Spouses' resources and adjusting working hours in the Netherlands: differences over time, over the family-cycle and between levels of human capital

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Summary

This study sets out to investigate the influence of spouse's resources on changes in labor supply, which we define as transitions into and out of employment, increase and reduction of weekly working hours. We examine whether the influence of spouse's resources changed over time, and depends on individual human capital and the presence of children. We use retrospective information on labor market careers of 5,685 respondents and their spouses in the Family Survey Dutch Population. We hypothesized that a spouse with much labor market resources gives an incentive to reduce labor supply. This incentive mechanism appears to be at work only under certain conditions, and only for women. First, it applied to women in the past: women whose husbands have much resources used to be less likely to become employed or to raise their number of working hours, and used to be more likely to leave the labor force or to reduce their working hours. Nowadays, women's labor supply is almost independent of their husband's resources. Second, the incentive mechanism is stronger for women with children than without children. Husband's working hours adjustments are hardly influenced by his wife's resources in the past and present.

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Introduction

A spouse who is successful on the labor market contributes positively to the socio-economic position of the household, from which all other household members can benefit. But if a successful spouse means a restriction to one's labor market career, successfulness of the spouse is not just advantageous for individual outcomes. In this study, we will argue that the latter is the case in choices on labor supply, i.e. on labor market participation and working hours. It is our aim to investigate the influence of spouses' resources, defined as education, employment and occupational status, on decisions to adjust labor supply, next to other determinants. We claim that, in order to understand the way spouses affect each others' labor supply decisions, it is necessary to specify the historical period in which these decisions take place, the level of individual human capital, and the child situation of the household.

We follow the argument that decisions concerning labor market participation and working hours are predominantly household decisions and, therefore, do not depend on individual factors only (Bernasco 1994; Blossfeld and Drobnic 2001). The rationale for this is that changes in labor supply have a direct impact on available time and income: for example, the decision to lower one's working hours results in a larger amount of available time and a lower household income. It are exactly these two matters that are necessary for running a household; in order to successfully maintain a household, several tasks need to be done inside the home such as preparing food, cleaning, washing and caring for children (if any), but on the same time the household needs sufficient income to pay for a reasonable living. Decisions on labor supply determine the availability of both time and income in the household, so in order to balance time and money, we can expect that labor market characteristics of both spouses contribute to decisions on labor supply.

From earlier research, it is well-known that the presence of young children has a strong impact on labor market participation and working hours, especially for women (Hendrickx, Bernasco, and De Graaf 2001; Kalmijn and Luijkx 2006; Kaufman and Uhlenberg 2000; Van der Lippe and Siegers 1994; Van Doorne-Huiskes and Schippers 1995). The need for time that can be spent inside the home increases considerably when children are born. The new balance between time and income often requires a reduction of working hours in the household, but as a

consequence of gender roles it usually comes down to a lower labor supply of the mother (Van der Lippe 2001). A standard prediction in the literature about the way spouses balance time and income uses an economic point of view. New home economists argue that the spouse with the highest earning capacities will specialize in paid work and the other in unpaid work (Becker 1981). If we put it less strongly, we can assume that the incentive to work (many hours) is weaker if one has a successful spouse; or in other words, one can afford not to work or to work fewer hours if the spouse has a successful career (Bernasco, De Graaf, and Ultee 1998; Hendrickx, Bernasco, and De Graaf 2001; Sorensen 1983). The influence of individual human capital on labor supply decisions follows an economic logic too: if one has a high earning capacity, it is very attractive to work an extra hour and very unattractive to give up working time (Becker 1962).

Prior research has predominantly supported the economic mechanism behind individual human capital and working hours. Individual human capital, like a high education or wage rate, increases the labor supply of women, either with respect to a higher odds to enter the labor market or to increase working hours, or with respect to a lower odds to become non-employed or to reduce working hours (Bernardi 1999; Elliott, Dale, and Egerton 2001; Hendrickx, Bernasco, and De Graaf 2001; Van der Lippe 2001; Van Emmerik and Hermkens 1999). The same is true for men (Wolbers 2000). However, the human capital hypothesis has also been falsified, e.g. by Van Emmerik and Hermkens (1999) who found, for the Netherlands, that the wife's income reduces her likelihood to work more hours. This result suggests that a high earning capacity makes a lower labor supply affordable, and that this overrules the incentive that is attached to this high earning capacity.

The possible restrictive influence of the spouse has been addressed less extensively in earlier research, and the evidence on this economic mechanism is mixed. On the one hand, there is support for the restrictive influence of a successful husband on female labor supply (Bernardi 1999; Bernasco 1994; Davies, Elias, and Penn 1994; Sorensen 1983), although it is sometimes only found for couples with children (Hendrickx, Bernasco, and De Graaf 2001; Lundberg 1988). On the other hand, some found that wives' education and income do no affect husbands' labor market entry or exit (Bernasco 1994), while others concluded that wives' education is a resource instead of a disincentive for husbands' probabilities to find a job (Brynin and Francesconi 2004), which falsifies the economic hypothesis.

We believe that the inconclusiveness of earlier findings about the influence of spouse's resources on labor supply can be due to a lack of specification of the couples under study, specifically, with respect to the historical period in which they made labor supply decisions, their human capital, and their family situation. Over the last decades, attitudes towards working women and mothers have become much more progressive (Treas and Widmer 2000). This societal change appeared to have a strong impact on the labor supply of women, but might also show up in the way husbands and wives influence each others' labor supply. Since female labor is more and more regarded as desirable, the negative incentive that comes from husbands' resources might have become less influential, whereas the modern view of equal division of labor might have increased the impact of wife's resources on her husband's working hour adjustments. If the way spouses influence each other's labor supply decisions has indeed been subject of change, results depend strongly on the observation window considered. The neglect of a historical perspective in earlier studies might, therefore, be an important reason for the discrepancies between the findings so far. Another condition that presumably affects the way labor market resources of the spouse influence working hour adjustments is individual human capital: a successful husband might induce a reduction of working hours of a poorly educated wife, whereas a successful husband is not enough reason for a highly educated wife to lower her working hours and, as a consequence, her future career opportunities. Finally, it can be argued that the influence of the spouse depends on the family situation, since the presence of young children requires another balance of time and money in the household.

We will make progress on earlier studies by theorizing and testing whether the influence of the partner is different in certain situations in order to enlarge our understanding of the role of the partner in working hours adjustments. This study provides a complete analysis with attention to changes in labor market participation (entry and exit) as well as weekly working hours (increase and reduction) both for women and men. Large scale Dutch data sets (Family Survey Dutch Population 1998, 2000, 2003) with extensive retrospective information on labor market careers of 5,685 respondents and their spouses enable us to observe changes in labor supply from the 1940s onwards, and to specify several relevant groups of respondents. We address the following research questions: (1) To what extent are working hours adjustments determined by the labor market position of the spouse, next to individual human capital and the presence of children? (2) Under which conditions, specified as historical period (1940-2003), individual

human capital, and the presence of children, do spouses' resources influence working hour adjustments?

Theory

We will briefly summarize three general and well-known hypotheses on labor supply that form the starting point in our study. First, we capture the idea that human capital positively affects labor supply in the *human capital-hypothesis*. Wages are strongly dependent on individual's human capital: the more human capital, the higher the wage rate and, thus, the more economic incentives one has to spend time on the labor market (Becker 1962). Also, in order to achieve the present level of human capital, people usually make investments, for example, by spending several extra years in educational training. A high amount of working hours is a means to recover the costs of this investment.

