

3.2. Data and methods

Study I is a background study including an analysis of legislation dating back to 1944 (when the Soviet Union made its first changes in maternity leave legislation), carried out to record the development of parental leave legislation. Media reports and records of parliamentary proceedings from 2003 were analysed, when the parental leave act was first discussed and elaborated. Some secondary data from Statistics Estonia was also used to describe general trends in employment and fertility. Additionally, some interviews with policy makers and experts from the Ministry of Social Affairs were carried out in order to

understand the emergence and developments of ideas into the policy making starting from the end of the Soviet rule late 1980s.

Study II is a qualitative study making use of 20 semi-structured, in-depth interviews. Half of the interviewed fathers had an experience of being at home with children and the other half did not have that experience. The sample was generated through the snowball technique and the fathers' socio-economic background was relatively diverse. Fathers were between 22 and 60 years old, with different educational backgrounds, occupations and number of children. The interviews were transcribed and analysed using the qualitative data analysis software Atlas.ti. One of the limitations of the current study is that only fathers with an Estonian origin were interviewed. In Estonia, however, there is a large non-Estonian community who, according to the gender monitoring (e.g. Vainu *et al.* 2009), are more conservative. It may be assumed that including non-Estonians into the study would have provided additional aspects to the reasoning and argumentation.

In **study III** the social insurance board registry data on beneficiaries of parental benefit is used. The data included families where both the mother and the father had received parental benefit during the period 2004–2007. This comprised altogether 1,440 families. Information on the parental benefit of both parents, number of children and taxable income of women was available. A logistic regression was used to describe the factors influencing mother's employment behaviour during the father's parental leave. The dependant variable in the study was a dummy variable describing whether the mother worked at least one month during the father's parental benefit period. The employment status was regarded as "working" if the mother received some taxable income at least for one month. The following variables were used to explain the employment of mothers: the length of father's parental benefit, the age of the child at the beginning of father's benefit, the number of children the parents have, the age of both parents and labour market status of both parents prior to the child's birth. Data were analysed using the statistical programme STATA.

The shortcoming of the current study is the fact that data on parental *benefit* were used in order to characterise and study parental *leave*. The period of parental benefit does not cover the whole period when the parents are eligible for parental leave – parental leave can be used until child's third birthday while parental benefit is paid until child is 1.5 years old. Moreover, the users of two measures do not coincide fully as parental leave is not a precondition for receiving parental benefit – working while receiving benefit is allowed. As **study III** points out, in 2004–2007 around 60–75% of the male beneficiaries did not receive any income from work and therefore can be regarded as being fully on leave. In other cases it may be assumed that it was economically rational for the fathers to reduce their working hours at least to some extent. These fathers may be regarded as being on part-time parental leave. Furthermore, information on parental leave, even if it were available, would not fit much better for the

purposes of the current study since the cases where the father quits working or reduces his working hours using parental benefit (i.e. he is part-time on leave) would not be recorded. Therefore, the data on parental benefit can be regarded as a reasonable proxy for parental leave to allow some useful insights into intra-family care arrangements.

4. FINDINGS

The aim of **study I** is to shed light on the process behind the development of Estonian leave policy and to understand how policy formation is influenced by the past. The study gives an overview of the development of leave policies and concludes that it shows clear signs of path dependency. In the context of the transition to capitalism where there was a chance to make radical changes, only minor adjustments to the old system were made. In 2004, when developing a new modern scheme with attempts to learn from the example of the Nordic welfare states, the policy learning process remained partial and the objective of gender equality was omitted. Instead, by limiting fathers' access to the parental benefit the leave policy reproduced and further legitimated the traditional gender order and female carer system.

The study suggests that the lack of a gender equality perspective in Estonian policy making is partially due to the coercive ideology of gender equality in the Soviet Union. While the Soviet equality ideology was modern in its ideal of the dual earner family model, the means of achieving it were drastically different. Furthermore, fathers had no role in family life and in reality a model of dual earner/state and female carer model was prevalent. The dual earner model has been preserved until now, but the father's role in the family was acknowledged not before 1991 when fathers became eligible for parental leave.

The aim of **study II** is to demonstrate how fathers in Estonia form their decisions whether to take parental leave or not, and what are the prevalent attitudes that discourage them from making the decision to take parental leave. Using the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen 2005) and 20 in-depth interviews with fathers, the study concludes that the father's decision to take parental leave is not only related to structural opportunities, but is also mediated by beliefs and norms. The study points out three kinds of beliefs that shape the father's intention to take parental leave.

First, there are beliefs about the consequences of his leave, mainly concerning the career and employment, but also the mother's breastfeeding and the child's welfare. Second, there are beliefs regarding social pressures and expectations that the others put on the father. The third set of beliefs concerns the father's perception of the control he has over the decision to take parental leave and his level of skills and knowledge related to childcare. The study discovers that the father's assessment of his parenting skills depends on the image of a "good parent." As the study showed, there is an image of an outcome-oriented "project manager" affected by failure anxiety. Furthermore, there is a much more relaxed image of a "good parent" as a "child's companion" whose role is to be present for the child. Fathers who expect themselves to be the "project managers" are interested in developing children into successful citizens, leaving supremacy in parenting skills to mothers. Even more, according to their belief the mothers' leave-taking is more beneficial for their children.

The aim of **study III** is to show the link between the father's leave-taking and the mother's return or entering to the labour market. Do fathers who are taking up the leave as "new fathers" move the family to the direction of the dual earner/dual carer model and is there a real role reversal which questions the existent gender order and traditional gender roles? Registry data from 2004–2007 is used to analyse the employment behaviour of mothers while fathers are receiving parental benefit. Parental benefit data are used as a proxy for fathers on parental leave.

The study shows that the attempt of familising fathers does not always result in defamilising the mothers. In Estonia, 43.1% of mothers do not work during father's parental benefit. On the family level, it strongly depends on the mother's and father's prior employment status whether she enters labour market when the father takes the parental benefit or not. Mothers whose labour market position has been secured before the birth of the child are likely to be defamilised when fathers became familised. The study observes that familisation of fathers leads to defamilisation of mothers, with less probability in the cases if the mother is of young age or there are four or more children in the family.

