**Mariana Paludi**, Universidad Mayor, Santiago, Chile

Email: [mariana.paludi@umayor.cl](mailto:mariana.paludi@umayor.cl)

Mariana Ines Paludi earned her Ph.D. from Sobey School of Business, Saint Mary`s University, Canada. She is an assistant professor at Universidad Mayor in Santiago, Chile. She has published in Management & Organizational History, Equality Diversity and Inclusion, an International Journal, and she has co-authored book chapters in Handbooks of Oxford University Press. Her areas of research include critical management, intersectionality, culture, Latin America, feminism, and decolonialism. She had taught undergraduate courses in Organizational Behaviour (Canada/Argentina), Management and Entrepreneurship, and Corporate Social Responsibility (Chile). Also, she teaches courses for master students on research methodology, gender and organizations in Argentina.

**Isabella Krysa**, Fairleigh Dickinson University, USA

Email: [i.krysa@fdu.edu](mailto:i.krysa@fdu.edu)

Isabella Krysa is an Assistant Professor of Management and joined the FDU Vancouver campus in August 2016. Her research interests are in organizational history, organizational diversity, and the work-life balance of new parents. In her research on diversity in the workplace, Prof. Krysa focuses on identifying systemic barriers of minority populations in the workplace and finding solutions to create inclusive organizations.

**Motherhood and organising: working mothers during Covid-19 in Chile and Argentina**

**Abstract**

This small-scale study explores paid and unpaid work during Covid-19 among working mothers. We aim to understand the influence of social norms and the workplace on the individual choices of mothers living in Chile and Argentina, two countries experiencing mandatory confinement. Based on previous studies, we used an explanatory framework analysis that focuses on the transition of motherhood influenced by three levels: individual (partner support, level of aspiration), organisational (work-life balance), and societal (norms regarding motherhood). We found that society, the workplace and disadvantageous government policies greatly constrain individual choices of working mothers. High levels of education and moderate to high income levels among mothers facilitated the gender balance of paid and unpaid work. Covid-19 represents a unique opportunity to restructuring the gender division of labour at home and the workplace. Implications on the new organising for mothers, the workplace and government policies will be suggested for post-confinement life.

**Keywords: Covid-19, women, gender, motherhood, working mothers, unpaid work, workplace, confinement.**

**Introduction**

This paper emerged as an exploration of the consequences of Covid-19 on mothers living in Southern America. The impact of Covid-19 on women illuminates the study of a contemporary approach to intersectionality based on scholars such as Anzaldúa (2007) who acknowledged the cultural differences among Latin American countries and the falsely assumed homogeneity attributed to them. Anzaldúa (2007) reminds us of the relevance of the multiple identities and experiences of women across the Latin American countries. This study focuses on the identity of working mothers while linking the interrelated nature of societies, organisations and individuals in juggling paid and unpaid labour in two particular countries, Chile and Argentina. Studies on Covid-19 regarding gender equality concerning paid and unpaid work have focused on countries such as the U.S. (Collins et al. 2020), Australia (Craig, & Churchill, 2020), Spain (Ferre, et al., 2020), and Italy (Del Boca, et al., 2020). Little do we know about mothers, organisations and the social context of Latin America in response to the pandemic crisis. Covid-19 forced men and women to stay at home and confront the gender division of care and household chores. We set out to answer how Covid-19 impacted the paid and unpaid workload of mothers with children under 6 years old. We also asked about the organisational responses to this new scenario and how mothers foresee the post-pandemic situation. Chile and Argentina are particular examples due to the fact that governments established a mandatory confinement since the pandemic crisis started and the closure of childcare facilities after Covid-19 has been a great challenge for working parents (IFC, 2020). During Covid-19, women in Latin American countries spend three times as long as men on unpaid domestic and care work each day being more important than ever the developing of gender sensitive policies (CEPAL, 2020). This study illustrates that working mothers with high levels of education and moderate to high levels of income have been able to balance paid and unpaid work because of partner support, remote-work arrangements, and the help of their extended family.

**Literature review**

Pregnant women and mothers are faced with a variety of challenges when it comes to the workplace. These issues occur on the macro-societal level, the meso-organisational level and the micro-individual level.

Macro-societal level

The literature suggests that on macro level, the institutionalization of social norms concerning gender attitudes towards child caring and family commitments shape what women and mothers experience in the workplace. For example, societal values and institutional practices such as maternity leave play an important factor in women’s employment outcomes. “Social institutions set the parameters of what decisions, choices or behaviours are deemed acceptable or unacceptable in a society and therefore play a key role in defining and influencing gender roles and relations (Cerise et al., 2013, p. 2).

Cultural ideals of women, and particularly mothers, impact how women perform in the market labour integration (Hakim, 2010). Certain assumptions about new mothers and their productivity continue to prevail in contemporary society. For example, women are viewed as less work-oriented than their male counterparts (Huopalainen & Satama, 2019; Ruitenberg, 2014; Stead and Elliott, 2009); they are assumed to change their productivity patterns once they become a parent and shift their focus from work to child care. As such, it is expected that women will reduce their workloads once they have children and will prioritize their commitment to family and childcare over career aspirations. Such assumptions about women create social norms that inevitably hinder women in their professional careers (Gatrell and Cooper, 2016; Haynes, 2008b; Hennekam et al., 2019). “Cultural images of motherhood provide coercive prescriptions of gender behaviour that influence most women’s lives” (Haynes, 2008b, p. 627).

The term ‘maternal body’ refers to women’s ability to reproduce and focuses on pregnancy and infant children care (Gatrell, 2013). During pregnancy and breast feeding, the ‘maternal body’ is a very visible site in the professional organisation with its prevailing masculine norms, and constituting a deviation from the norm. As a consequence, the maternal body experiences othering process in various ways (Gatrell, 2011b; 2013; Van Amsterdam, 2015). Women experience the “destabilization of their workplace status” (Gatrell, 2013, p. 626) once they are pregnant and become mothers and are met with hostility and exclusion in organisations (Gatrell, 2011b; Hennekam et al., 2019). Wolkowitz (2006) speaks of the “erasure of the female reproductive body at work” (p. 91).

Meso-organisational level

Societal norms, assumptions and prejudices against pregnant women and mothers have effects on the meso-organisational level. In 2007, a UK Government Report summarized the discriminatory position of women when it comes to market labour integration as follows: “There is one factor that above all leads to women’s inequality in the labour market – becoming mothers” (Equalities Review 2007, p. 66). In spite of discrimination laws for many decades now, women continue to experience professional marginalization and are oftentimes denied career advancement. It is a pretty much a global phenomenon that women continue to get paid less than men, and are underrepresented in all levels of public and private sector leadership positions in organisations (Gatrell et al., 2017; UN Women, n.d.; UNESCO, n.d.). Having children is a particularly limiting factor for women to achieve gender equality in the market place (Gatrell et al., 2017; UN Women). Mothers “pay a punishing wage penalty for motherhood” (Gatrell et al., 2017, p. 240). Such gendered attitudes continue to maintain the glass ceiling effect and limit women’s advancements in their careers (Fotaki, 2013; Gattrell, 2011a; 2011b; Gatrell et al., 2017; Hennekam et al., 2019).