Second, the *incentive-hypothesis* reflects the idea that if the spouse has a favorable position on the labor market, one has few economic incentives to spend much time on the labor market and might be more likely to stop working or to reduce working hours. We can also put it differently: if the spouse has a favorable position, one can afford to reduce his or her labor supply (Bernasco 1994; Hendrickx, Bernasco, and De Graaf 2001; Sorensen 1983).

Third, we formulate the *role specialization-hypothesis*. Women often follow an employment pattern that corresponds with the traditional female role: they work until they marry or have children, they are responsible for the caring tasks until the youngest child is old enough, and then go back to work sometimes (Myrdal and Klein 1956; Sorensen 1983). A man is supposed to work in every situation, but feels an extra responsibility to provide income if he has a family. The presence of a partner and children, therefore, makes women less likely to re-enter the labor market or to increase their number of working hours, and more likely to leave the labor market or to reduce their number of working hours, whereas the opposite is true for men.

We claim that the restrictive influence of spouse's resources on labor supply adjustments, as expressed in the incentive-hypothesis, depends on several factors. First, we hypothesize how the role of the spouse in labor supply decisions is determined by the historical period in which the decision takes place. In times that norms prescribe wives not to work or at least not to work full-time, women will make the decision to stop working or to reduce their working hours as soon as the household can afford it, i.e. when the husband is successful enough. In such a situation,

preferences and opportunities coincide. Nowadays, there is less support for a reduction in female labor supply, and thus it has become less important whether or not a reduction in working hours can be realized. This process might be strengthened by the process of emancipation, that implies that many women want to work anyway, irrespective of their husbands' position (Bielby and Bielby 1992; Sorensen 1983). The result of both societal changes is that *for women, the incentive-hypothesis has become weaker over time*. The existence of this trend has been shown for Britain with respect to female labor supply after first child birth (Joshi and Hinde 1993).

With respect to men, we expect the opposite. In a traditional view, men are supposed to work full-time regardless of his household situation. The modern view that proposes a more equal division of labor between husband and wife does not only imply a stimulation for women to work more, but also a stimulation for men to work somewhat less in order to have time to care for children. Moreover, emphasis on a more equal division of labor between husband and wife loosens the standard of a full-time job, and gives room for reacting to incentives that come from the wife's labor market situation (Bielby and Bielby 1992), which more and more attributes seriously to the household status and income (Oppenheimer 1977). Therefore, we predict that *for men, the incentive-hypothesis has become stronger over time*.

Second, we argue that the degree to which the resources of the partner impose work-related incentives depends on the human capital of the individual him- or herself; we believe that men and women with higher levels of human capital make decisions more independently of their spouses' situation. Following the economic argument, people with much human capital and corresponding earning capacity have a strong economic incentive to spend time on paid labor and have much to loose if they decide to work less or to stop working completely. That is why they are more inclined to let the impact of their own human capital prevail and act more independently from their spouses. High levels of human capital do not only make division of labor unattractive for individuals; new home economists reason that, also for the household, division of labor becomes less beneficial if the earning capacities of the wife are high (Blossfeld and Huinink 1991). These arguments lead us to expect that *the incentive-hypothesis is stronger for people with little human capital than for people with much human capital*.

Third, we expect the presence of children to be an important condition for restrictive partner effects. If we reason from the time and income balance that every household needs, it makes sense to argue that childless couples, which do not experience strong time demands in the

household, have a relative preference for income over time. As a result, their preference to lower labor supply at the cost of household income will be relatively weak, and the incentive-hypothesis applies only little. Couples with children, on the other hand, value time more highly at the expense of some income. Especially in the Netherlands, couples, generally, dislike outsourcing their children for five days a week (Portegijs, Hermans, and Lalta 2006), so the presence of young children induces a preference for fewer working hours. In such a situation, it becomes important whether or not one of the two spouses is successful enough to afford less labor supply of the other. In other words, if children are born, the economic incentives become more prevalent, and thus we derive that *the incentive-hypothesis is stronger for couples with children than for couples without children*. Hakim (2000) argued that women do not make a choice between work and family until they get married or have children. This might imply that the labor market situation of the husband has no influence before the couple has children, and becomes of influence only when children are born. Indeed, Lundberg (1988) found a negative effect of the husband's income on his wife's labor supply only if the couple had children, and Hendrickx et al. (2001) showed that husband's income lowers his wife's likelihood to re-enter the labor market if the couple has children.

Data

We use three waves of the Family Survey Dutch Population: 1998, 2000, and 2003 (de Graaf, de Graaf, Kraaykamp, and Ultee 1998; 2000; 2003). The surveys cover the Dutch population between age 18 and 70 with an overrepresentation of couples. The data are based on structured face-to-face interviews and self-completion questionnaires, which were identical for primary respondents and their cohabiting or marital partners (secondary respondents). The net response rate varies from 40.6 to 52.6 percent, which is very reasonable for these kinds of survey design in the Netherlands. In total, 5,764 respondents (primary respondents and their partners) have been interviewed. Our analyses will be based on a sample of 5,685 individuals who are 20 years or older at the moment of interview. The data contain complete labor market and demographic careers of the respondent and his or her partner until the moment of interview. We analyzed the working hours adjustments of all women and men in our data, regardless whether they were primary or secondary respondents. A retrospective design has been used in which respondents were asked to reconstruct, with exact dates, their careers in several domains. On the base of this

retrospective information we constructed a person-month file, for each respondent starting in the month after one finished school and ending at the moment of survey. We based the analysis on the months in which respondents were between 20 and 55 years of age.

Changes in labor supply

We are interested in four possible changes in labor supply: employment entry, employment exit, increase of working hours, and reduction of working hours. We apply event-history analyses to establish effects of independent variables on the probability to experience one of these changes. Employment entry is defined as finding a job after a non-employment spell, and we record the transition into employment in the month the respondent found a job. The risk set for the analysis on employment entry consists of all months in which respondents have no job (except for the first month of an unemployment spell). Employment exit is defined as exactly the opposite: a transition from an employment situation to a non-employment situation, and the risk set consists of all months in which respondents have a job (except for the first month of an employment spell). Weekly working hours can change either within a job or between jobs, and both possibilities have been put to the respondent. We consider an increase of at least 8 hours a week as a transition into more working hours, and a reduction of 8 or more hours a week as a transition into fewer working hours. This means that we only regard at least one work day more or less a week as a substantial change in the total number of working hours for the household. The risk set for experiencing a change in weekly working hours differs slightly from the risk set for experiencing employment exit, because the months in which a change in working hours took place are not included in the former. The result is that we do analyses on three risk sets: a logistic regression on the probability of employment entry, a logistic regression on the probability of employment exit, and a multinomial logistic regression on the probability to increase or reduce working hours (or to leave the labor force) compared to the probability not to experience an event (or a change of less than eight hours). The number of events for each analysis are shown in table 1.