The study emphasises that if the father does not become the primary carer and the mother's primacy is not questioned, there may be a little progress expected in moving towards the dual earner/dual carer model. The example of Estonia indicates that fathers use the parental leave policy in various ways. It is possible to find solutions where fathers use parental benefit without changing much the traditional gendered behaviour of mothers and fathers. The study concludes that in addition to the low take up of leave by fathers, the possible impact of parental leave on the movement towards the dual earner/dual carer model is inhibited by the fact that the father's leave does not always lead to the mother's employment.

5. DISCUSSION

A father on parental leave is still a rarity in Estonia. Although the parental leave policy provisions have improved recently to a great extent and the restrictions for fathers have been removed from the leave schemes, childcare still remains a responsibility of the mothers who use the lion's share of the parental leave that is available to the family. Despite the public support and the long tradition of female employment, the movement towards the dual earner/dual carer family model is still modest. Instead, Estonian society seems to display a dual earner/female and state carer model. Using the long and generous parental leave, mothers provide familised care for the first years after which the public childcare steps in most of the cases allowing mothers to return to work. Fathers, however, are relatively new players in this game as Soviet fathers were deprived from the leave rights and the new policies initially defined mothers as primary carers. The eligibility rules of parental leave and parental benefit have treated men and women equally only for the past few years.

5.1. Slow steps of leave policies towards dual carer family model

The family is a micro-process that takes place in a context of macro-processes like policies which create options that are available to micro-actors (Strohmeier 2002). Leave policies and childcare services are part of the macro-processes that directly create options for the family to arrange care for newborns. The eligibility rules, compensation levels, flexibility and conditions regarding employment, exceptions and other characteristics of the policy scheme define the possibilities and, to a certain extent, the costs and benefits of the decision to take a leave.

Study I showed that in 2004, when there was a turning point for Estonian leave policy as the Nordic oriented leave benefit was introduced, the policy making was drawn by two opposite forces. On the one hand there was the path dependency with the force to continue the previous system of long leave, rather supporting the female carer model, and on the other hand there was a new aspiration to differ from the old regime, learn from and to resemble the Nordic countries. The main aim of the new measure was to encourage fertility. From a gender equality perspective the policy making was with a controversial situation – on the one hand there was learning from egalitarian-oriented Nordic countries, on the one hand there was a support of traditional gender division of childcare. The policy learning was partial and the gender equality aim was omitted which led to a policy similar to that of Sweden in some aspects, but with less flexibility and instead of father's quota, access for fathers was initially restricted. Therefore, the scheme generates different gender impacts.

The policy making resulted in a long and very well paid leave scheme which creates good conditions for fathers as well as for mothers to freely choose their care arrangements and to practice the dual carer or even male carer model. One could assume that the generous payment would encourage fathers' leave taking – limited financial support during parental leave is often pointed out as one of the main reasons for low father's take-up (Deven and Moss 2002, Deven 2005: 260, Pleck 1993: 230, Haataja and Nyberg 2006). The share of men among parental benefit receivers, however, remains very low. Data by Statistics Estonia (LFS 2010) show that only 8% of the fathers (age 15–64) with a child under eight years old who did not take parental leave said that the reason was financial. The new leave scheme provides legal rights and financial conditions for fathers to use parental leave, but this is not enough to encourage a change in behaviour. Removing the financial obstacles is a necessary but insufficient precondition for fathers to take parental leave.

Study I notes that when limiting fathers' access to parental benefit, fathers were deterred from taking leave and the female carer model was further strengthened – fathers were not regarded as equal carers with mothers. Moreover, the initial proposal of the benefit that was called “mother's wage” is still deeply rooted in public conscious re-emphasising the mother-centeredness of the policy. This may hamper take-up by fathers as it is still regarded as a “mother's” benefit. The study by Karu *et al.* (2007) notes that not all fathers are even aware of their eligibility for leave and therefore they may not consider this opportunity.

By 2007, Estonian parental leave policy was adjusted to treat both parents nearly equally – fathers can take parental leave immediately after the maternity leave. Therefore the policy should now send out the message that both parents are capable of nurturing and caring for the child. The experience from other countries shows that a gender neutral policy tends to produce a gendered division of care (Ellingsæter and Leira 2006b, Leira 2002, O'Brien 2009). Hence, the Nordic countries have chosen to direct the choices of parents even further by using their *gentle force* in the form of individual eligibility, i.e. the daddy's months. In the context of Estonia, by changing the gender order and encouraging the father's to be more involved in childcare, the same policy instrument may prove to be beneficial. The fathers in Estonia react to changes in policy. The father's take up of parental benefit increased to some extent after removing the limitations. A similar, but more drastic reaction followed the increase of paternity leave benefit from very low flat rate to 100% of previous earnings – the fathers' take up immediately increased four times. Therefore, making further adjustments, for instance, by providing a father's quota or some flexible arrangements in the leave scheme may have an impact on father's behaviour.

5.2. How can childcare be incorporated into hegemonic masculinity?

While the leave policies create options and frame the possibilities for their action, the socio-historical context also shapes individual level decisions. According to the theory of planned behaviour, the normative beliefs, i.e. the perceived social pressure and expectations of the society, are one of the central factors influencing the behavioural intentions. **Study II** illustrates well that fathers perceive the hegemonic masculinity in Estonia to be very work-centred and those who are deviating from the expected pattern in order to take care for their children felt they were perceived as inferior (*losers, different*) or what Connell (1995: 78) would call “at the bottom of a gender hierarchy among men.” A study by Pajumets (2010) concluded that a professional career is a significant source of Estonian fathers’ social approval and professional identity. **Study II** showed that fathers who took parental leave felt a need to justify and legitimise their decisions by providing job-related reasons and felt they were irreplaceable at work, but not that needed at home.