Family-focused policies have become the research focus seen as an important factor in research on gender, and work-life balance (Gatrell and Cooper, 2016; Özbilgin et al., 2011). Family-friendly policies have come to be viewed as potential opportunities for mothers to overcome organisational barriers to career advancement (Gatrell and Cooper, 2016; Hennekam et al., 2019; Lewis & Cooper, 1999). This however, might have also produced the side effect that employers have the assumption that it is still women who bear the additional burden of childcare, thus further perpetuating the stigma about mothers’ double burden of career and family, creating self-fulfilling prophecies and thus gendering family-friendly policies (Gatrell and Cooper, 2016; Hennekam et al., 2019).

In their study on family-friendly policies, Gatrell and Cooper (2016) conclude that the combination of fathers’ low entitlement to and participation in family-friendly polices combined with mothers’ low entitlement to career advancement and high participation in family-friendly policies maintain the gendered assumptions of men as bread-earners and women as child caretakers. Such gendered workplace practices perpetuate the image of the “generic female parent” (Smithson and Stokoe, 2005, p. 156). Smithson and Stokoe (2005) found in their research that changing the language to reflect to be more gender neutral did not change assumptions about work-life policies to be about women. In contrast, a change in parental entitlements for both genders, meaning men feeling entitled to family-friendly policies and women feeling entitled to career advancement could potentially contribute to minimize the current gendered nature of organisations. “These changes to paternal sense of entitlement regarding family support at work could impact on the status quo as regards the gendering of work and family practices” (Gatrell and Cooper, 2016, p. 140).

Micro-individual level

At the micro-individual level, research shows that the personal circumstances of pregnant women and new mothers play an important role in the context of their careers. Research shows that spousal support is an important factor in determining women’s career advancement post-birth such as sharing of home and childcare duties, emotional and interpersonal support (Bröckel, 2018; Hennekam et al., 2019; Huopalainen & Satama, 2019). Bröckel (2018) for example investigated the instrumental and social support role that partners play in women’s re-entry into the labour force after the birth of their child. The author concludes that particularly egalitarian household sharing and childcare arrangements are positively related to women’s return to full-time employment. Similarly, Heikkinen et al. (2014) found in their study on female managers that higher spousal support at home, and the higher the spouse’s willingness “to break the traditional gender order” (p. 37) was related to more positive experiences in the careers of the female managers. The spousal support was differentiated into ‘psychological support’, ‘hand-on support’, and ‘career assistance’ support.

Personal attitudes toward career since motherhood is another micro-level issue that determines women’s workforce experience. In 2010 in the Netherland for example, the majority of mothers either did not work at all after (32.4%) or worked part-time (42.5%), while 11.3% worked more than 35 hours per week (Ruitenberg, 2014). As Ruitenberg (2014) discusses in the study, the different work choices mothers made related to various different personal attitudes, experiences and motivations, while at the same time reflecting societal norms of the Dutch context. “Dutch mothers’ heterogeneous labour market behaviour cannot be understood as simple and varied expressions of free choice, but rather as intentional and unintentional outcomes of mothers’ diverse—though always engendered—perceptions of possibilities and constraints” (Ruitenberg, 2014, p. 77).

**Gender Equality, Latin America and Covid-19**

Government laws and regulations can favour progress towards gender equality and economic opportunities for women. Removing discriminatory legal barriers is associated with women's access to better jobs with better wages and in higher positions (World Bank, 2020). According to the report on Women, Business and Law from World Bank (2020), eight indicators measure legal differences between men and women as they transition through different stages of their careers. Among those, workplace, pay and parenthood have a direct impact on gender equality. The evolution path shows that High Income OECD countries, such as United Kingdom, United States, Japan, Germany, Canada, and Chile are leading the progress, followed by Europe and Central Asia, and in the third place, Latin America and the Caribbean. Among Latin American countries, the index shows that Chile and Argentina have similar scores, Chile 77.5 and Argentina 76.3 (World Bank, 2020). However, this number is far from the leading country of the region, Peru, which scores 95, just below Norway (96.9). In other words, Chile’s and Argentina’s scores reveal that women access up to 77 % of men´s rights. For example, high income countries have a median paid parental leave of 276 days for women and 56 for men. Whereas in Latin America and the Caribbean region, women receive 91 days on average and men 5 days (World Bank, 2020).

The world has changed due to the global health emergency caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Latin American region has shown social, cultural and economic inequalities over decades, and this health emergency has further aggravated them (Articulación Regional Feminista, 2020). The pandemic has direct and indirect impact on different social groups, and especially on women. Therefore, it is important to pay particular attention to governments’ initiatives in response to the crisis.

***The Chilean context***

On March 19th, 2020, Chile has declared the State of Constitutional Exception of Catastrophe throughout the entire country for 90 days (renewed for 90 more days). This is a mechanism through which the situation of normality and regularity of the rights and freedoms of people guaranteed by the Political Constitution is altered, due to extraordinary circumstances, in order to protect another greater good. In this context, confinement of the populations was first voluntary, and throughout March it became mandatory for Santiago (capital city) and most of the cities around the country (Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile, 2020, March 18).

The closure of childcare facilities after Covid-19 has been a great challenge for working parents (IFC, 2020). Two main points of discussion regarding the closure of such facilities were taken to the Senate in Chile. The first notion taken to the Senate was to extend parental leave and the introduction of an emergency parental leave. The second notion focused on the particular situation of women during this pandemic and the enforcement of the remote work law. Regarding the parental leave, women in Chile receive 210 days of parental leave (42 before birth) from which 42 day could be transfer to the father of the child; whereas men receive 5 days. Social inequalities in Chile among women with paid work are not new. However, due to the pandemic, several new challenges came to affected particularly women, such as unemployment, work suspension, psychosocial risks, and particularly, the need for valuing domestic and care work (unpaid work) (Presidencia del Senado, 2020). When analysing the household arrangements of working heterosexual couples, data shows that just 1 in 10 couples share domestic and unpaid care work equally, whereas among the vast majority of couples women accomplish two-thirds of all household-related tasks as well as care work (Comunidad Mujer, 2017).

Social distancing measures and the mandatory quarantine announced in Chile due to the Covid-19 pandemic affected the gender gap in time spent on domestic and care work (Sanhueza et.al, 2020). A recent study conducted in Chile found that among bi-parental families, the mandatory quarantine decreases the gender gap regarding the time spent on care activities, however it increased the gender gap in times spent on unpaid housework (Sanhueza et.al, 2020).

The Covid-19 postnatal leave establishes that men and women with children under 6 years old will be able to apply for a paid parental leave of at least three months as long as the state of emergency in the country remains active (Senado, 2020a). Another important change has been the implementation of the law N°21.220 (*Ley de teletrabajo*) which regulates remote work. This change in the labour law specifies how employers must provide their employees with all the tools, security and safety measures to conduct their paid work from home.

***The Argentinian context***

On March 12th, 2020, the government of Argentina created the Decree of Necessity and Urgency 260/2020 to expand the state of emergency in health due to Covid-19 (still effective until August 16, 2020). These pandemic-related regulations include mandatory confinement, the closure of national borders for flights from overseas, and 14 days of mandatory quarantine for those infected with Covid-19 (Argentina Gobierno, 2020).