= table 1 about here =

Individual human capital, partner's labor market capital, children and control variables

There are two general ways to analyze the influence of independent variables on events. One is based on the idea that a decision to change one's working hours is a response to another change in the couple's life, e.g. the reduction of working hours of the wife follows an increase of husband's occupational status. According to this approach, independent variables should be operationalized as events just as the dependent variable. However, people hardly react instantly to an event, and it is difficult to determine how long the time lag between the events will be. To overcome this problem, we use the second way of analysis, namely to model the independent variables as situations. In this case, we analyze what situations induce people to change their labor supply.

We use five indicators for individual human capital. Education has been measured in years of schooling, varying from six years for elementary education to 20 years for a postgraduate degree. Occupational status has been measured by the International Socioeconomic Index (ISEI) (Ganzeboom, De Graaf, and Treiman 1992). In the months that people are non-employed (and thus at risk of experiencing employment entry), we used the occupational status of the last job (if any). Work experience is the total number of months (recoded to years) that a person has been in employment at a particular moment. During non-employment spells the meter remains unchanged and starts running again in the month a new employment spell starts. We added a quadratic term of work experience as well. A dummy variable indicates whether or not people have any supervisory authority over other employees (no children, pupils etcetera). In case of non-employment, we included the information of the last job. Finally, the number of weekly working hours ranges from 3 to 60. Missing values on education, occupational status and working hours have been imputed with mean scores, and dummy variables (score 1 if initially missing value) have been added to the models (but will not be shown in the tables); missing values on supervisory authority have been captured in an extra category. All human capital indicators are time-dependent except for education, since people start to be at risk after finishing education. We lagged all variables one month in order to be sure that they represent the situation before the transition took place.

Information on partner's labor market capital has been added in all months that the respondent had a relationship with that particular partner. The months between the start and end of the relationship are marked as having a partner. We consider the month the relationship

started, that is the phase before cohabiting or being married, as the start of the relationship. In this way, we are able to observe partner effects that, possibly, take place in anticipation of household formation. For ex-partners, only cohabiting or married relationships are considered. Note that we use the term partner and spouse interchangeably throughout the article although we do not distinguish married from other types of relationships. For the partner at the moment of interview, we have complete information; for ex-partners educational level is known in the 1998 and 2000 survey, and last occupation only in the 1998 survey. We consider three partner characteristics. Educational attainment has been measured in years of schooling (6-20 years). A dummy variable indicates whether or not the partner has a job (job=0 and no job=1). We also tried a measure of spouse's labor supply that distinguishes non-employment, small part-time job (1 to 19 hours), large part-time job (20 to 34 hours), full-time job (35 to 40 hours), and more than full-time job (41 hours or more). However, since the results were all non-significant and the inclusion of working hours complicated the solution of missing values on occupational status (see below), we used the dichotomized measure of spouse's (non)employment. If the spouse has a job, we add his or her occupational status measured by ISEI. Educational level is time constant, and labor market participation and job level are time dependent variables. Missing values on partner's educational level and occupational status have been imputed with mean scores. For the part that missing values are the result of the absence of a job, the above-mentioned dummy variable with score 1 for partner's joblessness takes account for the missing values. For the part that missing values indicate real missing information, dummy variables have been added to the models (1 is missing while having job), but are not shown in the tables.

The presence and age of children are classified in three categories and vary over the life course: no children, youngest child is under age four, youngest child is over four and still living in the household, and children have left the parental home (empty nest). This information has been based on the date of birth of every child, date of leaving the parental home of every child (if unknown, we assume the child left home on age 18) and, in exceptional cases, date of death of the child. Children from prior relationships are assumed to leave the home of the father after divorce, whereas children are assumed to stay in the household of widowed fathers and divorced or widowed mothers.

We control for period and duration of being at risk. The earliest transitions are made in 1940 and the latest, obviously, in 2003. We control for period by means of 5 dummy variables:

1940-1959, 1960-1969, 1970-1979, 1980-1989, and 1990-2003. To test whether changes over time have taken place, we construct linear interaction terms between, for example, partner's education and year. Year has been recoded in a way that 0 refers to 1940 and has been divided by ten in order to interpret the changes per decade. The duration of being at risk of experiencing, respectively, employment entry, employment exit, or a change in working hours has been categorized in: less than two years, two to four years, five to nine years, and ten years or more. We will not control for age because it correlates strongly with work experience, especially for men; we believe life stage has been captured well by the presence of a partner and age of children. All analyses will be done separately for men and women. Table 2 shows descriptive statistics for all independent variables for females and males.

= table 2 about here =

Results

Table 3 and 4 show the tests of the human capital-hypothesis, the incentive-hypothesis, and the role-specialization-hypothesis for females and males respectively. The human capital-hypothesis finds partial support, but only for women. In concordance with the human capital-hypothesis, highly educated women are less likely to stop working and more likely to enter employment and to increase working hours, but a high education also makes for a reduction in working hours. To some extent, changes in working hours coincide with job changes, so this result might suggest that employed highly educated women are more mobile in general. Perhaps, it also indicates that highly educated women can more easily afford a reduction in working hours. A high occupational status and supervisory authority protect against a diminishing of labor supply, but does not induce more labor supply. Although work experience typically boosts the earning capacity, it does not lead to more labor supply; it positively affects the exit-chance and negatively affects the chance to increase working hours for women. Perhaps, work experience represents an age effect: people are less inclined to increase working hours as they grow older. Finally, we find that the more working hours in the month before the transition the lower the odds to raise working hours any further and the higher the odds to reduce them, which indicates a ceiling effect. We also see that women who work many hours have a higher probability to leave the labor market.

For men, we find that education positively affects the likelihood of adjusting work hours in an upward and downward direction, and that it does not affect labor market participation. A high occupational status, supervisory authority, and work experience, on the other hand, reduces men's odds to make transitions in both directions. These results imply no support for the human capital-hypothesis for men. The effect of working hours, again, represents a ceiling effect. Although men's human capital contributes significantly to the explanation of changes in labor supply, men's human capital does not follow the economic logic in the sense that men with much human capital, and thus with a high earning capacity, are more likely to expand their labor supply.

Before turning to the incentive-hypothesis, we will first discuss the results on the role-specialization hypothesis. We hypothesized that having a partner and children diminishes the labor supply of women, whereas it stimulates the labor supply of men because of the female caretaker role and the male breadwinner role. Our results provide support for this normative hypothesis: women with a partner are less likely to enter the labor market and more likely to leave the labor market or to reduce their working hours than single women. The opposite is true for men: having a wife increases their likelihood to become employed or to raise their working hours, and decreases their exit chances. In other words, having a spouse supports labor supply of men, whereas it restricts labor supply of women. Furthermore, young children clearly hinder female labor supply. Children in school-going age, however, positively affect female labor supply. This is not surprising if we consider that the results refer to women who are at risk to enter, respectively, exit the labor market or change their working hours at the moment their children are in school-going age. Similar results have been found for Dutch women by Kalmijn and Luijkx (2006). The presence of children does not stimulates men's labor supply, and even lowers their probability to become employed.