Study II revealed that the perception of the norms in the society does not always coincide with the real experience of fathers who were actually also praised for their decision to care (see also Karu *et al.* 2007). The public opinion surveys carried out in recent years also show quite strong support for the dual carer model. Here the questions arise – to what extent are these traditional images of fatherhood and masculinity really carried by the individuals and to what extent it is an outdated perception of social norms. As Connell (1995) points out, the fact that the hegemonic masculinity is the dominating image of masculinity, it does not mean that it dominates in practice.

It is possible that there are an increasing number of people carrying new values and supporting an egalitarian division, not the hegemonic masculinity, but people are not aware of this. A study carried out by Karu *et al.* (2007) using the same data as **study II** showed that fathers always perceived general attitudes towards parental leave more conservatively compared to their own attitudes. Also, fathers who had not been on parental leave regarded themselves to be more involved and egalitarian than the “average” Estonian man.

The theory of planned behaviour emphasises the significance of *beliefs* in the process of shaping the behaviour. Here it may prove to be beneficial to distinguish between the real pressure from family, friends and workplace to not take parental leave and the normative beliefs which, as the theory of planned behaviour states, do not have to be truthful. As fathers taking parental leave are a new and not widely spread phenomenon in Estonia, fathers can seldom rely on their own or colleagues’ real experiences while developing the understanding on the potential reactions that would follow their decision to take parental leave. As **study II** showed, fathers do not always explicitly discuss their possible leave even with the mothers. Therefore, in addition to well expressed expectations by the people surrounding the fathers, the perception of the wider context and

normative norms may play a role in creating fathers' normative beliefs. The fathers in **study II** felt that Estonian society does not support "active" fathering, although some fathers expressed support for the gendered division of care and felt reluctance towards the rhetoric of gender equality. The negative connotation of similar concepts of feminism and socialist gender rhetoric in Estonia have been noted earlier in the studies (Marling 2010, Kurvinen 2008).

Study I points out that the Soviet Union strove towards gender equality with aims very similar to contemporary European societies valuing equal opportunities and full employment for both men and women. However, in comparison with contemporary democratic societies, the means of achieving gender equality differed radically in the socialist society. Soviet society did not respect personal freedom of choice; employment was compulsory for everyone and the leave policies providing parents the opportunity to care for their children were only available to mothers – fathers had to have no role in family life other than being one of the breadwinners. This coercive way of implementing the equality and the fact that it was limited only to the labour market, not the family, made people resistant and fall back to appreciating the traditional gender division when the coercion was over. Kurvinen (2008) argues that during the transition period, the traditional biology-based gender images were emphasised as a part of the concern for survival of the Estonian nation.

The question is how resistance to these concepts could be changed and how the active fathering could be incorporated into the hegemonic masculinity. Or, how could the masculinity that involves active fathering become the hegemonic masculinity, i.e. the dominant ideal. Treating masculinities as something that is done, not something fixed and learned for life, Deutch (2007) emphasises that changing the gender relations does not require waiting for another generation to be socialised differently. If gender is done, it can be also undone and the attention should be turned to under what conditions and by whom new masculinities can be created. Brandth and Kvande (1998: 311) suggest that it is the hegemonic men themselves who have the influence to change hegemonic masculinity to incorporate new elements, for instance, childcare, into it. Some studies, for instance, Almqvist (2008), indicate some real change occurred in Swedish hegemonic masculinity. Brandth and Kvande (1998) show that fathers who took parental leave incorporated childcare into their regular "masculine" activities. Therefore they did not exchange their place with mothers in order to *mother* (Douchet 2009) the way than mothers do. Instead, they were executing what Brandth and Kvande call masculine care. This may be a key to incorporating fathers care into hegemonic care – by valuing and accepting the masculine care which may differ from the feminine care. In other words, realising that men do not mother (Douchet 2006, Douchet 2009, Unger 2010) and do not have to mother may lessen the resistance of both parents for choosing fathers to provide care. Douchet (2009) argues that fathers too are capable of nurturing, but fathers pay attention to other kinds of nurturing than mothers.

5.3. The image of parenthood as a source of reluctance

Perhaps the most interesting factor influencing the father's parental leave that was revealed in **study II** is the behavioural control and the father's belief regarding whether he has the abilities and skills to handle the situation of parental leave. Some fathers expressed fear and doubts about whether they have sufficient skills and abilities. Whether fathers felt fear varied according to the image of a good parent and parenting the fathers had. The study distinguishes two types of good parenting – 1) the parent as a “project manager,” and 2) the parent as a “companion.” The level of stress and fears that fathers expressed regarding their parental leave depended on which of these two images of parenting they believed in. The first group of fathers who described parenting as similar to project managing were concerned about child's *outcome*, prioritised teaching and developmental activities, and expressed a fear of failure and making mistakes in this process. Together with the belief of supremacy of the mother and her natural skills of parenting, the fathers preferred mothers to take the leave in order to secure the best future for the child.

The second group of fathers saw a role of a parent to be *a companion*. For these fathers teaching the child and providing him or her with knowledge was not primary. Instead their role was to mediate the world to the child and vice versa, to fulfil children's needs. These fathers did not perceive there were better or worse ways of caring for the child and therefore these fathers did not believe in the mother's supremacy. As a result they were not afraid of being on parental leave – they did not perceive there was a possibility of failure or a poor outcome. These fathers felt in control.

Based on previous research, Tulviste and Ahtonen (2007) noted that in the societies with rapid changes, the parents placed significance on characteristics like achievement and independence. Their study comparing Estonia and Finland showed that Estonian parents value smartness as a child-rearing value, while Finnish parents carry hedonistic values more often. These two types of child-rearing values correspond well with the values of the two parenting types found in **study II**. The “project managers” were concerned about educating and child development while the “companions” were mainly concerned of child wellbeing and fulfilling their needs. Therefore, it could be suggested that the “project manager” type is more common to Estonian parents than the “companion” type of parenting. The latter perhaps could be seen as a newer ideal type that is becoming more common in the stable welfare states. Similarly, Pajumets (2007) found that fathers in Estonia valued the time where they are active with the child and can help him or her to develop.