Parental leave in Argentina is 90 days for women and 2 days for men (Ministerio de Justicia y Derechos Humanos - Law N° 20.744). Due to the pandemic, different feminist groups and politicians recommended the introduction of leaves of absence under extraordinary circumstances for mothers and fathers since schools, kindergarten and day-care facilities have been shut down. Unlike Chile, Argentina did not legislate in order to extend parental leave regarding co-parenting situations. According to a UNICEF (2020) Covid-19 survey, 51% of women in Argentina perceived an overload of domestic and care work. Similar to Chile, the Argentinian government is discussing regulations concerning working from home during the pandemic at the Senate level. Some of the points under the regulation include the right of digital disconnection (by establishing office hours from home that are compatible with care work of children under 14 years of age), the provision of infrastructure (of hardware and software according to the needs of the job), health and safety measures, privacy regulations, etc. (Infobae, 2020).

**Organisational practices**

The study of the linkages between work and family roles has been developed since the 1960s, especially targeting women. For the European Union, the reconciliation of work and family has become a matter of national policy (Gregory & Milner, 2009). Employers are agents of change in terms of unpaid work for employees. According to IFC (2020), innovative family-friendly initiatives during Covid-19 are key for employees to manage work and care. Four main initiatives are identified: 1) provide childcare services to essential workers, like those in health-care; 2) allow home-based work (HBW) where possible; 3) offer flexible work options (even during HBW); and 4) allow staff to take (paid) family leave. According to ELA (2020), Argentina lacks behind in terms of the regulations concerning HBW. This will present a problem for the future of work because the “new normality” will demand more HBW than pre-Covid-19. The report from ELA (2020), combined with UNICEF (2020) provides recommendations for the private sector tailored to each organisation according to the needs of their employees. For example, care work for small children will require different strategies than the care of elderly people. In addition, the circumstances will demand different adjustments such as single parenting, dual-career homes, HBW for both parents, and so on. Some of the recommendations for employers include: 1) flex-time; 2) reduced working time; 3) workload reorganisation; 4) economic benefits for those with care work for children at school; 5) leave of absence; 6) a combination of HBW and office workload.

Since 2000, The Women´s Empowerment Principles (WEPs) from UN Women has been signed by 2500 companies worldwide, and 650 in Latin America committing to reach gender equality in three dimensions: workplace, marketplace and community. A recent report on the advancement of WEPs in companies in Argentina provided some recommendations on the best practices in the workplace that focus on care work, co-responsibility between partners and work-life balance (Vidal, 2020). These best practices include extended parental leave, mandatory parental leave for fathers (from 40 days to 6 months in some companies), leave of absence for fertility treatments (men and woman), and leave of absence for parents with children with disabilities, for a two-year period, amongst others (Vidal, 2020). American Express, for example, has a mentoring program especially for pregnant women and mothers with small children. Companies with good practices provide options for parents upon their return from their parent leaves, such as the opportunity to work from home or reduce their work hours up to 12 months following parental leave (Vidal, 2020).

In Chile, the government created guidelines (named *Norm 3262-2012*) that help organisations implement a standardised system to ensure gender equality and work-life balance. Since 2014, 28 organisations in Chile have been certified under the norm, and they plan to reach 100 by 2021 (SERNAM, 2013). The norm provides organisations with tools to self-diagnose, plan future actions to be implemented, training sessions for employees focusing on various topics such as recruitment, careers development, sexual harassment, communication, and co-responsibility. Important to mention is that to foster work-life balance practices means ensuring that organisations create a family friendly culture whether they are men or women (SERNAM, 2013).

Recently, leaders of Latin American WEPs companies shared experiences in response to Covid-19 with a gender perspective stressing the role of companies to adjust the workplace with the several roles of women and men in the home, the importance of marketing to respond to gender violence, and the relevance of diversity and women empowerment among other topics (UN Women, 2020).

**Methods**

The empirical data for this study is based on an online small-scale questionnaire that combined open-ended and close-ended questions. The aim of this questionnaire was to gain more insights regarding mothers with small children and their opinions and experiences with paid and unpaid work during the Covid-19 pandemic. Between the 10th and 30th of June, 2020 we sent the online questionnaire to target mothers of children under 6 years of age living in Chile and Argentina. The questionnaire contained 38 questions organized according to the multilevel framework from Hennekam et al. (2019) that explains the challenges of motherhood at three societal levels, macro-societal, meso-organisational and micro-individual. As briefly mentioned in the introduction, both Chile and Argentina are currently experiencing mandatory confinement during the pandemic. As a result, we were interested about hearing the opinions of both Argentinian and Chilean mothers about the topics discussed in this paper. We do not aim to make comparable generalisations by conducting our survey across both countries. Rather, we were curious about how mothers experienced the pandemic concerning paid and unpaid work across both countries.

The sample was generated through email, social media, messaging apps, and personal contacts using the snowball technique. We obtained 36 responses, 14 from Chile and 18 from Argentina. Three respondents from Argentina did not follow the requirements so we analysed a sample of 29 (14 for Chile and 15 for Argentina).

[Insert Table 1 here]

The questionnaire asked respondents for demographic information regarding their educational background, salary, employment situation, and age and number of children under their care. In order to understand how Covid-19 impacted women and their experience of motherhood in reference to paid and unpaid work, we restricted the sample to employed mothers who are in bi-parental relationships, with children under the age of 6 (non-mandatory school years).

To capture the three level framework, we compiled a set of questions at each level. At the macro-societal level (**Social Norms)** our questions centred on: 1) the impact of pregnancy on women’s workplace, 2) how maternity impacted women´s paid work, and 3) the impact of Covid-19 on motherhood. The following questions were asked: *How are mothers who part-time and work full-time perceived in your workplace?.* *Describe how your physical changes (“the pregnant body”) were perceived in your workplace. What impact will Covid-19 have on motherhood?.*

At the meso-societal level (**Organisational Norms)** we asked about: 1) family-friendly organisational practices of the employer, 2) family-friendly practices targeted particularly to parents, and 3) the impact of Covid-19 on their employer’s way of managing work. We asked the following questions: *What initiatives does your employer provide to help employees gain work-life balance*? *Is your employer helping you carry out your paid and unpaid work during the Covid-19 crisis, and if so, how?.*

At the micro-level (**Individual Norms)** we asked about: 1) work aspirations, 2) time spent on paid and unpaid work, and 3) the way of organising with their partners before and after the pandemic regarding paid and unpaid work. One of the questions at the micro-level we asked was: *Can you provide details how your time arrangements with your partner concerning care work changed during Covid-19?* A multiple choice question about care work comparing the situation before and during Covid-19 gave respondents different options to answer, such as: a) *My partner will take care of my daughter/son so that I can return to work*; b) *Kindergarten is the best option to be able to return to paid work*; or c) *help at home is the best option to be able to return to work*.

Our research was conducted based on particular assumptions:

* Assumption 1: during Covid-19, mothers in Latin American countries will absorb duties of care and household at home, because of the lack of public policies and family friendly organisational practices.
* Assumption 2: women will be more at risk, and working mothers more even so, of losing their job during and after Covid-19.
* Assumption 3: partners and organisational practices can help diminish women’s burden.

This research is qualitative in nature, providing a multi-method methodology (e.g. open-ended and survey type of questions) that uses an interpretative and naturalistic approach (Denzing & Lincoln, 1994) by collecting both background as well as narrative information from our subjects under study through the design of a questionnaire. We present descriptive results from the data through a holistic approach that identifies categories and patterns among the respondents. The results might corroborate some findings of other research (e.g. Hennekam et al., 2019), but some results might also be context specific.

