

Attitudes Towards Mothers Working Outside the Home in the Caribbean



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Research Question

What affects attitudes towards mothers working outside the home in the Caribbean?

Main Hypothesis

H1: Women (vs. men) will be more supportive of mothers working outside the home

- Multiple factors – socialization, desire for economic independence – may push women to be more supportive

Other Hypotheses

H2 (a-c): Higher education (a), more wealth (b), and younger age (c) will lead to more support for mothers working outside the home

- Education and wealth are associated with marriage and other safety nets + different socialization experiences, which may lead to more support for working mothers
- Youth tend to be more socially progressive

H3: Christians will be less likely to support mothers working outside the home

- Christianity is linked to social conservatism, due to biblical theology and church teachings; views may vary by denominations

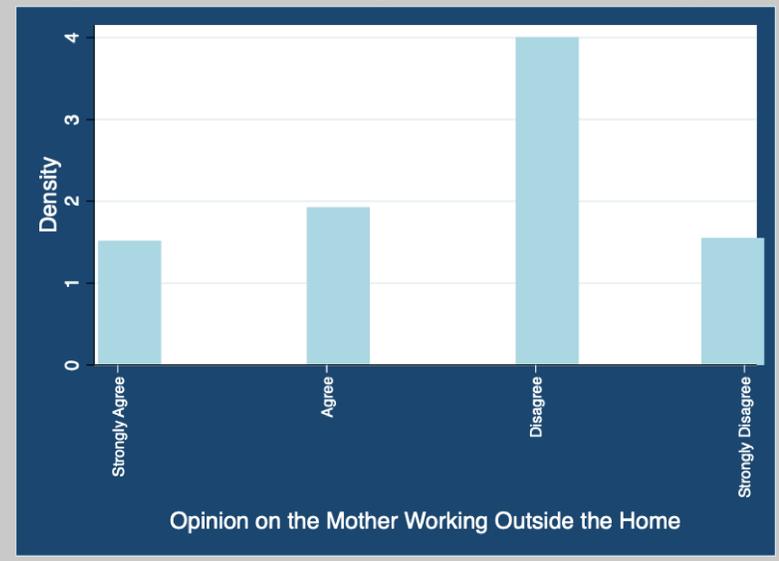
H4: H2 and H3 predictors of support for mothers working outside the home may vary by gender (exploratory)

Data

LAPOP's AmericasBarometer 2023 national survey of adults in Trinidad and Tobago (n=1,660)

Dependent Variable

Support for working mothers: Agree/disagree with the following statement: When a mother works outside the home, the children suffer. Coded 1-4, higher values = disagree (i.e., more support).

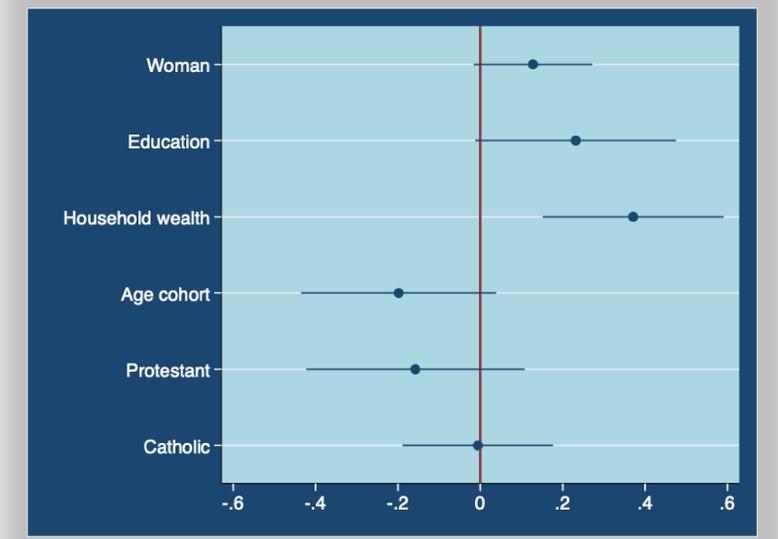


Asked of split sample. Mean = 2.6. Other half asked about working fathers (mean = 2.9).

Independent variables

Woman = women/non-binary=1, man=0
 Education = primary, secondary, university (0-1)
 Wealth = less to more, 5 categories (0-1)
 Age = 6 cohorts, higher values = older (0-1)
 Christianity = Catholic (1, 0); Protestant (1,0)

Results/Discussion



These results align with H1 and H2a-c, but most fall just short of being statistically significant.

To explore H4, I ran the analysis (w/o gender) for women and men. For women, wealth is positive and significant. For men, education and wealth are positive and significant; age is negative and close to significant.

Interestingly, while the coefficient on Protestant is consistently negative, it is never significant. The coefficient on Catholic is consistently close to 0.

Null/marginally significant results may be driven by low N, especially in analyses split by gender. Future research should consider experiences and attitudes towards domestic violence and collective cultural norms.

References