In Estonia, the conviction is that mothers are more capable to care for the child than fathers. **Study II** showed that fathers believe the mothers' supremacy in this field. This, however, is not universal and may be culture specific. Rostgaard *et al.* (1999) summarise a study carried out by Christoffersen in Denmark

in 1990, revealing that only one per cent of mothers and fathers said fathers are not able to take care of the child, while ten per cent of fathers and eight per cent of mothers believed that the mother is better taking care of the newborn baby.

The belief in the mother's supremacy may be significant, on the one hand, in limiting the father's access to childcare and parental leave. Mothers may limit the father's access to parental leave directly, but the influence of mothers may be indirect. Coltrane (1996) finds that mothers who perceive their husbands or partners to be less competent as parents are likely to restrict fathers' access to children. Different studies have shown that the mother's perception of the father's competence plays a role in either encouraging or discouraging the father to be involved in parenting (e.g. Fagan and Barnett 2003, McBride *et al.* 2005). **Study II** supported the fact that the mothers play a significant role in the fathers' decisions to take or not to take parental leave.

Study II raises a question again to what extent the maternal gatekeeping is real or to what extent it is a belief of the father – fathers may assume they know the position of the mother in this question even without discussing the options with her. The lack of negotiations has been pointed out in other studies (e.g. Almqvist 2008). However, again the cultural differences were revealed – there were negotiations in Swedish couples, but not in French couples. At the same time, mothers play a role in creating fathers' perceptions of themselves as fathers and their parenting skills. Therefore, the hindering gatekeeping does not have to always happen through direct prohibition, but may reach fathers indirectly, influencing their possibilities to acquire parenting skills or develop their self-perceptions as fathers.

5.4. Can dual carer politics defamilise mothers?

In addition to changing the gender order and images of masculinities, the fathers' parental leave is expected to contribute to gender equality via direct role reversal. In other words, achieving the dual earner/dual carer model assumes role reversal between the parents – if father starts providing familised care, the mother (re)enters to labour market. As a result, the mothers would suffer less from motherhood penalty. **Study III** shows that the common assumption that the familisation of fathers leads to the defamilisation of mothers does not always hold: parental leave of fathers may not lead to employment of mothers.

The leave policies may be used in various ways and in a society where there have been little changes in values families find possibilities to organise parental leave of fathers in ways that would not question the existing gender order and the traditional gendered behaviour of fathers and mothers. In cases where fathers do not become the primary carers and the primacy of mothers is not questioned, the steps towards the dual earner/dual carer model are slow. The Estonian parental leave scheme does not allow much flexibility for parents to

organize their parental leave. It is largely an “either-or” choice that parents are faced with: they can either choose work or leave. There are few possibilities for combining work and care in a more flexible manner. Working while on leave is allowed, but it comes with the cost of losing some of the benefit. In this policy framework, the dual carer model can only be achieved if the parents switch their roles for some time – the mother goes to work and the father stays on leave. Only about a quarter of those few Estonian families where the father took parental leave in 2004–2007 had chosen care and work arrangements where the familisation happens simultaneously with the defamilisation of mothers.

The analysis in **study III** showed that the mother’s and father’s prior employment status and the age of the mother have the strongest impact on the mother’s employment while the father receives parental benefit. Mothers whose labour market position was secured before the birth more likely returned to employment when the father took parental benefit. Those who were most vulnerable in terms of employment “gained” least from the fathers’ take up of the parental benefit.

Although it is worth noting that while the defamilising impact is limited in these cases where fathers are at home together with the mother of the child, the quality of family life may benefit from this. Further analysis of the data used in **study III** showed that the fathers who had been home together with the whole family, in fact, were the most family centred in their values and attitudes (Karu *et al.* 2007). To conclude, O’Brien and Moss (2010) note that there is still very little empirical evidence on what parents or fathers actually “do” while they are on parental leave. Drawing on the results of **study III** the need for more detailed analysis of the work and care arrangements within the family can be concluded. The policy only draws a general frame for families to arrange their lives, but the family arrangements can vary significantly.

Family policies in general are regarded as being based on social values which are not necessarily corresponding to public demand (Strohmeier 2002). Therefore, the family policy is not only meant to meet the needs and preferences of the families but it can also shape families according to the changing social values. However, Strohmeier (2002) points out that macro-process as outcomes of policy implementation are rather slow while the micro-processes run faster and with more variation. There may be disharmonies between the operation of common culture on the macro and micro level. In the case of the current study, the fathers taking parental leave still seem to deviate from the common culture that is operating on the macro level.

In order to advance father’s leave-taking there are therefore two routes – change the policy or change the fathers. First, it is possible to adjust leave schemes to meet the father’s current needs better – e.g. implementing a father’s quota, prolongation of the duration, increasing the benefit level and introducing flexibility as has been suggested. At the same time, the take-up that has achieved via adjustments to the schemes to make them more acceptable for fathers’ current life styles, do not necessary bring along much change, e.g. the

“feminization of male life-course” as Esping-Andersen (2009) calls it. When women continue being the main carers and fathers can step up or in when it is suitable for their masculine life-course, the current gender order and hegemonic masculinity will not be much questioned or challenged.

CONCLUSION

The aim of the dissertation was to examine the movement of Estonian society towards the dual earner/dual carer model, more precisely, the dual carer aspect of the model and the fathers' use of parental leave were the focus. The theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen 2005) was found to be useful in order to provide some new insights into the process of father's leave-taking. The dissertation is based on three studies making use of different sources and methods to uncover different aspects of the issue under question.

Instead of the dual earner/dual carer family model that is an ideal that the Nordic countries strive for, Estonian society seems to display a dual earner/female and state carer model. The thesis concludes that the leave policies generate conditions and possibilities for the families to arrange their work and care arrangements. At the same time, removing the obstacles is not a sufficient condition in order to change the behaviour as it is deeply rooted within the society. Drawing from the theory of planned behaviour, fathers and mothers base their decisions regarding parental leave on their beliefs. These beliefs are formed in the socio-historical context, influenced by personal experiences and information received from other people.