We expressed the expected influence of spouse's resources on working time adjustment in the incentive-hypothesis that predicts that a successful spouse lowers the incentive to spend much time on the labor market. Overall, we find little support for this idea. Partner's education, joblessness, and occupational status do not contribute to men's and women's probability to change their labor supply. The only exception is that a highly educated husband makes a wife more likely to reduce her working hours than a poorly educated husband, which is in line with the

incentive-hypothesis. For every year of extra schooling of the husband the wife's odds to start working less increases with 5 percent (exp(b)=1.05)

= table 3 and 4 about here =

The second part of our analyses will make clear whether the incentive-hypothesis has to be falsified completely or whether it applies only to particular historical periods or specific conditions. We will first consider trends in the influence of the spouse on working hours adjustments. Is it true that the incentive for a lower labor supply caused by a successful spouse used to be stronger than it is nowadays? The answer is clearly yes, as far as women are concerned. Figure 1, 2, and 3 depict the trends in the effects of husband's resources on the odds for wives to, respectively, enter and exit the labor market, and to increase working hours (corresponding coefficients are in table 5). A highly educated or high-status husband used to hinder his wife's probability to become active on the labor market. The strength of the effect was considerable: in 1940, a woman with the lowest educated husband was about half as likely to enter the labor market than a woman with the highest educated husband was (odds ratio is 0.470), and the odds ratio of labor market entry for a woman whose husband has the lowest occupational status versus a woman whose husband has the highest occupational status was .166. Over time, the restrictive partner effects disappeared, and even tend to be positive nowadays. The same conclusion emerges from figure 2: husband's education, occupational status, and employment used to increase the likelihood of labor market exit, but this effect declined since the second half of the twentieth century. Partner effects on changes in working hours are less pronounced, but figure 3 shows that women with highest educated husbands were very unlikely to increase their number of working hours compared to women with lowest educated husbands in 1940 (odds ratio is 0.113), but the odds ratio is around 1 at the turn of the century, indicating that husbands' educational level does not longer play a role in their wives' transitions into more working hours.

= figure 1, 2 and 3 about here =

With respect to men, we can be brief: things hardly changed, as can be derived from table 6. One exception relates to a man's probability to reduce his working hours. His wife's education had no

significant influence on this choice in the 1940s (although it tended to be negative), but has become positive nowadays, indicating that men with highly-educated wives are more likely to reduce their working hours. These results lead us to falsify the hypothesis that wives' resources have come to play a larger role in men's working hour decisions, although the greater willingness of men with highly educated wives to reduce working hours might indicate the start of this trend.

= figure 4 about here =

The second condition studied is human capital. The interaction terms between spouse's characteristics and individual human capital are shown in the second panel of table 5 for females and in table 6 for male. Interactions with joblessness of the spouse are non-significant and, therefore, not shown. Indeed, we find that husband's education implies less incentive for reducing working hours for a highly educated wife than for a poorly educated wife: for a wife with six years of schooling, a highly educated husband significantly increases her odds to reduce her working hours, but for a wife with 20 years of schooling, the effect of husband's education has almost disappeared (0.165-14*0.010). However, we also find the opposite, namely that the incentive for a lower labor supply caused by a successful husband is stronger for women with a high occupational status than women with a low occupational status. Spouse's education and occupational status stimulate working hours for women with little occupational success, but hinder women with much occupational success, implying that it are the successful women who feel the incentive from a successful spouse not to increase their time on the labor market. Apparently, the question whether or not the couple can afford 'negative' decisions with respect to labor supply outweighs the foregone income resulting from these decisions. Overall, we have to falsify the hypothesis that the negative incentive from a successful spouse is stronger for women with little human capital.

In table 6, we see that male entry and exit chances of highly educated men are not influenced by spouses' education, whereas wives' education stimulates labor market participation of poorly educated men. So, instead of stronger negative partner effects for people with low levels of human capital, we observe stronger positive partner effects. It is true, however, that highly educated man are less influenced by their wives when it comes to transitions into or out of

employment, which is in line with the idea that much human capital makes labor supply decisions more independent from spouse's resources.

= table 5 and 6 about here =

The final condition we examine, the child situation in the household, appears to be an important determinant for the degree to which the successfulness of the husband restricts the labor market participation of his wife. This restriction on wives' entry and exit chances is stronger if children are present, and the positive effect of husbands' education on childless wives' entry chances disappears when there are children. For childless men (table 6), we find that wives' education has no influence on the likelihood to work more hours, but if the couple has young children, a highly educated wife prevents her husband to work more hours. We can conclude that the expectation that the incentive-hypothesis would apply more strongly to couples with children than without children has been supported.

Conclusion

In this study, we set out to investigate determinants of working hour adjustments of Dutch men and women with a strong focus on the influence of spouse's resources. We claimed that the influence of spouse's resources depends on several conditions, and we studied the influence of historical period (1940-2003), human capital, and the presence of children as relevant candidates. We distinguished four kinds of working hour adjustments: enter the labor market, leave the labor market, increase and reduce the number of weekly working hours. A retrospective design was used to reconstruct the labor market careers of both spouses over a period of over six decades.

The basic hypotheses we started with did not all find support. The human capital-hypothesis that predicts that much human capital and according earning capacity will induce labor supply only holds, partially, for women but not for men. Our results showed more support for the role specialization-hypothesis, again, especially for women. A husband and young children reduce female employment participation and working hours, whereas having a wife makes men more active on the labor market. Children appeared not to be a reason for men to work more as was predicted by the role specialization-hypothesis. The incentive-hypothesis represented our ideas about how the partner influences labor supply decisions. We relied on an

economic interpretation that suggests that a successful spouse lowers the incentive to spend much time on the labor market. In the overall analyses, we only found very marginal support for this hypothesis in the sense that women with highly educated men are more likely to reduce their working hours than women with poorly educated men.

The main result of this study, however, is that the relevance of this incentive mechanism depends on the historical context and the presence of children, and applies only to women. The incentive to reduce labor supply if the spouse is successful strongly implies the need or preference for division of labor within the household. The underlying new home economics argument is, of course, that division of labor is best for the household. Although an unequal division of paid labor within couples exists in the majority of Dutch households, it is less obvious in present times and less necessary for couples without children. This explains why the incentive mechanism is only at work in earlier times and in households with children. Gender roles largely determine why it is the wife that retreats (partly) from the labor market if the couple decides to divide of labor, and this explains why the incentive-hypothesis is (and was) much more applicable to women than to men. The fact that the specification of conditions under which the resources of the spouse mean a restriction to labor supply can be a possible explanation for the inconclusiveness of findings in earlier studies, which hardly paid attention to such conditions.

At the start of the twenty-first century, we can say that both husbands and wives act relatively independently from each other, and that labor market resources of the one have little influence on working hour adjustments of the other. For men, this has always been the case, for women it is a relatively new phenomenon. This finding partly consolidates the outcomes of Bernasco's (1994) study in which he was unable to distinguish trends: overall, husband's resources affect labor supply of the wife, but not vice versa. However, this is not the story of present day society. This conclusion fits Hakim's (2000) argument that, in present times, women are relatively free to choose whether and how much they want to work. Their decisions depend less on the household situation than they did before.

Although we understand that spouses' occupational *level* is a stronger determinant for the household's socio-economic position than spouses' labor *supply*, the results of this study suggest that inequality between households has increased over time. The traditional pattern that a successful husband reduced the labor supply of his wife had a repressive effect on the socio-economic inequality between households. After all, the labor market activity of the wife of a

successful husband was typically restricted, while the labor supply of wife of a less successful husband was stimulated. The disappearance of this repressive effect could imply increased inequality.