**Results**

According to the findings the interplay of factors on the macro‐, meso‐ and micro‐level impacted motherhood and gender dynamics related to paid and unpaid work. Nonetheless, social and organisational norms respond to the legal measures available for employers which constrain the individual choices of working mothers. Figure 1 reflects the factors impacting mothers’ experiences during the confinement on the macro-, meso-, and individual levels. As can be seen, the sizes of the different levels vary based on the external impact they carry on the mothers’ experiences. We argue that society-level factors such as norms and government regulations carry the greatest influence on mothers’ experiences because these factors impose a particular set of conditions to which mothers have to adjust to, independent of their personal preferences. Table 2 summarizes the key concepts emergent from the questionnaires.

[Insert Figure 1 here]

Social Norms

Pregnancy was perceived by colleagues and management as a good thing. For example, a respondent said, it was *a positive thing, at least for managers. A blessing.* A smaller portion of respondents believe that pregnancy is perceived as a problem because it gives the impression that women are not responsible nor flexible in their job. We asked them to explain how pregnancy impacted their paid work. For 31% of the 29 respondents, maternity had a negative impact and for 66% it was neutral. On one hand, pregnancy had an impact on both, the body and the mind. *Being tired* or *having to split their mind into two* were some of the descriptions. On the other hand, maternity represented the loss of income due to the loss of a job, the lack of a payed leave of absence and the reduction of working hours.

As discussed previously in this paper, the use of part-time jobs and other flexibility options are fundamental for working mothers. We asked our respondents about their perception of the different work choices mothers make, such as working full-time, part-time or leaving one’s jobs to stay at home with the children. Full-time working mothers are valued on the one hand, and unacknowledged on the other hand. Full-time working moms are valued and admired because of the heavy duty of balancing motherhood and work. At the same time, because flexibility options are not available, women are forced to go back to work full-time, which is normalised and then invisible. When we asked about mothers who work part-time, half of the respondents answered but their answers were scattered. A small portion said they are unacknowledged or it’s fine to have part-time workers. A small number said that part-time options for mothers make them be seen as less available, (e.g. *they are not 100%*) and less committed (e.g. *lazy*).

A controversial decision might be the fact that mothers might need to quit their jobs to dedicate themselves full-time to care work. To the question regarding their opinions on mothers who stop working after giving birth, three main findings emerged. 41% of the mothers express that it is a personal decision, and should be respected. 24% assumed that the choice of quitting a job to be a stay at home mom is forced by the lack of support. A 17% of the respondents said they did that for a couple of months, whereas some expressed their desire to do so if they could afford not to work. A 14% would not do it or believe it is a mistake. A respondent answered that breaking completely with sources of economic or professional income are disruptive to their identity and autonomy. Below is one respondent’s answer:

*A woman should never have to completely leave the relationship with work. Hopefully they will never separate or divorce.*

As Covid-19 has particularly impacted the balance of care responsibilities, we asked, *What impact will Covid -19 have on motherhood?* Only 60% of the respondents gave an answer. More than half said it had a positive impact with regards to spending more time with their children. As one respondent said:

*Positive. No one can be indifferent to the greater involvement of parents in school tasks, games, activities with children.*

Fewer respondents found that the pandemic had a negative impact on motherhood as it brings a greater workload, and as a consequence, more stress. One respondent explained how the impact had different aspects:

*Multiple. We are mothers 24 hours a day and Covid made us very aware of the vulnerabilities.*

[Insert Table 2 here]

Organisational Norms

Family-friendly work practices

Family-friendly workplaces have helped in the advancement of women in the organisation. Half of the respondents recognized the existence of family-friendly policies (FF) by their employer. However, most do not feel they are in a family-friendly environment. We asked, *Which initiatives are today targeted to mothers*, and also *Do you think that your employer should provide help particularly to mothers and/or fathers?* Chilean mothers categorically answered yes to both questions, but Argentine mothers doubted the target specific initiatives.

[Insert Table 3 here]

As previously mentioned, during the pandemic both in Argentina and Chile, apart from kindergarten, employers provide reduced working hours, and remote work. In Chile, more than half of the respondents said that payed kindergarten is being provided for by their employer. Additionally, mothers receive flex-time from their employers. In Argentina, kindergarten was not mention by any respondent, however, remote work, leave of absence and also flex-time were among the options for mothers. A few respondents in Chile mentioned that they have a place for breastfeeding at work. Regarding Covid-19, one respondent mentioned that their employer usually pays for day-care, but she wondered what would happened as day-care facilities are closed, and the government has pending to approve a postnatal leave extension for parents.

When asked about what should be done by employers with a particular focus on mothers, flex-time was most important for mothers, followed by reduced working hours, leave of absence, and management support. For mothers, employers should focus on giving fathers more flex-time, the possibility for remote work and the possibility to extend the parental leave.

The category management refers to the way leaders and managers assign, support, and apply practices that favours flexibility among employees. One respondent said:

*The aid is already there but it is subject to the leader of the area that the benefits are fulfilled or not.*

Another commented:

*Adjustment of workload, activities and objectives according to available skills and times.*

14% of the mothers, especially in Chile, explained that their employers do not consider the impact of productivity measures when a parent is absent due to parental leave. Upon their return, parents are assumed to absorb the managerial workplace standards which expect 24/7 availability from them.

Considering such mind-set before the pandemic started, our respondents felt that Covid-19 resulted in in more remote work and flex-time within their workplaces. However, many employers did not adapt well to this new reality.

Individual Norms

Career Aspirations

The majority of the respondents expressed having ambitious career aspirations. This is corroborated by the fact that 34% of the respondents have a university degree and 48% pursued graduate studies. Women expressed that they *like what they do*, and that it is important for their own *personal development*. Concerning what aspects motivate them at work, one respondent answered: *professional development, my world, my space*. Another said *I love my profession, and I dedicated a lot of years to get better at it*. Learning, growing and getting better at what they do are the motivational drivers of these mothers.

Partner Support & Covid-19

We asked to choose among different options in order to categorise how mothers resolved care work during, but also after Covid-19. A difference among Argentine and Chilean mothers emerged. Argentine mothers expressed that kindergarten and their partners’ help would be the best options. Only one woman expressed that she will quit her job to be a stay-at-home mother. When asked how Covid-19 changed the organisation of care work with their partner, they mostly said that they resolved it through a new way of organising their duties. One respondent said:

*We better distribute time because we both work from home. So it is not so structured. Also we don´t have to commute and therefore we can quickly get in and out of work. With which we require less preparation time.*

Chilean mothers expressed that in spite of new arrangements at home and in the workplace because of Covid-19, most of the care work is still the mothers’ responsibility. The women who felt that they continued to carry the duties of the household and care work were those whose partners worked outside of home. One respondent commented:

*[we had to] Rearrange everything but I carry the weight. It has cost a lot, since I have a daughter of 6 and the baby and I have had to be a housewife working mom and teacher. He sees the children when he arrives [from work]*

For those women whose partner was an independent worker or switched to home-office work, the reorganisation of the unpaid work meant to split the duties evenly based on their paid work schedule. Most women responded to have two types of arrangements: share household chores or divide between cleaning and cooking. Most families had lost their cleaning aids because of Covid-19 restrictions. A 41 % of the couples adjusted their habits evenly, or accepted that their homes could be less clean than before Covid-19. A 21% of the couples did find that a clear cut distinction between cleaning and cooking was useful, were women do the cleaning and men the cooking. One respondent said:

*We are now implementing that he co-manage the kitchen issue more because I was starting to get depressed and from now on he thinks menus for example.*

For the 17% of the respondents whose partners spend less time at home, household duties and care work is almost exclusively their responsibility. A 7 % of the respondents described how they received support from their own parents in order to manage their paid work duties. However, social norms have an impact on such new scenarios. As a respondent explained, her parents-in-laws did not understand her academic work:

*We had to come to my in-laws' house, she [mother in law] supports us with the care of the children, the household chores are distributed, but mainly it is she who takes care of the house. He [father in law] works outside, he leaves at 5 in the morning and arrives at 7 in the afternoon, we came out of the metropolitan region. I work on the computer, do classes, research, write, etc. I am constantly interrupted by the family. This situation became unbearable when we were the four of us (two children; 4 and 1.5 years old). The stress of having to write, publish, teach, and have the children crying, or wanting to play or order food, gave me a frustrating feeling that was hard to bear. That is why we went to the family, we came to live with his parents (grandparents of the children), but this also produces levels of stress, especially because when working in front of a computer, and sharing with family, which in general do not understand academic work (the writing process) and how much concentration you need.*

To the question on how Covid-19 changed their support system to balance motherhood and work, more than half of the respondents relied on their partners, and around 24% on their extended family.

Finally, respondents expressed different thoughts and feelings regarding their life after the confinement of Covid-19. For example, they realised the importance of care time with their love ones, and many expressed that they want to have more time in the future to spend with their children and partners at home. On the other hand, some were concerned regarding duties of care and how tiring it will be if external help cannot be reached. A few mentioned concerns about economic and career challenges as a consequence of the confinement and some were uncertain of the future or believed that no major changes will be seen.

**Discussion & Conclusions**

Pre-epidemic, women were experiencing socio-economic marginalization globally (World Economic Forum, 2020). Overall, women were financially less secure than men. For example, pre-pandemic, 44.3% of women were employed compared to 70% of men globally (ILO, 2020). In Chile, women employment dropped from 52% in March-April 2019, to 42.9% in the same period of 2020. Compared to the 64.8 % of men employment rate, women are negatively impacted by Covid-19 (INE, 2020). In Argentina, employment statistics comparing the 1st trimester 2019 versus 2020, for women rose from 43.5 to 43.9 % whereas men employment dropped from 63.4 to 62 % (INDEC, 2020). Women usually work more often in lower paying jobs and in occupations with less securities and stability (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2020). Women are also the ones to provide unpaid care work, such as childcare as well as home duties.

There is great concern that the epidemic might accelerate and deepen that marginalisation and augment women’s vulnerable position. For example, data globally shows that domestic violence against women has increased since the onset of Covid-19 (Taub, 2020). ILO (2020) reports that women’s unpaid care work has also increased during Covid-19. These findings are confirmed in some academic papers that are slowly trickling in on the early effects of Covid-19 on gender issues and motherhood. For example, Mclaren et al. (2020) show in their gender analysis of reporting in media from Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Vietnam and Australia that women’s paid and non-paid burdens are escalating during Covid-19. Craig and Churchill (2020) found in their analysis that unpaid work increased to much higher levels during the lockdown than before, particularly for women, in Australia. Some gender-gap narrowing could be observed as their study found that there was a relative increase in childcare time for fathers.

Overall, however, Craig and Churchill (2020) found that mothers were more dissatisfied with their work-family balance and their partners’ share than before the pandemic. On the opportunity side, feminist economist see Covid-19 as a crisis that illuminates the primary role of care work, both paid and unpaid, to functioning societies and economies (Bahn, Cohen & van der Meulen Rodgers, 2020).

While the above discussed issues are crucial considerations for national-wide policy making, workplaces and individual households to address and to prepare for post-pandemic life, we see the lockdown during Covid-19 also as an opportunity for women, mothers and society as a whole to rethink, restructure and rebuild organisational practices that have so far created and maintained stark gender inequality.

Social Norms: As our analysis shows, the ´maternal body’ (Gatrell, 2013) is also othered among Chilean and Argentine working mothers. Covid-19 hides the maternal body experience as the bodily experience of maternity remains unseen. However, mothers in Chile commented that their employers do not consider pregnancy, birth and small infant care in their expectations towards productivity which is reflected in the expectation to comply with the 24/7 availability culture of the current workplace norms. Such expectations only reflect how the maternal body poses a disruption in the smooth running of the managerialist organisational culture.

The part-time norm that expects women to go back to work part-time after childbirth (Hennekam et al., 2019) was not mentioned by Chilean and Argentine mothers. This shows that full-time work constitutes the norm for mothers return to work whereas part-time work does not commonly constitute an option in the Chilean and Argentinian context. The option of quitting work after childbirth was seen as a personal decision to be made. Only a few had a judgement regarding that option. However, behind the question respondents assume that women who take that path do so because they don’t have other options, because of lack of legal support (e.g. parental leave) or external help (e.g. kindergarten). Covid-19 gave a unique opportunity for both parents to do remote work which questions the idea that part-time or home-office means less availability or lack of commitment. Still, in Chile it “requires a cultural reorganisation for its efficient application. Culturally, it has been difficult to change the ingrained concept of work, which is associated with an action of commuting. Today we are facing a “paradigm shift from 'going to work' vs. 'doing it' anytime, anywhere” (La Tercera, 2020, March 21). Nevertheless, other consequences such as mental health problems among home office options or a deteriorating organisational climate emerged within the pandemic (Sanchez, 2020) which also should be taken into account in order to improve work-life balance in organisations.

Organisational norms: Family-friendly policies have come to be viewed as potential opportunities for mothers to overcome organisational barriers to career advancement (Gatrell and Cooper, 2016; Hennekam et al., 2019; Lewis & Cooper, 1999). This however, might have also produced the side effect that employers have the assumption that it is still women who bear the additional burden of childcare. When we asked women about the option of fathers having particular target initiatives for balancing paid and unpaid work, they majority leaned towards initiatives just for mothers. One would think that in order to change assumptions about work-life policies as a woman issue, they would express the need for fathers to be equally targeted within work-life policies, however that was not the case (see Table 3). In Chile more than in Argentina, women do believe in the necessity of an extension of parental leave for fathers. Covid-19 forced equal time spent at home for both genders, and organisations should learn from the experience in order to create interventions that rebalance unpaid child care among the genders after the pandemic (McKinsey, Global Institute, 2020).

Mother’s individual choice is circumscribed by social and organisational norms (Figure 1). For instance, Covid-19 parental leave extension of three months in Chile sends the message that care work is important, and also, breaks the assumptions that women = mothers as this initiative offers mothers, fathers and primary care givers the option to extend their parental leave for another 30 days because of Covid-19. In sum, the approach to care requires that the labour market be reorganized to be more solidary and fair, as it cannot be an individual issue beyond the pandemic crisis. For Chile particularly, the remote work legislation should be assessed by the government, as for our study, employers did not provide much help to workers.