Study I investigated the process behind the development of Estonian leave policy and looked at the role of the socio-historical context in this process. The study showed that the policy was influenced by two forces – the path dependency with the force to retaining the previous system of long leave supporting the female carer model, and on the other hand there was a new aspiration to learn from and to resemble the Nordic countries. The result was a policy scheme quite similar to the Swedish parental benefit in many aspects, but it lacked some crucial features that were significant in the Nordic countries. For instance, instead of providing fathers with the individual right for leave, the Estonian scheme restricted the access of fathers to the parental benefit. Together with the reluctance towards the Soviet gender equality, the ideology carried out and reinforced to people and the revival of the traditional gender roles in the wake of independence play a role in the policy creation and use. The policy does now provide fathers with legal rights and financial conditions to take parental leave, but the take-up still remains marginal. **Study II** indicated that the hegemonic masculinity in Estonia supports the work-centeredness of fathers and the caring for children is not expected from the fathers.

Study II investigated how fathers in Estonia form their decisions about whether to take parental leave and what are the prevalent attitudes that discourage them from making the decision to take parental leave. The study emphasises that in addition to factual obstacles and resistance from the significant surrounding people, the father's personal beliefs play a significant role. The father can be expected to take parental leave if he assesses the consequences of the leave-taking as positive, he feels others support the decision or even expect him to take parental leave and when he feels he has control over the

decision to take leave. In order for the father to feel that he is able to take parental leave, he also needs to feel he possesses the knowledge and skills to handle the leave.

Fathers for whom the role of a good parent resembles the role of a project manager and whose aim is to lead the “project” (the child) to a successful result, tend to be negatively disposed towards taking parental leave. Previous research on Estonian parenting values indicates that Estonian parents value smartness and achievement as parenting values (Tulviste and Ahtonen 2007) which allows drawing the conclusion that this type of parenting is characterising Estonian parents’ ideals on parenting. Together with the conviction of mothers’ supremacy regarding the knowledge and skills of childrearing, Estonian fathers may find it rational and in the best interest of their children if they do not take parental leave. Fathers with a different parenting image, those aiming at securing the wellbeing of the child rather than educating and developing activities, felt more relaxed towards the childcare, did not feel the fear of failure and were more disposed to take parental leave.

Study III showed that familisation of the fathers does not always lead to defamilisation of the mothers. In other words, father’s leave-taking does not lead to the mother’s return or entering to the labour market. The leave policies are used by the families in different ways and families find possibilities to organise the fathers’ parental leave in ways that allow retaining the existing gender order. If the father does not become the primary carer and the mother’s primacy is not questioned, there may be little progress expected in moving towards the dual earner/dual carer model in Estonia. The study concludes that the movement towards the dual carer model is slow due to the very small take-up of parental leave by fathers and to the fact that nearly half of the cases where fathers take the leave, the mothers are not entering employment.

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SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Lapsehoolduspuhkusel isad Eestis: esimesed sammud kahe leivateenija/kahe hoolitseja peremudeli suunas

Alates 1970. aastatest on Põhjamaad võtnud eesmärgiks arendada oma ühiskonnas sellist peremudelit, kus töö- ja perekohustused oleksid mehe ja naise vahel sümmeetriliselt jagatud. Sellise kahe teenija/kahe hoolitseja (i.k. *dual earner/dual carer*) peremudeli saavutamiseks on rakendatud erinevaid sotsiaalpoliitilisi meetmeid, nagu näiteks lapsehoiuteenused ja lapsehoolduspuhkus. Need meetmed koos soolise võrdõiguslikkuse ideoloogia levikuga on oluliselt soodustanud naiste tööhõivet ning tänaseks võib öelda, et kahe leivateenijaga peremudeli osas on tehtud olulisi edusamme. Eestis, kus Nõukogude võim võttis eesmärgiks saavutada meeste ja naiste täistööhõive, on praeguseni säilinud kahe leivateenijaga ideoloogia ning Eesti naiste tööhõive ulatub üle Euroopa keskmise. Naiste jõulist sisenemist tööturule on nimetatud revolutsiooniliseks muutuseks ühiskonnas (Goldin 2006, Esping-Andersen 2009).

Samas paistab, et revolutsioon on poolel teel seiskunud – naiste eluteedes on nende tööturule sisenemisel toimunud drastilised muutused, kuid sellega ei ole kaasnenu võrdväärseid muutuseid meeste eluteedes. Naised on liikunud töösfääri, kuid mehed ei ole samaväärselt sisenenud kodusfääri, mistõttu on naiste õlul kanda töötaja ja hoolitseja topeltkoormus. Selline meeste ja naiste perekohustuste, ennekõike lapsehoolduse ebasümmeetriline jagunemine väljendub ka soolises ebavõrdsuses, mis on Eestis Euroopa riikide võrdluses eriti suur. Mitmed uurijad (nt. Esping-Andersen 2009; Moss ja Deven 1999) on seisukohal, et tasakaalus ühiskonna saavutamiseks on tarvis kahe leivateenija mudeli kõrval ka kahe hoolitseja peremudeli saavutamist, mis eeldab meeste suuremat panust lapsehoius.

Väitekirja koosneb kolmest empiirilisest uurimusest (esitatud artiklitena, mis on avaldatud kahes rahvusvahelise levikuga eelretsenseeritavas ajakirjas ja ühes rahvusvahelise levikuga kommertskirjastuse poolt välja antud kogumikus) ja ülevaateartiklist, milles on esitatud uurimuste teoreetiline raamistik, uurimuste tutvustus ja tulemuste arutelu. Väitekirja aluseks olevad uurimused käsitlevad Eesti lapsehoolduspuhkust erinevast vaatenurgast, kasutades erinevaid andmeid ning analüüsimeetodeid.

