

# Gender Role Division and Well-being of the Couples: Evidence from the Netherlands, Germany and Japan

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This study examines the influence of male participation in housework and childcare on the well-being of the couples in Germany, the Netherlands and Japan, where gender role norms are known as traditional. For example, in Japan, the number of men who desire to participate in childcare is increasing with the emergence of the positive images of active fatherhood. Some panel data analysis in Japan also shows that a wife's marital satisfaction level tends to rise with an increase in male participation in childcare. On the other hand, the media have started to underscore the stress faced by numerous working men who are still required to work long hours while simultaneously attempting to become more involved in childcare. To increase gender equity in family life, changes in individual values must be accompanied by changes in social conditions to ensure that male participation in domestic tasks can contribute to increased well-being for both the husband and the wife. This research will take advantages of GGS's couple survey design, wherein answers will be obtained separately from male and female partners living in the same household, and examine how men's participation in housework and childcare relates to well-being of both men themselves and their female partners. First, the study intends to classify the couples according to how each couple's well-being responds to male participation in domestic work. Then, second, I compare how the distribution and correlates of each group differ across countries. Results are compared across Japan, Germany and the Netherlands where strong cultural preference exists for women to stay at home for child-rearing. Through this comparative framework, the research intends to reveal both consequences and social constraints of men's active participation in domestic work in these gender "traditional" societies.