Individual norms: In Chile and Argentina, governments provide disproportionally less parental leave to men (2 to 5 days for men versus 3 to 6 months for woman) which influences organisations’ initiatives and individuals’ choices and behaviours on gender roles of unpaid work (Cerise et al., 2013). As “Dutch mothers’ heterogeneous labour market behaviour cannot be understood as simple and varied expressions of free choice, but rather as intentional and unintentional outcomes of mothers’ diverse—though always engendered—perceptions of possibilities and constraints” (Ruitenberg, 2014, p. 77), the same could be said for Chile and Argentina. Legislation in both Chile and Argentina assumes women should take on the vast majority of care work, and social norms enhance women to be viewed as less work-oriented than their male counterparts (Huopalainen & Satama, 2019; Ruitenberg, 2014; Stead and Elliott, 2009). This contrasts with our study of Chilean and Argentinian mothers who are work-oriented, and have invested in their education and personal growth (most respondents have postgraduate studies).

Partners’ support has been a key element in women´s advancement when parenting (Bröckel, 2018; Heikkinen et al.2014; Hennekam et al., 2019; Huopalainen & Satama, 2019). What Covid-19 brought was the obligation of partners to stay at home with their toddlers. Most respondents whose partners did home-office work saw an opportunity to have their partners most involved in care work and household task, and new arrangements for splitting the responsibility were relatively easy. Similar to the study of inequalities among UK workers (Blundell, et al., 2020) ndividuals with higher levels of education and higher earnings are better able to develop their work activities from their home and to have space in their homes to continuing with their children’s education. Among women whose partners still have to work outside from home (most probably in cases of jobs with less qualifications) the burden lies on mothers. As a respondent said she has to be “*a housewife working mom.”*

**Implications for practice**

Paid and unpaid work are shaped by the norms and regulations of society, organisations and individuals choices. Ruitenberg’s (2014) conclusion on Dutch mothers applies to Chilean and Argentine mothers whose perceptions of what choices they have regarding paid and unpaid labour circumscribe to labour laws and organisational practices.

Recommendations from international organisations such as flex-time, reduced working hours, workload reorganisation, economic benefits for those with care work for children at school, paid leave of absences and hybrid jobs that combine home and office work are important. Nevertheless, Chile and Argentina should be accountable for the legal reforms in areas such as universal access to paid day care for workers in Chile, or the regulation of remote work in Argentina. Organisations should assess their role in the management of paid and unpaid work for both genders, as the management mentality sees the worker as masculine, full-time and always available and productive. The perceptions that employees have on time and physical presence should be evaluated seriously by Human Resource departments. Covid-19 for bi-parental families was a unique opportunity to face and balance the management of paid and unpaid labour. In spite of the burden of care duties and household choirs, more time spent with the family was appreciated, which should be taken into account for policy making. Initiatives like the reduction of workday hours from 45 to 40 per week in Chile (Senado, 2020b) is one good example.

The pandemic presents a unique, unforeseen situation which can serve as an opportunity to introduce more gender-equal workplace practices since work now happens more and more virtually rather than in the ‘standard’ format of the office. We believe, as many others, that the pandemic has changed the nature of work permanently. Hence, this is a good time to put in place practices and set guidelines that are based on the assumption of both genders engaged in paid and unpaid work, rather than the traditional division of (paid and unpaid) labour.

**References**

Articulación Regional Feminista (ARF) (2020). *Los derechos de las mujeres de la región en épocas de COVID-19. Estado de situación y recomendaciones para promover políticas con justicia de género* [The rights of women in the region in times of COVID-19. Status and recommendations to promote policies with gender justice]. Buenos Aires, mayo 2020.

Argentina Gobierno (2020). *Decreto de Necesidad y Urgencia 260/2020* [40/5000 Decree of Necessity and Urgency 260/2020]. Retrieved from: <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/coronavirus/dnu>

Anzaldúa, G. (2007). *Borderlands/LaFrontera: The New Mestiza*. [3er edition]. San

Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.

Bahn, K., Cohen, J., & van der Meulen Rodgers, Y. (2020). A Feminist Perspective on

COVID‐19 and the Value of Care Work Globally. *Gender, Work & Organization*.

Bliblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile (2020, March 18). *¿Qué es el Estado de*

*Excepción Constitucional de Catástrofe?* [What is the State of

Constitutional Exception of Catastrophe?]. Retrieved from: <https://www.bcn.cl/noticias/que-es-el-estado-de-excepcion-constitucional-de-catastrofe>

Blundell, R., Dias, M. C., Joyce, R., & Xu, X. (2020). Covid‐19 and inequalities. *Fiscal*

*Studies, 41(2)*. https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-5890.12232

Bröckel, M. (2018). The Role of Partners’ Support for Women’s Reentry Into Employment

After a Child-Related Career Break in Germany. *Journal of Family Issues,* *39*(7), 1739-1769.

CEPAL (2020). The COVID-19 pandemic is exacerbating the care crisis in Latin America and the Caribbean. Retrieved from: https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/45352/S2000260\_en.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y

Cerise, S., Eliseeva, A., Francavilla, F., Mejia, C., & Tuccio, M. (2013). *How do*

*maternity leave and discriminatory social norms relate to women’s employment in developing countries?* OECD Development Centre.

Collins, C., Landivar, L. C., Ruppanner, L., & Scarborough, W. J. (2020). COVID‐19 and

the Gender Gap in Work Hours. *Gender, Work & Organization*. https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12506

Comunidad Mujer (2017). *Serie Comunidad Mujer 2017 en base a Encuesta de Uso del*

*Tiempo* (ENUT, INE, 2015) [Community Woman Series 2017 based on the Survey

on the Use of Time (ENUT, INE, 2015)].

Craig, L. & Churchill, B. (2020). Dual-earner Parent Couples’ Work and Care during

COVID- 19. *Gender, Work & Organization*. doi: 10.1111/gwao.12497

Del Boca, D., Oggero, N., Profeta, P., & Rossi, M. (2020). *Women's Work, Housework and*

*Childcare, Before and During COVID-19*. (CESifo Working Paper No. 8403). Retrieved from: <https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3644817>

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research*.

Thousand Oaks, CA, US: Sage Publications.

ELA (Equipo Latinoamericano de Justicia y Género) (2020). *Los desafíos del cuidado en el*

*regreso gradual a los espacios laborales* [The challenges of care in the gradual return to work spaces]. Retrieved from: <http://www.ela.org.ar/a2/index.cfm?muestra&aplicacion=APP187&cnl=87&opc=53&codcontenido=4221&plcontampl=43>.

Equalities Review (2007). *Fairness and Freedom: The Final Report of the Equalities*

*Review*. Retrieved from:

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100806180051/http://archive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/equalitiesreview/upload/assets/www.theequalitiesreview.org.uk/equality_review.pdf>

European Institute for Gender Equality (2020). *Economic hardship and gender*. Retrieved

from: <https://eige.europa.eu/Covid-19-and-gender-equality/economic-hardship-and-gender>

Farre, L., Fawaz, Y. ,Gonzalez, L., & Graves, J. (2020). *How the Covid-19 Lockdown*

*Affected Gender Inequality in Paid and Unpaid Work in Spain*. (IZA Discussion Paper No. 13434). Retrieved from: <https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3643198>

Fotaki, M. (2013). No Woman is Like a Man (in Academia): The Masculine Symbolic

Order and the Unwanted Female Body. *Organization Studies,* *34*(9), 1251-1275.

Gatrell, C. J. (2013). Maternal body work: how women managers and professionals

negotiate pregnancy and new motherhood at work. *Human Relations*, *66*(5), 621–

644. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726712467380

Gatrell, C., & Cooper, C. (2016). A sense of entitlement? Fathers, mothers and

organizational support for family and career. *Community, Work & Family: From Theory to Impact: Bringing Work-life Initiatives into the Mainstream,* *19*(2), 134-147.