Doktoriuurimuse eesmärgiks on analüüsida kahe teenija/kahe hoolitseja peremudelit Eestis. Ennekõike keskendutakse peremudeli ühele komponendile, hoolitsusele ning selle hoolitsuskohustuse peresisesele jagunemisele meeste ja naiste vahel. Fookuses on lapsehoolduspuhkusel olevad isad. Väitekirjaga otsitakse vastuseid järgmistele uurimisküsimustele:

1. Milline on soolisest perspektiivist olnud lapsehoolduspuhkuse areng Eestis? Millised ajaloolised arengud ja hoiakud on kujundanud ühiskondlikku konteksti, milles lapsevanemad langetavad lapsehoolduspuhkusega seotud otsu-

- seid? Milline on isade lapsehoolduspuhkusega seotud sooideoloogia praegu ning milline on selle areng ajalooliselt?
2. Millistel põhjustel vaid vähesed isad Eestis jäävad lapsehoolduspuhkusele? Millised on isade uskumused lapsehoolduspuhkusele jäämise osas ning mil viisil need uskumused kujundavad isade kavatsust lapsehoolduspuhkusele jääda?
 3. Mil määral viib isade lapsehoolduspuhkusele jäämine ehk familiseerimine emade tööturule sisenemiseni ehk defamiliseerimiseni? Millised tegurid mõjutavad seda, kas naine läheb mehe lapsehoolduspuhkusel olemise ajal tööle?

Väitekirja ülevaateartikkel käsitleb perekonda kahetasandilise süsteemina, kus perekonnasisesed otsuseid võib vaadelda kui mikroprotsesse, mis toimuvad selliste makroprotsesside kontekstis nagu näiteks sotsiaalpoliitika (Strohmeier 2002). Makrotasandi tegurid määravad raamistiku ja erinevad võimalused, mis perekonnal on oma lapsehoiu korraldamiseks. Seega käsitleb töö lapsehoolduspuhkusele jäämise otsust kui indiviidi mikrotasandi otsust, kuid samas rõhutatakse ka ühiskondliku konteksti tähtsust nende otsuste kujundamisel. Makrotasandi teguritest käsitletakse töös ühelt poolt riigi lapsehoolduspuhkuse korraldust, kuid teisalt rõhutatakse ka ühiskonnas levinud maskuliinsuse ning isaduse kuvandi tähtsust.

Uuringus tuginetakse indiviidi tasandi otsuste analüüsimisel kavatsusliku käitumise teooriale (*theory of planned behaviour*), mille abil analüüsitakse, kuidas vanemad langetavad otsuse isade lapsehoolduspuhkusele jäämise kohta. Kavatsusliku käitumise teooria kohaselt käituvad inimesed ratsionaalselt – nad võtavad arvesse kogu neile kättesaadava informatsiooni ning arvestavad otseselt ja kaudselt oma tegevuse tagajärgi (Ajzen 2005). Inimeste loogika ja arutluskäik aga tugineb uskumustel, mis Ajzeni kohaselt võivad olla kallutatud, ebatäpsed või tegelikkusele mittevastavad (irratsionaalsed). Uskumused kujunevad kontekstis, kus inimesed elavad, samuti mõjutavad otsustamise protsessi nii isiklikud kogemused kui ka ümbritsevatelt inimestelt saadav teave. Töös rõhutatakse, et sellise uue nähtuse puhul nagu meeste lapsehoolduspuhkusele jäämine, ei ole inimestel informatsioon piiratud mistõttu ei ole võimalik väga täpselt ennustada, millised on isade lapsepuhkusel viibimise tagajärjed.

Eesti perekonnad järgivad küll kahe teenijaga peremudelit, kuna naiste palgatööl käimine on Eesti ühiskonna tavapäraseks osaks olnud juba aastakümneid ning naiste tööhõive on kõrgem kui Euroopas keskmiselt, kuid kahe hoolitseja peremudelini on veel pikk maa. Pigem on Eestis lapsehooldus jagatud naise ja riigi vahel (*female&state carer*), mitte ema, isa ja riigi vahel. Kõige tavapärasem lapsehoiukorraldus Eesti peredes on selline, kus lapse sünni järgselt jääb naine pikale lapsehoolduspuhkusele ning seejärel pannakse laps laste-aeda. Isa roll lapsehoidmises jääb suhteliselt marginaalseks.

Väitekirja leiab, et lapsehoolduspuhkus loob tingimused ja võimalused pere-dele oma töö ja pereelu korraldada. Samas ei piisa ühiskonnas juurdunud

soolise rollijaotuse muutmiseks sellest, et antakse meestele õigus lapsehoolduspuhkuseks ning kaotatakse muud piirangud. Väitekirj rōhutab uskumuste tōhtsust, mis on mõjutatud oluliselt sotsiaalsest ja ajaloolisest kontekstist, isiklikest kogemustest ja teiste inimeste poolt saadavast infost.

Esimeses uurimuses antakse ülevaade Eesti lapsehoolduspuhkuse arengust läbi aegade ning analüüsitakse, kuidas lapsehoolduspuhkuse ja vanemahüvitise skeemi kujundamine oli mõjutatud perepoliitika ajaloolistest arengutest. Uurimus näitas, et poliitikakujundamine oli mõjutatud kahes vastassuunas mõjuvast jõust – ühelt poolt n.õ. rajasõltuvusest (i.k. *path dependency*), mis väljendub surves säilitada juba olemasolevat, teisalt aga kaasnes iseseisvuse saavutamise soov vanast süsteemist võimalikult palju erineda ning oma arengutega suunduda pigem Põhjamaade suunas. Nende kahe mõjujõu tulemusel säilitati Eestis pikk lapsehoolduspuhkus, millele 2004 aastal lisandus vanemahüvitis. Viimane küll sarnaneb paljudes aspektides Põhjamaisele süsteemile, kuid selles puuduvad Põhjamaadele omased soolist võrdsust soodustavad komponendid. Kui Põhjamaades toetatakse isade lapsehoolduspuhkusele jäämist sellega, et osa lapsepuhkusest on spetsiaalselt reserveeritud isadele, siis Eestis vastupidiselt piirati algselt isade õigusi, millega saadeti ühiskonnale sõnum, et lapsehoolduspuhkus on emade, mitte isade õigus ja kohustus. Praeguseks on küll piirangud isadele likvideeritud ning emadel ja isadel on vanemahüvitisele võrdsed õigused, kuid siiski kasutavad seda võimalust vähesed isad.