The Netherlands is often said to be a country with progressive attitudes towards working women and couples' division of labor, but that this is not represented in actual behavior of the Dutch (Kalmijn and Luijkx 2006; Treas and Widmer 2000). It is true that the proportion of women that is employed is not extremely low compared to other West-European countries, but the proportion of full-time working women is; the Netherlands is considered a part-time working country. Also among men, the Dutch have a relatively high proportion of part-time workers in a cross-national perspective (Delsen 1998), but this percentage is still only about 14 percent in 2003 (Lucassen 2004). However, the results in this study, perhaps, revealed a beginning of a trend towards 'modern husbands'. In contrast to earlier decades, husbands with highly educated wives have a higher tendency to reduce their weekly working hours nowadays.

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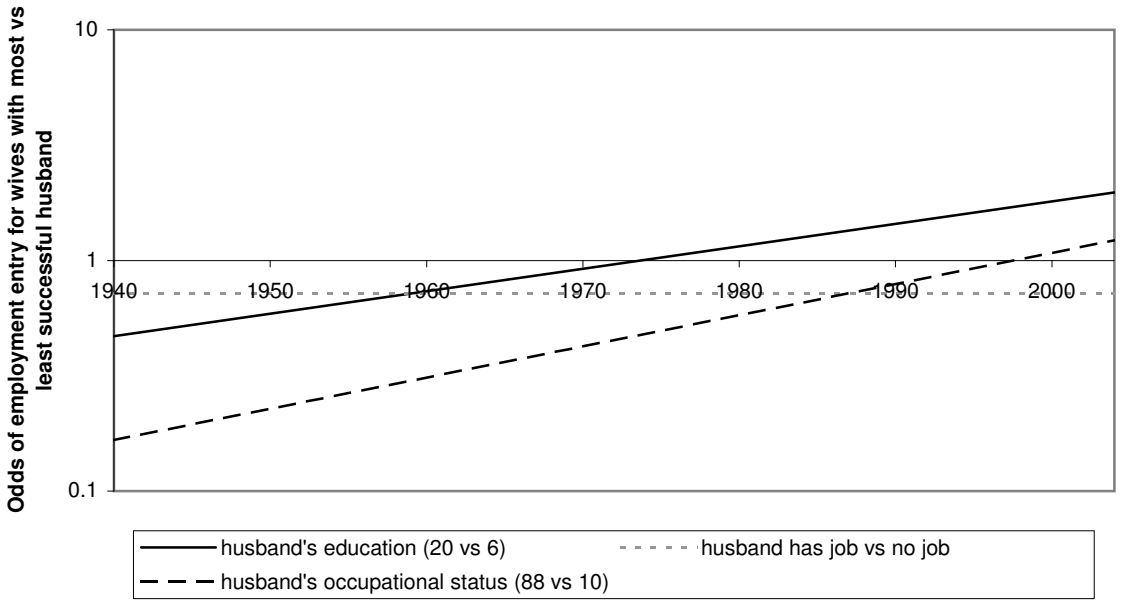
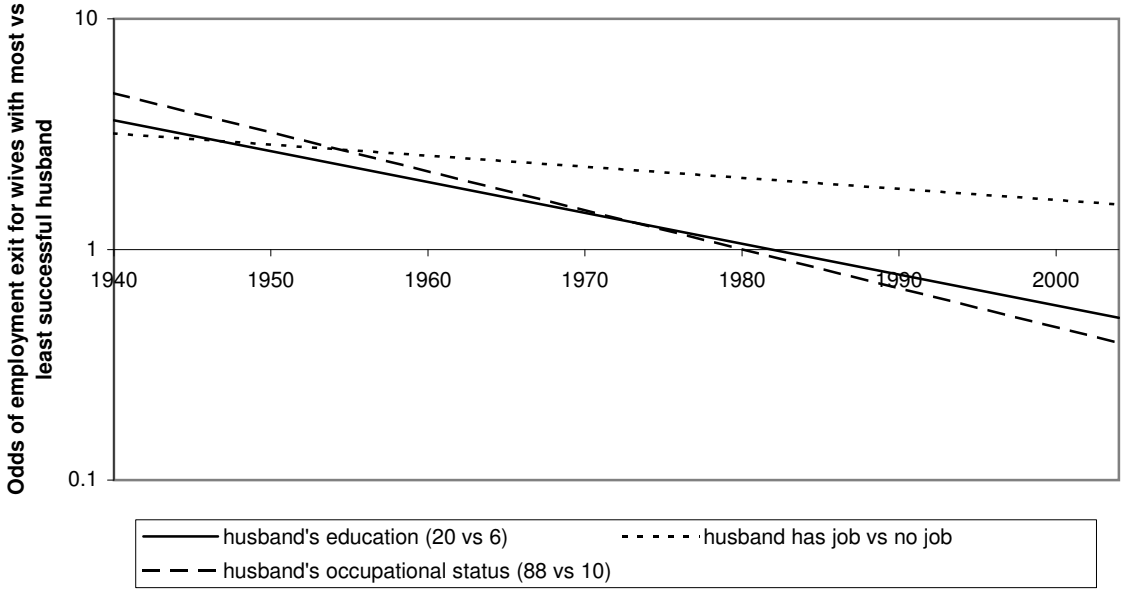
Figure 1: Trends in effects of husbands' resources on wives' probability of employment entry



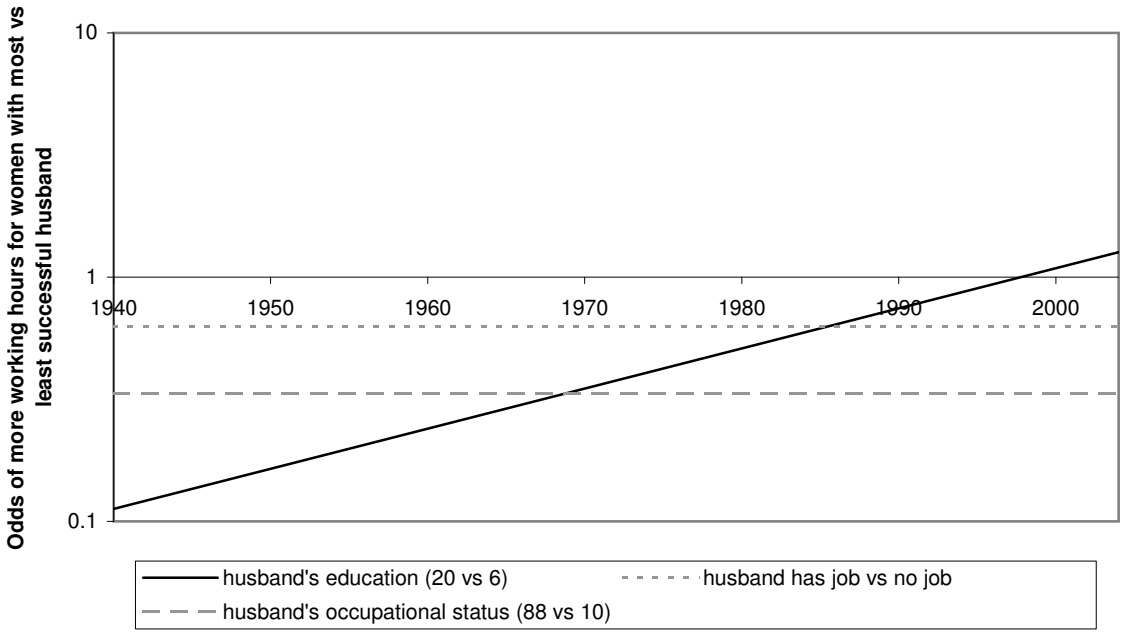
Source: Family Survey Dutch Population 1998, 2000, 2003