Gatrell, C., Cooper, C., & Kossek, E. (2017). Maternal Bodies as Taboo at Work: New

Perspectives on the Marginalizing of Senior-level Women in Organizations. *The Academy of Management Perspectives,* *31*(3), 239-252.

Gregory, A., & Milner, S. E. (2009). Work-life balance: a matter of choice?. *Gender, Work*

*& Organization, 16*(1), 1-13.

Hakim, C. (2010). *Feminist Myths and Magic Medicine: the Flawed Calls for Further*

*Equality Legislation*. London: Centre for Policy Studies.

Haynes, K. (2008a). (Re)figuring accounting and maternal bodies: The gendered

embodiment of accounting professionals. *Accounting, Organizations and Society 33*(4–5), 328–48.

Haynes, K. (2008b). Transforming identities: Accounting professionals and the transition to

motherhood. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting 19*(5), 620–42.

Heikkinen, S., Lämsä, A., & Hiillos, M. (2014). Narratives by women managers about

spousal support for their careers. *Scandinavian Journal of Management,* *30*(1), 27-39.

Hennekam, S., Syed, J., Ali, F., & Dumazert, J. P. (2019). A multilevel perspective of the

identity transition to motherhood. *Gender, Work & Organization, 26*(7), 915-933.

Huopalainen, A. S., & Satama, S. T. (2019). Mothers and researchers in the making:

negotiating ‘new’ motherhood within the ‘new’ academia. *Human Relations*, *72*(1), 98–121. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726718764571.

IFC (2020). *Childcare in the COVID-19 Era: A Guide for Employers*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/2e12d33a-ce55-46b2-aae5-ee8304a6506a/202004-Childcare-COVID-19-Guide-for-Employers.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=n6zlGLV>

ILO (2020). *The COVID-19 response: Getting gender equality right for a better future for*

*women at work. International Labour Organization*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---gender/documents/publication/wcms_744685.pdf>

INDEC (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos) (2020). *Mercado de trabajo. Tasas e*

*indicadores socioeconómicos.(EPH). Informes técnicos / Vol. 4, n° 110* [Work market. Socioeconomic rates and indicators (EPH). Technical reports / Vol. 4, No. 110]. Retrieved from: <https://www.indec.gob.ar/uploads/informesdeprensa/mercado_trabajo_eph_1trim20AF03C1677F.pdf>

INE (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas) (2020). *Boletín estadístico: Empleo trimestral1.*

*Edición N° 260, 30 Junio 2020* [Boletín estadístico: Empleo trimestral1.

Edición N° 260, 30 Junio 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://www.ine.cl/docs/default-source/ocupacion-y-desocupacion/boletines/2020/pa%C3%ADs/bolet%C3%ADn-empleo-nacional-trimestre-m%C3%B3vil-marzo-abril-mayo-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=bf85a27_6>

Infobae (2020). *Senado: el proyecto sobre la regulación del teletrabajo se tratará la semana próxima en comisión y se votaría sin cambios*. [Senate: the project on the regulation of telework will be discussed next week in committee and would be voted without changes]. Retrieved from: <https://www.infobae.com/politica/2020/07/03/senado-el-proyecto-sobre-la-regulacion-del-teletrabajo-se-tratara-la-semana-proxima-en-comision-y-se-votaria-sin-cambios/>

Kanji, S., & Cahusac, E. (2015). Who am I? Mothers’ shifting identities, loss and

sensemaking after workplace exit. *Human Relations*, *68*(9), 1415–1436. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726714557336

La Tercera (2020). *En cuarentena, pero conectados: La nueva (y difícil) experiencia de*

*trabajar desde casa* [Quarantined, but connected: The new (and difficult) experience of Work from home]. Retrieved from: <https://www.latercera.com/que-pasa/noticia/en-cuarentena-pero-conectados-la-nueva-y-dificil-experiencia-de-trabajar-desde-casa/I4EKENTPMNDCHAETL3GGLZEFPI/>

Lewis, S., & Cooper, C. (1999). The work-family research agenda in changing contexts.

*Journal of Occupational Health Psychology,* *4*(4), 382-93.

Lewis, S., Gambles, R., & Rapoport, R. (2007). The constraints of a 'work-life balance'

approach: An international perspective. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management: Work-life Balance,* *18*(3), 360-373.

McKinsey Global Institute (2020). *COVID-19 and gender equality: Countering the*

*regressive effects*. Retrieved from: <https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/McKinsey/Featured%20Insights/Future%20of%20Organizations/COVID%2019%20and%20gender%20equality%20Countering%20the%20regressive%20effects/COVID-19-and-gender-equality-Countering-the-regressive-effects.pdf>

Mclaren, H.J., Wong, K.R., Nguyen, K.N. & Mahamadachchi, K.N.D. (2020). Covid-19 and Women’s Triple Burden: Vignettes from Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Vietnam and Australia. *Social Sciences,* *9*,87.

Ministerio de Justicia y Derechos Humanos. Contratos de trabajo, Law N°20.744. Retrieved from: <http://servicios.infoleg.gob.ar/infolegInternet/anexos/25000-29999/25552/norma.htm>

Minmujeryeg (2020). Ministerio de la Mujer y la Equidad de Género. Retrieved from:

<https://www.gob.cl/salacunauniversal/>

Özbilgin, M. F., Beauregard, T. A., Tatli, A., & Bell, M. P. (2011). Work-Life, Diversity and Intersectionality: A Critical Review and Research Agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews,* *13*(2), 177-198.

Presidencia del Senado (2020). *Agenda Género Covid19* [Gender Agenda Covid19]. Retrieved from: <https://www.senado.cl/senado/site/mm/20200623/asocfile/20200623134514/agenda_g__nero_covid_22_de_junio_1.pdf>

Ruitenberg, J. (2014). A Typology of Dutch Mothers’ Employment Narratives: Drifters,

Privilegeds, Balancers, Ambitious. *Gender Issues,* *31*(1), 58-82.

Sanchez, D. (2020). *El 44% de los empleados afirma que el teletrabajo ha deteriorado el*

*clima laboral de su empresa* [44% of employees affirm that teleworking has deteriorated the work environment of their company]. La Tercera, Pulso. Retrieved from: .<https://www.latercera.com/pulso/noticia/el-44-de-los-empleados-afirma-que-el-teletrabajo-ha-deteriorado-el-clima-laboral-de-su-empresa/W27JBDDO5FF43GNO46MUWPRWFU/>

Sanhueza, C., Cazzuffi, C., Sandoval, D. & Rosales-Salas, J. *Gender gaps in time use*

*during COVID-19 pandemic in Chile* (Working Paper version: 31st May, 2020). Santiago: Universidad Mayor.