Uurimus väidab, et Eestis on sotsiaalpoliitika kujundamisel soolise võrdõiguslikkuse põhimõtete rakendamine takerdunud osalt minevikukogemuste tõttu. Nõukogude Liidus toimus soolise võrdõiguslikkuse tagamine sunniiviisiliselt, läbi hirmu ning karistumehhanismide. Kuigi Nõukogude Liidu sooideoloogia oli retoorilisel tasandil väga sarnane kaasaegsete ühiskondade soolise võrdõiguslikkuse ideoloogia ning püstitatud eesmärkidega, olid selle saavutamise viisid ja meetodid äärmiselt erinevad. Võrdsusest räägiti vaid avaliku sfääri kontekstis ning eesmärgiks oli seatud kahe teenijaga mudel, perekonna tasandil võrdsuse saavutamisest ei räägitud. Naiste tööhõive tagamiseks püüdis riik enda õlule võtta suure osa perekonnakohustustest – isadel perekonnas aktiivset rolli ei nähtud. Kahe teenijaga peremudel on Eestis siiani säilinud ja levinud. Isa hoolitseja rolli perekonnas ei tunnustatud enne 1991. aastat kui koos iseseisva riigi tekkimisega anti ka meestele õigus jääda lapsehoolduspuhkusele.

2007. aastaks on kaotatud piirangud meestele vanemahüvitise kasutamiseks, mis peaks saatma riigi poolt välja sõnumi, et ka mehed on võimelised laste eest hoolitsema. Samas teiste riikide kogemus näitab, et n.õ. sooneutraalne poliitika taastoodab traditsioonilist tööjaotust (Ellingsæter, Leira 2006b, Leira 2002; O'Brien 2009). Võiks eeldada, et Eesti pikk ja väga heldelt tasustatud vanemahüvitise skeem võimaldab lapsevanematel otsustada kahe hoolitseja peremudeli kasuks – finantskaalutlusi peetakse üheks peamiseks põhjuseks, miks isad lapsepuhkust ei võta (Deven, Moss 2002, Deven 2005: 260, Pleck 1993: 230,

Haataja, Nyberg 2006). Vanemahüvitis kompenseerib enamikel juhtudel sada protsenti eelnevast palgast, nii et see takistus on poliitikameetmega kõrvaldatud. Õiguste tagamine ning takistuste kõrvaldamine on küll oluliseks eeltingimuseks, kuid mitte piisav selleks, et toimuks muutust inimeste käitumises. Seetõttu on Põhjamaad rakendanud meetmeid, et isade osalust julgustada – loodud on n.ö. isa kuud ehk individuaalne lapsehoolduspuhkuse õigus isadele. Sellise meetme rakendamine või ka Eestis võib samuti toimida, sest varasemad kogemused näitavad, et Eesti isad reageerivad seadusemuudatustele. Vanemahüvitise kasutamise piirangute kaotamise järgselt tõusis isade arv, kes vanemahüvitist võtsid ja isapuhkuse tasu tõstmise järel tõusis isapuhkusele jääjate hulk neljakordselt.

Teise uuringu eesmärgiks oli analüüsida, kuidas kujuneb Eesti isade otsus, kas jääda lapsehoolduspuhkusele või mitte ning millised on meeste lapsehoiu ja lapsehoolduspuhkusega seotud hoiakud. Uuringu raames viidi läbi 20 süva-intervjuud väikeste laste isadega, kellest pooled olid olnud lapsehoolduspuhkusel ning pooled mitte. Kavatsusliku käitumise teooriale (Ajzen 2005) tuginedes selgus uurimuse käigus, et mees jääb lapsehoolduspuhkusele, kui 1) ta on lapsehoolduspuhkusele jäämise suhtes positiivselt meelestatud ning hindab selle otsuse tagajärgi positiivseks; 2) usub, et ümbritsevad inimesed soosivad tema otsust ning 3) ta usub, et tal on olukorra üle kontroll, st ta saab vabalt ise otsustada ning ta tunneb, et tuleb lapsehoolduspuhkuse olukorraga toime.

Uuring tuvastas, et isade kavatsust lapsehoolduspuhkusele jääda mõjutab muuhulgas see, milline on nende nn hea lapsevanema kuvand. Isade hulgas on levinud kahesuguseid ettekujutusi sellest, milline on hea lapsevanem ning milline on hea lapsevanema roll. Osa isasid näeb lapsevanemat kui „projekti-juhti“, kes suunab oma kasvatustegevuse tulevikku eduka ning toimetuleva tulevase täiskasvanu kasvatamisse ning arendamisse. Siia lisandub veendumus, et emadel on loomumane oskus lapsi õigesti kasvatada, mistõttu loobuvad isad hirmust lapse kasvatamisel vigu teha oma võimalusest lapsehoolduspuhkust kasutada. Vastupidiselt teine grupp isasid nägi lapsevanemas ennekõike kaaslast ning nemad suhtusid laste kasvatamisse rahulikumalt, pidades ennekõike vajalikuks lapse heaolu tagamist praegu ning lastele seltsi pakkumist. Need vanemad isade ütluste alusel ei muretsenud niivõrd lapse tulevikusaavutuste pärast, mistõttu ei kartnud nad ka eksimist. Teisel juhul olid isad lapsehoolduspuhkuse osas märksa positiivsemalt meelestatud. Varasemad uurimused näitavad et Eesti lapsevanemad väärtustavadki lapse kasvatamisel kõrgelt just lapse tarkust ning saavutusi (Tulviste and Ahtonen 2007). See võimaldab arvata, et Eesti lapsevanemad esindavad pigem antud uurimuses leitud ‘projekti-juhi’, mitte lapse kaaslase kuvandit. Kuna laialt on levinud ka emarolli idealiseerimine ning uskumus, et emadel on loomulikud eeldused laste kasvatamiseks, võivad seetõttu vanemad pidadagi lapse heaolu jaoks paremaks, kui ainuüksi ema lapsehoolduspuhkusele jääb.

Olulisel kohal tagajärgede hindamisel ning ühiskonna ootuste kujunemisel on hegemoonilisel maskuliinsusel ehk maskuliinsusel, mis on ühiskonnas kõige

rohkem väärtustatud. Uuring näitas, et Eestis on maskuliinsus töökeskne, mistõttu lapsehoolduspuhkuse kasuks otsustanud mehed tunnetasid, et neid ei peeta mehelikuks ning et nad asuvad soohierarhia madalal astmel.