Figure 2: Trends in effects of husbands' resources on wives' probability of employment exit



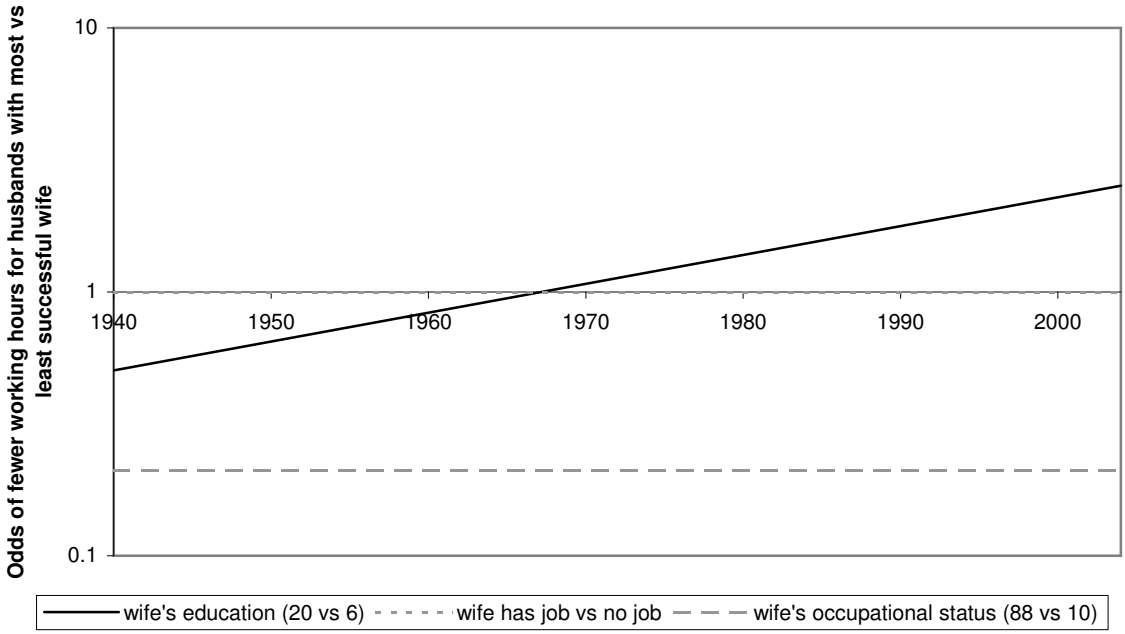
Source: Family Survey Dutch Population 1998, 2000, 2003

Figure 3: Trends in effects of husbands' resources on wives' probability to increase working hours



Source: Family Survey Dutch Population 1998, 2000, 2003

Figure 4: Trends in effects of wives' resources on husbands' probability to reduce working hours



Source: Family Survey Dutch Population 1998, 2000, 2003

Table 1: Number of events of labor market entry and exit and changing working hours for females and males

	females		males	
	total	**with partner**	**total**	**with partner**
no event	329,051	307,145	89,797	71,479
entry	1,256	1,091	845	569
total	330,307	308,236	90,642	72,048
N respondents	1,899	1,796	1,118	875
no event	383,337	327,307	639,174	562,568
exit	1,873	1,713	741	530
total	385,210	329,020	639,915	563,098
N respondents	2,524	2,404	2,544	2,411
no event	375,477	320,083	634,635	558,842
more hours	571	479	560	464
fewer hours	998	905	574	472
leaving labor force	1,875	1,715	742	531
total	378,921	323,182	636,511	560,309
N respondents	2,521	2,402	2,539	2,408

Source: Family Survey Dutch Population 1998, 2000, 2003

Table 2: Statistics of independent variables (only from non-missing observations) [a)]

	at risk for labor market entry [b)]						at risk for labor market exit [c)]					
	females			males			females			males		
	N	mean	st dev	N	mean	st dev	N	mean	st dev	N	mean	st dev
year												
1940-1959	1899	0.02		1118	0.07		2524	0.05		2544	0.03	
1960-1969	1899	0.08		1118	0.08		2524	0.09		2544	0.07	
1970-1979	1899	0.17		1118	0.14		2524	0.13		2544	0.14	
1980-1989	1899	0.28		1118	0.32		2524	0.22		2544	0.24	
1990-2004	1899	0.46		1118	0.39		2524	0.52		2544	0.52	
duration												
< 2 years	1893	0.32		1114	0.64		2518	0.22		2533	0.13	
2-4 years	1893	0.15		1114	0.12		2518	0.19		2533	0.12	
5-9 years	1893	0.25		1114	0.13		2518	0.39		2533	0.29	
> 10 years	1893	0.27		1114	0.11		2518	0.20		2533	0.46	
human capital												
education (6-20)	1888	11.11	3.06	1115	12.04	3.28	2515	11.80	3.01	2535	12.09	3.26
occupational status last job (10-88)	1545	45.56	14.30	681	42.42	14.35						
occupational status (10-88)							2508	47.04	14.02	2534	48.05	14.11
work experience (0-39)	1899	6.32	5.88	1118	5.93	9.67	2524	7.48	4.97	2544	11.62	6.10
work experience square (0-1521)	1899	77.03	149.27	1118	131.85	298.10	2524	101.31	121.79	2544	218.56	178.42
working hours (3-60)							2513	32.61	9.26	2538	41.23	6.57
supervising last job	1556	0.13		688	0.20							
supervising							2512	0.15		2538	0.35	
partner resources												
having partner	1899	0.91		1118	0.70		2524	0.86		2544	0.85	
partner education (6-20)	1687	11.83	3.29	825	11.55	3.23	2252	12.20	3.17	2309	11.52	3.03
partner no job	1899	0.12		1118	0.31		2524	0.11		2544	0.34	
partner occupational status (10-88)	1490	48.14	14.92	539	47.30	15.45	2036	48.43	14.68	2044	47.00	14.06
children												
no children	1899	0.30		1118	0.75		2519	0.70		2544	0.54	
youngest child < 4	1899	0.40		1118	0.11		2519	0.12		2544	0.22	
youngest child > 4	1899	0.30		1118	0.15		2519	0.17		2544	0.23	
empty nest	1899	0.00		1118	0.00		2519	0.00		2544	0.00	

[a)] average of all months per respondent

[b)] based on the sample of months in which respondent is between 20 and 55 of age and at risk to experience labor market entry

[b)] based on the sample of months in which respondent is between 20 and 55 of age and at risk to experience labor market exit

Source: Family Survey Dutch Population 1998, 2000, 2003

Table 3: Effects of human capital, partner's resources and children on females' probability of labor market exit and entry and transitions into more or fewer hours