Senado (2020a). *Anuncian acuerdo por postnatal: incorporarán licencia médica parental*

*Covid-19 al proyecto sobre cuidado de menores de 6 años* [Post-natal agreement announced: Covid-19 parental medical leave to be added to childcare Project] Retrieved from: <https://www.senado.cl/anuncian-acuerdo-por-postnatal-incorporaran-licencia-medica-parental/senado/2020-07-03/191443.html>

Senado (2020b). *Comisión de Trabajo avanza en la tramitación de dos*

*emblemáticas iniciativas: 40 horas y teletrabajo* [Working Committee advances in the processing of two emblematic initiatives: 40 hours and teleworking]. Retrieved from: <https://www.senado.cl/comision-de-trabajo-avanza-en-la-tramitacion-de-dos-emblematicas/senado/2020-01-29/162003.html>

Sernam (2013). *Guía Sistema de Gestión de Igualdad de Género y Conciliación de la Vida*

*Laboral, Familiar y Personal en las Organizaciones* [Guide System for the Management of Gender Equality and the Reconciliation of Work, Family and Personal Life in Organizations]. Retrieved from: <https://minmujeryeg.gob.cl/?page_id=37311>

Smithson, J. and Stokoe, E.H. (2005), Discourses of Work–Life Balance: Negotiating

‘Genderblind’ Terms in Organizations. *Gender, Work & Organization*, *12*: 147-168.

Stead, V. and Elliott, C. (2009). *Women’s Leadership*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Taub, A. (2020, 07 April). A new COVID-19 crisis:Domestic abuse rises worldwide.

*Chicago Tribune*. Retrieved from: <https://www.chicagotribune.com/coronavirus/sns-nyt-coronavirus-domestic-abuse-rises-worldwide-20200407-6kd46ga4hrfizoxmhz4dmiigja-story.html>

Trethewey, A. (1999). Disciplined bodies: women's embodied identities at work.

*Organization Studies*, *20*(3), 423–450.

UN Women (n.d.). *Equal pay for work of equal value*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/csw61/equal-pay>

UN Women (2020). *Latin American WEPs leaders share experiences in response to COVID-19 with a gender focus*. Retrieved from: <https://lac.unwomen.org/en/noticias-y-eventos/articulos/2020/07/empresas-weps-latinoamerica-respuesta-covid-19>

UNESCO (n.d.). *Global Education Monitoring Report*. Retrieved form:

<https://gem-report-2017.unesco.org/en/chapter/gender_monitoring_leadership/>

UNICEF. (2020). *Encuesta COVID. Percepciones y actitudes de la población. Impacto de*

*la pandemia y las medidas adoptadas sobre la vida cotidiana* [COVID survey. Perceptions and attitudes of the population. Impact of the pandemic and the measures taken on daily life] Retieved from: https://www.unicef.org/argentina/media/8061/file.

van Amsterdam, N. (2015). Othering the ‘leaky body’. An autoethnographic story about

expressing breast milk in the workplace. *Culture and Organization, 21*(3), 269-287. doi: 10.1080/14759551.2014.887081

Vidal, V. (2020). *Buenas prácticas de empresas WEPs en Argentina* [Good practices of

WEPs companies in Argentina]. ONU Mujeres. Retrieved from:

<https://lac.unwomen.org/es/digiteca/publicaciones/2020/04/argentina-buenas-practicas-empresas-weps-ganar-ganar>

Wolkowitz, C. (2006). *Bodies at Work*. London: Sage.

World Economic Forum (2020). *What the COVID-19 pandemic tells us about gender*

*equality*. Retrieved from: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/05/what-the-Covid-19-pandemic-tells-us-about-gender-equality/>

**Tables**

**TABLE 1** Demographic Characteristics of the respondents

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Country | Chile |  | 14 |
|  | Argentina |  | 15 |
| Zone | Urban |  | 29 |
| Average Age |  |  | 37 |
| Situation of living: | “I live with my male partner”  “I live with my female partner”  “don´t answer” |  | 27  1  1 |
| Average # of Children |  | | 1.6 |
|  | Children 0 - 1 |  | 1.6 |
|  | Children 1,1 - 3 |  | 7 |
|  | Children 3,1 - 5 |  | 6 |
| Work situation | Independent / Self-Employed |  | 6 |
|  | Employed in the private sector |  | 10 |
|  | Employed in the public sector |  | 10 |
|  | Unemployed |  | 1 |
|  | Employer |  | 2 |
| Education | Graduate Studies |  | 14 |
|  | University |  | 10 |
|  | Postsecondary |  | 4 |
|  | High School |  | 1 |
| Monthly Income | Chile  Argentina |  | 1.873.000 CLP  45.400 PES |

**TABLE 2** Data examples for key concepts

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Concept | Data Example |
| Maternal Body  Full-time Norm  Conflict of leaving paid work | * Negative. They (management) took away my productivity which generated an economic burden. * (Motherhood) has a lot of impact because I don't work, I don't get paid. There were months of happiness but also anguish for not being able to work and generate money. My mother then had a very important role like now with the Covid-19 (I would say essential). * Impacted my productivity (at work), especially during the pre-and postnatal times. * They (full-time workers) are valued for the effort. * All mothers work full-time. * (full-time workers) The norm. * If it's a personal choice, that's fine with me. * It depends on each case. If it is a personal decision to dedicate time to child breeding it is fine. If it is for reasons of force majeure and this implies delaying professional development, it seems terrible to me. * That many times there are no options because the State is not responsible. |
| Family friendly initiatives  Management culture during Covid-19 | * (my employer provides) daycare, but it depends on what happens with Covid-19 and the postnatal extension. * I had contemplated putting my son in daycare but in Covid-19 times it is impossible. * It offers leave of absence for the care of a minor child in cases where they cannot access remote work. * Enabling work from home, but not providing the instruments to do it (equipment and internet access, for example). * Only reduction in the kindergarten fee by 20%. But nothing aimed at mothers. Just a general wellness program that you can check if you're not feeling well. * Allowing to minimize the days and hours of work attendance. |
| Partners support & Covid-19  Career Aspirations | * The organisation does not change too much, if the amount of times we are with it, x spending more time at home than usual, we try to divide ourselves. * We are without support at home, so we divide the chores of the children proportionally depending on the work of each one. * In times of pandemic we divide care in equal parts. * To be able to improve myself and give my daughter a better future. * My motivations to work have to do with the satisfaction that my work brings me personally and with the challenge of learning more every day. * Lifelong learning, contribution to society and personal development. |

**TABLE 3** Workplace Initiatives

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Workplace Initiatives | FFF  ARG | FFF CHL | Mother (today) ARG | Mother (today) CHL | Mother (future) ARG | Mother (future) CHL | Father (future) ARG | Father (future) CHL |
| Kindergarten | 13% | 57% | **.** | 33% | **.** | 5% | **.** | 10% |
| Reduce working hours | 13% | 7% | **.** | **.** | 13% | 10% | 6% | 5% |
| Remote Work | 13% | 7% | 7% | **.** | 6% | 5% | 13% | 15% |
| Leave of Absence | 13% | **.** | 13% | **.** | 6% | 10% | **.** | 5% |
| Extension Parental Leave | 7% | **.** | **.** | **.** | **.** | **.** | 6% | 15% |
| Flextime | 7% | **.** | 13% | 17% | 25% | 24% | 19% | 25% |
| Breastfeeding | **.** | **.** | **.** | 8% | **.** | **.** | **.** | **.** |
| Covid-19 | **.** | **.** | **.** | 8% | **.** | **.** | **.** | **.** |
| Infrastructure | **.** | **.** | **.** | **.** | **.** | 5% | **.** | **.** |
| Legal | **.** | **.** | **.** | **.** | **.** | 5% | **.** | 5% |
| Management | **.** | **.** | **.** | **.** | 6% | 24% | **.** | 5% |
| Money | **.** | **.** | **.** | **.** | 13% | **.** | 6% | **.** |