Samas said lapsehoolduspuhkusel olnud mehed ka imetluse ja kiidusõnade osaliseks, mis näitab ebakõla tegelike kogemuste ning tajutud ühiskonna normide vahel (vt ka Karu *et al.* 2007). Avaliku arvamuse uuringud näitavad samuti, et ühiskonnas on teatud toetus kahe hoolitsejaga mudelile – leitakse, et isad võiksid suurendada oma osalust lapse eest hoolitsemises (Vainu *et al.* 2009). Seega tekib küsimus, mil määral tegelikult inimesed toetavad traditsioonilise maskuliinsuse kuvandit ning kui suurel määral on tegu aegunud sotsiaalsete normidega. Connell (1995) rõhutab, et vaatamata sellele, et hegemooniline maskuliinsus on ühiskonnas domineeriv maskuliinsuse kuvand ja ideaal, ei pruugi seda praktiseerivad seda tegelikult kuigi paljud mehed. Võimalik, et ühiskonnas kasvab uusi väärtusi ja egalitaarset tööjaotust toetavate inimeste arv, kuid inimesed ei teadvusta seda. Karu *et al.* (2007) uurimus näitas, et mehed tajuvad iseenda hoiakuid ühiskonnas levinud hoiakutest oluliselt egalitaarsematena.

Küsimus on, kas ja kuidas on võimalik muuta hegemoonlist maskuliinsust selliselt, et ka lapse eest hoolitsemine kuuluks selle kuvandi hulka. Brandth ja Kvande (1998) pakuvad, et hegemoonilist maskuliinsust saavad muuta ennekõike mehed, kes ise on nõ hegemoonilise maskuliinsuse kandjad. Nende uuring näitas, et meestel on oma maskuliinne viis, kuidas laste eest hoolitseda ning nad inkorporeerivad lapse eest hoolitsemise oma tavapärasesse tegevustesse. Võtmeks võibki olla meheliku hoolitsuse väärtustamine ning teadvustamine, et lapsehoolduspuhkusel olev mees ei muutu emaks.

Kolmanda uurimuse fookuses olid need perekonnad, kus isad on lapsehoolduspuhkusele jäänud. Uurimuse eesmärgiks oli vaadata, kuivõrd isade lapsehoolduspuhkusele jäämine ehk familiseerimine viib emade tööturule sisenemise ehk defamiliseerimiseni. Selleks, et analüüsida naiste tööturukäitumist mehe lapsehoolduspuhkuse ajal, kasutati 2004–2007 aasta registriandmeid. Kuna lapsehoolduspuhkuse andmed ei olnud kättesaadavad, kasutati vanemahüvitise andmeid, mis küll otseselt ei kirjelda lapsehoolduspuhkuse perioodi, kuid mida sai kasutada piisavalt hea lähendina.

Lapsehoolduspuhkust saab kasutada erinevatel viisidel ja ühiskonnas, kus toetatakse traditsioonilist tööjaotust meeste ja naiste vahel, leiavad inimesed võimalusi, kuidas lapsehoolduspuhkust kasutada selliselt, et see ei seaks kahtluse alla olemasolevat jaotust. Eesti lapsehoolduspuhkuse ja vanemahüvitise skeem on suhteliselt paindumatud ning seavad inimese valiku ette, kas töö või lapsehooldus. Vahepealseid võimalusi tööd ja hoolitsust kombineerida oluliselt ei ole – töötamine vanemahüvitise ajal on küll lubatud, kuid see tähendab, et vanemad kaotavad osa hüvitise summast.

Uurimus näitas et, 43,1% emadest ei tööta isa vanemahüvitise ajal isegi mitte ühel kuul. Selgus, et perekonna tasandil sõltub naise tööleminek ennekõike

naise eelnevast tööturustaatuses – need, kes enne lapsehoolduspuhkusele jäämist ei töötanud, sisenesid ka isa vanemahüvitise perioodi ajal tööturule oluliselt väiksema tõenäosusega. Nende naiste puhul, kes olid enne lapse sündi jõudnud endale koha tööturul kindlustada, toimus meeste familiseerimise ajal ka nende endi defamiliseerimine. Analüüsist ilmnes ka, et noored ja nelja või enama lapsega naised jäid pigem isa vanemahüvitise ajal koju kui läksid tööle. Teisisõnu, meeste lapsehoolduspuhkus aitab vähem kaasa nende naiste tööturupositsiooni parandamisele, kes on tööturul kõige nõrgemal positsioonil. Uurimus rõhutab seda, et kui naine jääb koos mehega koju ning mees ei võta lapsehooldust enda kanda, ei seata traditsioonilisi soorolle küsimuse alla ning liikumist kahe hoolitseja mudeli suunas ei toimu.

Kokkuvõtvalt võib öelda, et kui soovitakse soodustada isade lapsehoolduspuhkusele jäämist, on selleks kaks moodust – kas läbi poliitikameetmete muutmise või meeste ja ühiskonna hoiakute muutmise kaudu. Ühelt poolt on võimalik kohandada lapsehoolduspuhkuse ja vanemahüvitise skeeme selliselt, et need vastaksid paremini meeste vajadustele ning soovidele – näiteks soovitatakse paindlike puhkusevõimaluste suurendamise või isakuu rakendamist. Teisalt on samuti vajalik, et lapsehooldus saaks maskuliinsuse osaks ning ühiskond on valmis selleks, et isad teevad muutuseid ka oma tööelus.

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Teadustöö põhisuunad

Lapsehoolduspuhkus, sotsiaal- ja perepoliitika, sotsiaalpoliitika soolised aspektid, töö- ja pereelu ühitamine, isadus.

Erialaorganisatsioonid

International Network on Leave Policies & Research; Euroopa Sotsioloogia Assotsiatsioon; EQUALSOC (EL 6RP)

DISSERTATIONES SOCIOLOGICAE UNIVERSITATIS TARTUENSIS

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