FEMALES	entry				exit				more hours				fewer hours			
	all respondents		with partner		all respondents		with partner		all respondents		with partner		all respondents		with partner	
	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se
intercept	-5.454 **	0.264	-6.553 **	0.373	-5.205 **	0.197	-4.283 **	0.206	-4.430 **	0.555	-5.853 **	1.037	-10.719 **	0.375	-10.329 **	0.422
year 1940-1959 (ref)																
year 1960-1969	0.033	0.244	0.427	0.358	0.179	0.118	0.195	0.125	0.712	0.540	1.706	1.026	0.451	0.324	0.522	0.370
year 1970-1979	0.490 *	0.227	0.967 **	0.344	-0.108	0.117	-0.167	0.124	0.561	0.521	1.426	1.013	0.848 **	0.307	0.965 **	0.350
year 1980-1989	0.566 *	0.225	1.048 **	0.343	-0.542 **	0.119	-0.652 **	0.126	0.849	0.510	1.712	1.007	1.364 **	0.300	1.425 **	0.344
year 1990-2004	1.052 **	0.223	1.571 **	0.341	-0.648 **	0.120	-0.799 **	0.127	1.033 *	0.509	1.894	1.005	1.724 **	0.300	1.764 **	0.344
duration < 2 years (ref)																
duration 2-4 years	-0.608 **	0.091	-0.572 **	0.100	-0.163	0.087	-0.066	0.093	-0.290 *	0.116	-0.233	0.128	0.001	0.102	0.046	0.110
duration 5-9 years	-0.945 **	0.078	-0.884 **	0.084	-0.064	0.084	-0.004	0.090	-0.378 **	0.122	-0.282 *	0.133	0.033	0.100	0.088	0.107
duration > 10 years	-2.080 **	0.092	-2.000 **	0.099	-0.342 **	0.119	-0.261 *	0.125	-0.494 **	0.187	-0.311	0.199	0.262	0.135	0.322 *	0.142
human capital																
education	0.085 **	0.011	0.095 **	0.013	-0.045 **	0.009	-0.051 **	0.010	0.052 **	0.017	0.073 **	0.021	0.059 **	0.013	0.035 *	0.015
occ status [a)]	0.004	0.002	0.003	0.002	-0.005 **	0.002	-0.004 *	0.002	0.001	0.003	0.002	0.003	-0.012 **	0.002	-0.014 **	0.002
work experience	-0.024	0.016	-0.025	0.018	0.010	0.015	0.017	0.017	-0.115 **	0.020	-0.128 **	0.022	-0.013	0.019	-0.013	0.020
work experience square	-0.001	0.001	-0.001	0.001	-0.001	0.000	-0.001 **	0.001	0.002 **	0.001	0.003 **	0.001	-0.001 *	0.001	-0.001	0.001
working hours [b)]					0.016 **	0.002	0.017 **	0.002	-0.087 **	0.004	-0.088 **	0.005	0.080 **	0.003	0.082 **	0.004
supervising [a)]	0.096	0.094	0.076	0.100	-0.232 **	0.070	-0.231 **	0.074	-0.113	0.138	-0.109	0.151	-0.323 **	0.089	-0.335 **	0.094
partner																
having partner	-0.360 **	0.092			0.847 **	0.085			-0.203	0.123			0.707 **	0.113		
partner job (ref)																
partner no job			-0.119	0.097			-0.115	0.078			0.152	0.140			-0.040	0.105
partner education			0.020	0.012			0.005	0.010			-0.021	0.018			0.049 **	0.014
partner occ status			-0.002	0.003			-0.002	0.002			0.006	0.004			-0.002	0.003
children																
no children (ref)																
youngest child < 4	-0.887 **	0.081	-0.857 **	0.085	0.613 **	0.063	0.632 **	0.065	-1.165 **	0.160	-1.168 **	0.166	0.905 **	0.083	0.925 **	0.085
youngest child > 4	0.256 **	0.080	0.275 **	0.086	-0.572 **	0.088	-0.555 **	0.092	-0.322 **	0.117	-0.273 *	0.122	-0.377 **	0.128	-0.381 **	0.133
empty nest	n.e.		n.e.		0.052	1.004	0.195	1.004	n.e.		n.e.		n.e.		n.e.	
N respondents	*1,899*		*1,796*		*2,524*		*2,404*		*2,521*		*2,402*		*2,521*		*2,402*	
N respondent-months	*330,307*		*308,236*		*385,210*		*329,020*		*378,921*		*323,182*		*378,921*		*323,182*	
N events	*1,256*		*1,091*		*1,873*		*1,713*		*571*		*479*		*998*		*905*	

** p<.01; * p<.05; n.a. not estimated

[a)] in the analysis on labor market entry, occupational status and supervising authority refer to last job

[b)] in the analysis on labor market entry, working hours are not included

Source: Family Survey Dutch Population 1998, 2000, 2003

Table 4: Effects of human capital, partner's resources and children on males' probability of labor market exit and entry and transitions into more or fewer hours

MALES	entry				exit				more hours				fewer hours			
	all respondents		with partner		all respondents		with partner		all respondents		with partner		all respondents		with partner	
	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se
intercept	-3.279 **	0.199	-3.069 **	0.294	-4.562 **	0.335	-4.868 **	0.461	-2.628 **	0.321	-2.657 **	0.431	-12.089 **	0.365	-11.748 **	0.450
year 1940-1959 (ref)																
year 1960-1969	0.086	0.159	0.156	0.227	-0.196	0.194	-0.350	0.285	-0.088	0.228	0.184	0.286	0.312	0.201	0.330	0.251
year 1970-1979	0.123	0.148	0.156	0.208	-0.089	0.180	-0.185	0.261	-0.392	0.220	-0.291	0.282	0.079	0.203	0.042	0.250
year 1980-1989	0.110	0.135	0.188	0.198	0.182	0.170	0.203	0.252	-0.318	0.211	-0.241	0.276	0.251	0.197	0.120	0.248
year 1990-2004	0.219	0.139	0.266	0.202	0.091	0.172	0.106	0.256	-0.197	0.207	-0.076	0.275	0.421 *	0.193	0.215	0.246
duration < 2 years (ref)																
duration 2-4 years	-0.422 **	0.088	-0.453 **	0.109	-0.569 **	0.119	-0.734 **	0.159	-0.313 *	0.126	-0.387 **	0.142	-0.066	0.137	-0.173	0.157
duration 5-9 years	-1.744 **	0.122	-1.918 **	0.149	-1.093 **	0.132	-1.155 **	0.156	-0.725 **	0.130	-0.870 **	0.141	-0.235	0.128	-0.313 *	0.141
duration > 10 years	-3.748 **	0.264	-3.959 **	0.318	-1.827 **	0.197	-1.893 **	0.215	-1.149 **	0.174	-1.268 **	0.180	-0.718 **	0.167	-0.802 **	0.176
human capital																
education	0.011	0.013	0.012	0.017	-0.022	0.014	-0.036 *	0.018	0.034 *	0.017	0.038 *	0.019	0.058 **	0.016	0.043 *	0.018
occ status [a]	0.000	0.003	0.002	0.004	-0.012 **	0.003	-0.013	0.004	-0.013 **	0.003	-0.012 **	0.004	-0.011 **	0.003	-0.012 **	0.004
work experience	-0.036 *	0.018	-0.027	0.021	-0.070 **	0.021	-0.070 **	0.023	-0.002	0.022	0.008	0.024	-0.007	0.021	-0.005	0.023
work experience square	-0.001	0.001	-0.001	0.001	0.003	0.000	0.002 **	0.001	-0.002 *	0.001	-0.002	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.001
working hours [b]					0.010 *	0.005	0.013 *	0.006	-0.079 **	0.004	-0.078 **	0.005	0.119 **	0.005	0.119 **	0.005
supervising [a]	0.024	0.117	-0.009	0.138	-0.399 **	0.093	-0.310 **	0.104	-0.293 **	0.103	-0.304 **	0.111	-0.523 **	0.098	-0.406 **	0.105
partner																
having partner	0.225 **	0.080			-0.437 **	0.093			0.257 *	0.122			-0.032	0.121		
partner job (ref)																
partner no job			-0.136	0.094			0.364 **	0.098			0.007	0.107			-0.061	0.106
partner education			0.003	0.018			0.015	0.019			-0.015	0.020			0.030	0.020
partner occ status			-0.001	0.004			-0.006	0.005			0.005	0.005			-0.007	0.005
children																
no children (ref)																
youngest child < 4	-0.373 **	0.130	-0.380 **	0.140	-0.072	0.123	-0.115	0.131	-0.100	0.120	-0.148	0.129	-0.153	0.119	-0.175	0.129
youngest child > 4	-0.461 **	0.159	-0.485 **	0.171	0.013	0.130	-0.046	0.141	0.154	0.156	0.107	0.163	-0.057	0.143	-0.093	0.154
empty nest	n.e.		n.e.		1.348	0.718	0.726	1.009	n.e.		n.e.		n.e.		n.e.	
N respondents	*1,118*		*875*		*2,544*		*2,411*		*2,539*		*2,408*		*2,539*		*2,408*	
N respondent-months	*90,642*		*72,048*		*639,915*		*563,098*		*636,511*		*560,309*		*636,511*		*560,309*	
N events	*845*		*569*		*741*		*530*		*560*		*464*		*574*		*472*	

