Colloquium on Global Diversity

Parental Leave: How Long is Enough Time?

February 28th, 2020

Ursula Schwarzenbart
A quick reminder......

... it is called **parental** leave....

...and not **mothers**‘ leave
Terminology

Maternity leave/protection

a period in which a woman is legally allowed to be absent from work in the weeks before and after she gives birth

Parental leave

entitles men and women workers to an individual right to leave on the grounds of the birth or adoption of a child to take care of that child

Paternity leave

leave to be taken by fathers, mostly in parallel with maternity leave and before they take up parental leave

Allowances are based on national regulations

Source: see backup page 12
Example: Combined maternity and parental leave duration EU

Average:
97,8 weeks
(24,45 months)

Highest:
195,5 weeks
(48,89 months)
(Poland)

Note: for the sake of purpose and simplicity without paternity leave. Year of study: 2015

Source: see backup page 12
Example: Legal situation in Germany

Maternity protection
Parental leave

6 weeks
8 weeks

100% salary for 14 weeks

Up to 34 months
(max. 36 months incl. 8 weeks maternity protection, partly until the age of 8)

Up to 65% of last net income (max. 1,800€, min. 300€) for 12 months or 14 months, if the partner is also taking 2 months. Different options e.g. 24 months with half payment amount, funded by the government

Source: see backup page 12
Additional, unpaid leave options voluntarily granted by companies in Germany

Termination agreement with reintegration commitment

Family leave
(time out up to 10 years for both women and men)

Qualification leave
(time out up to 5 years, also possible in block part-time)

Care break
(Exemption for care up to max 3 years)

Sabbatical
(time out from 3 -12 months)

Unpaid special leave
(time out up to 3 months)

Care leave
(Exemption for care up to max. 12 months)

*incl. continuation of pension contributions
How are longer parental leaves impacting women’s career?

Here are some facts related to Germany

- 52% German employees see part-time jobs as “career killers”

- 66% nevertheless of the mothers work part-time after birth compared to 5,8% of fathers in 2018

- 10% Women who are taking more than one year parental leave, are earning on an average about 10% less per hour compared to women without parental leave

- 87% Fulltime employed couples perceive a culture of presence at work

- 23,7% Fathers claimed parental allowances in 2018

- 76,3% Mothers claimed parental allowances in 2018

Source: see backup page 12
How are longer parental leaves impacting women’s career?

Informal aspects („unwritten rules“ perspective with mostly universal portability)

Motherhood is seen as an expression of a lack of career ambition/orientation.

The longer women are away or work part-time, the more difficult to catch up with career ambitions due to decreasing visibility, shrinking networks and organizational changes.

Re-integration below the qualification and mostly in part-time with few demanding tasks.

Less professional experience due to longer career breaks and fewer weekly working hours.

Employers attach great importance to personal presence in the workplace and availability outside of normal working hours by email or phone.

Source: see backup page 12
How are longer parental leaves impacting women’s career?

Longer leaves are counteracting succeeding factors within organizations…
(perspective with mostly universal portability)

Important factors to succeed within organizations

• Full-time job
• Visibility
• Presence
• Reachability
• Experience
• …..

Situation of female employees with children

• Working mostly in part-time, due to child-care and organization of family life
• Limited presence and reachability
• Experiences gaps due to leaves

Career implications

• Others might be preferred for promotions
• Tendency for jobs in interface-functions or niches
• Lower payment
Thank you very much for your attention!
Any questions?
Sources:

**Page 3:**


**Page 4:**

**Page 5:**

**Page 7:**


Study AT Kearney 361°, „Vereinbarkeit wagen“, page 5


**Page 8:**