** p<.01; * p<.05; n.a. not estimated

[a] in the analysis on labor market entry, occupational status and supervising authority refer to last job

[b] in the analysis on labor market entry, working hours are not included

Source: Family Survey Dutch Population 1998, 2000, 2003

Table 5: Influence of the spouse by individual human capital, children, and year on females' probability of labor market entry or exit and the transition into more or fewer hours [a)]

FEMALES	entry		exit		more hours		fewer hours	
	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se
partner resources * year								
partner education	-0.054	0.030	0.092 **	0.020	-0.156 **	0.047	0.037	0.034
* year	0.016 **	0.006	-0.022 **	0.004	0.027 **	0.009	0.003	0.006
partner job (ref)								
partner no job	0.329	0.471	-1.157 **	0.281	0.461	0.748	-0.285	0.539
* year	-0.095	0.099	0.251 **	0.063	-0.063	0.152	0.052	0.110
partner occ status	-0.023 **	0.007	0.020 **	0.005	-0.014	0.012	0.001	0.008
* year	0.004 **	0.001	-0.005 **	0.001	0.004	0.002	-0.001	0.002
partner resources * human captial								
partner education	0.065	0.037	0.029	0.031	0.066	0.069	0.165 **	0.054
* education	-0.004	0.003	-0.002	0.003	-0.007	0.005	-0.010 *	0.004
partner education	0.067 *	0.034	-0.010	0.026	0.099 *	0.049	0.035	0.037
* occupational status	-0.001	0.001	0.000	0.001	-0.003 **	0.001	0.000	0.001
partner occ status	0.004	0.009	-0.001	0.007	0.016	0.016	0.005	0.012
* education	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.001	-0.001	0.001	-0.001	0.001
partner occ status	0.009	0.008	-0.002	0.006	0.029 **	0.011	-0.001	0.008
* occupational status	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.001 *	0.000	0.000	0.000
partner resources * child situation								
partner education	0.069 **	0.020	-0.011	0.011	-0.011	0.023	0.040 *	0.017
* no child (ref)								
* child <4	-0.072 **	0.026	0.035	0.019	-0.040	0.050	0.040	0.026
* child >4	-0.065 **	0.023	0.054 *	0.024	-0.017	0.031	-0.024	0.038
* empty nest	n.e.		0.167	0.310	n.e.		n.e.	
partner occ status	0.007	0.004	0.000	0.003	0.005	0.005	-0.002	0.003
* no child (ref)								
* child <4	-0.014 *	0.006	-0.006	0.004	-0.012	0.012	-0.005	0.006
* child >4	-0.011 *	0.005	-0.003	0.006	0.006	0.007	0.016	0.009
* empty nest	n.e.		-0.010	0.075	n.e.		n.e.	

** p<.01; * p<.05; n.a. not estimated

[a)] every interaction term has been added separately to the baseline model;

interactions with having partner are based on the sample with months of all respondents,

interaction with partner's resources based on the sample with months in which respondents have partner

[a)] in the analysis on labor market entry, occupational status and supervising authority refer to last job

Source: Family Survey Dutch Population 1998, 2000, 2003

Table 6: Influence of the spouse by individual human capital, children, and year on males' probability of labor market entry or exit and the transition into more or fewer hours [a)]

MALES	entry		exit		more hours		fewer hours	
	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se
partner resources * year								
parnter education	-0.038	0.042	-0.007	0.046	0.001	0.045	-0.049	0.044
* year	0.009	0.008	0.005	0.009	-0.004	0.009	0.018 *	0.009
partner job (ref)								
partner no job	-0.095	0.345	-0.160	0.374	0.028	0.373	0.004	0.345
* year	-0.009	0.077	0.115	0.079	-0.006	0.081	-0.016	0.077
partner occ status	0.000	0.009	0.001	0.012	0.010	0.012	-0.020	0.011
* year	0.000	0.002	-0.002	0.002	-0.001	0.002	0.003	0.002
partner resources * human captial								
partner education	0.135 *	0.058	-0.113 *	0.051	-0.056	0.061	-0.010	0.057
* education	-0.011 *	0.004	0.011 **	0.004	0.003	0.005	0.003	0.004
partner education	0.026	0.052	0.008	0.049	-0.007	0.053	-0.059	0.050
* occupational status [b)]	-0.001	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.002	0.001
partner occ status	0.018	0.016	0.002	0.017	-0.021	0.017	-0.026	0.017
* education	-0.002	0.001	-0.001	0.001	0.002	0.001	0.002	0.001
partner occ status	0.016	0.015	0.013	0.015	0.010	0.015	-0.002	0.014
* occupational status [b)]	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
partner resources * child situation								
partner education	-0.021	0.021	0.031	0.024	0.028	0.026	0.002	0.026
* no child (ref)								
* child <4	0.075	0.040	0.014	0.040	-0.093 *	0.038	0.075	0.038
* child >4	0.076	0.048	-0.069	0.038	-0.079	0.041	0.030	0.040
* empty nest	n.e.		n.e.		n.e.		n.e.	
partner occ status	-0.004	0.005	-0.008	0.006	0.003	0.006	-0.008	0.006
* no child (ref)								
* child <4	-0.002	0.014	0.009	0.015	0.002	0.012	-0.002	0.012
* child >4	0.028 *	0.013	0.004	0.011	0.009	0.011	0.006	0.011
* empty nest	n.e.		0.020	0.113	n.e.		n.e.	

** p<.01; * p<.05; n.e. not estimated

[a)] every interaction term has been added separately to the baseline model;
interactions with having partner are based on the sample with months of all respondents,
interaction with partner's resources based on the sample with months in which respondents have partner

[b)] in the analysis on labor market entry, occupational status and supervising authority refer to last job

Source: Family Survey Dutch Population 1998, 2000, 2003