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The Effect Of Policy Context On Work And Family Identity In Norway And The United States

Rebecca Folkman Gleditsch

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THE EFFECT OF POLICY CONTEXT ON WORK AND FAMILY IDENTITY IN
NORWAY AND THE UNITED STATES

by

Rebecca Folkman Gleditsch
Bachelor of Arts, University of North Dakota, 2013

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

of the

University of North Dakota

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

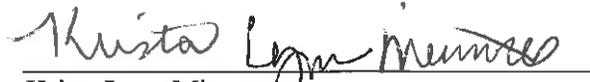
Master of Arts

Grand Forks, North Dakota

May

2015

This thesis, submitted by Rebecca Folkman Gleditsch in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisory Committee under whom the work has been done, and is hereby approved.



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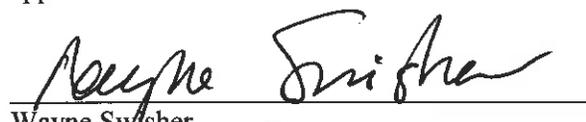


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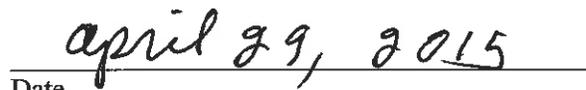


Elizabeth Legerski

This thesis is being submitted by the appointed advisory committee as having met all of the requirements of the graduate School at the University of North Dakota and is hereby approved.



Wayne Swisher
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PERMISSION

Title The Effect of Policy Context on Work and Family Identity in Norway and the United States

Department Sociology

Degree Master of Arts

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Rebecca Folkman Gleditsch
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ABSTRACT

Scholars are interested in how social policies affect citizens on issues related to work and family. Previous research has made comparisons of work and family in Scandinavia and the United States, emphasizing differences in history, development, and current social policies. However, much of the literature focuses on countries within the European Union, and research on how gender and social policy correlate with work and family identities is particularly scarce in Norway. To examine the effect of social policies on work and family identities, this study analyzes if men and women in Norway and the United States differ in the strength of their work and family identities. This study uses data from the World Value Survey's (WVS) fifth wave collected between 2005 and 2009. The sample used in this study ($N = 1,445$) consists of employed individuals, 18 and older from Norway ($N = 717$) and the United States ($N = 738$). A cross-national comparison is performed on work and family identities in the two countries, and the results indicate that gender and policy context are both related to work and family identities in Norway and the United States. Although respondents from both countries express strong work and family identities, a greater percentage of Norwegians hold two strong identities. Findings on men and women's family and work identities in Norway and the United States are discussed.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Over the past 25 years scholars have explored the topic of welfare states and social policies in the Western world. In particular, research has examined how different types of welfare states affect social policy development, the welfare of citizens, and how individuals balance work and family (Esping-Andersen 1990; Haas and Rostgaard 2011; Meyers and Gornick 2001). This previous research highlights how policies operating at the societal level influence various aspects of individual behavior, often uncovering how such policies may foster or constrain gender differences at the individual level. For example, policies have been found to shape men and women's level of participation in care work and paid work (Hook 2010) and their potential to develop work and family identities (Neilson and Stanfors 2014). Past scholarship has compared the Scandinavian welfare state and the American welfare state, emphasizing differences in history, development, and current social policies (Berrick and Skivenes 2013; Esping Andersen 1990; Parry 2001; Sainsbury 1996). However, much of the research focuses on countries within the European Union, and research on how the Norwegian and American policy contexts shape work and family identities is particularly scarce. Given this background, do men and women in Norway and the United States differ in the strength of their work and family identities?

An individual's overall identity consists of several parts that are connected to one's social roles (Greenhaus, Peng, and Allen 2012), such as work and family. The more time an individual spends in a role, the stronger the associated identity is likely to be (Greenhaus et al. 2012). A strong family identity has been described as occurring when "one's sense of self is tightly bound up in one's role in the family" (Mannon, Minnotte, and Brower 2007: 68)

and a strong work identity has been described as taking place when “one’s identity is tied to one’s role at work” (Mannon et al. 2007: 68). Men and women diverge in how they create work and family identities, and the importance they place on these identities. Several studies have found that the meaning and importance placed on work, family, and gender identities varies among men and women in the United States (Aryee and Luk 1996; Greenhaus et al. 2012; McLaughlin and Muldoon 2014). However, very few studies have compared work and family identities among individuals in Norway and the United States, which might vary according to different policy contexts. Indeed, the social policies and benefits of a country have implications for gender equality, as they have the potential of equalizing the division of labor between men and women and may facilitate the combination of paid work and care work. This is especially important for women who often cut back on work when policy contexts are unsupportive of women’s labor force participation (Becker and Moen 1999; Glynn 2014; Higgins, Duxbury, and Lyons 2010).

Different social policy contexts might also shape men’s and women’s work and family identities. Countries with policies that enable men and women to combine participation in the paid labor force with having a family may encourage the formation of strong work and family identities among both men and women. Countries with fewer social policies in these areas might lead to individuals with weaker work and family identities, or individuals with one strong identity and one weak identity, as they might be forced to choose between participation in paid work or care work. Comparing countries with different social policies can therefore help further our understanding of work and family identities. It is especially helpful to compare countries with very different policy contexts.

Following the welfare typology created by Esping-Andersen (1990), Norway and the United States are on opposite ends of the welfare state continuum. Norway, part of the social democratic welfare regime along with the other Scandinavian countries, represents a welfare

state form that provides broad universal services (Christensen 2012). Social services are seen as a right, and the country is very decommodified in that benefits are provided regardless of labor force participation. The United States, on the other hand, is part of what Esping-Andersen calls the liberal welfare state regime in which social services are not seen as a right and benefits are tied to one's occupation in the labor market, thus creating a welfare state in which benefits are highly commodified (Berrick and Skivenes 2013; Sainsbury 1996).

Another important part of the Norwegian welfare state is a strong emphasis on both work and welfare (Dahl and West Pedersen 2006), with gender equality as an explicit goal (Duvander, Lappegård, and Andersson 2010). Many social policies focus on both equality in the workplace and childrearing at home (Duvander et al. 2010; Meyers and Gornick 2001), which may affect men's and women's work and family identities. Social policies, such as paid parental leave for both parents, subsidized day-care centers, child benefits, and after-school programs, make it easier for parents to combine care work and paid work, which in turn can have the potential of building strong work and family identities for parents. Norway has developed these public policies with the aim of promoting the dual earner/dual carer model in which men and women share both paid and unpaid work (Haas and Rostgaard 2011: 178). In Norway, this also involves caregiving for children from birth onwards. As such, policies in Norway have been aimed at full employment for both men and women, including those with young children (Leira 2002: 83). In comparison to Norway, the United States is very different in terms of the social policies that exist for individuals combining work and family. As a liberal welfare state, there is more emphasis on caregiving within the family with little involvement from the state (Berrick and Skivenes 2013; Sainsbury 1996). Compared to Norway, there are fewer social policies facilitating the combination of caregiving and labor force participation (Esping-Andersen 1990; Leira 2002), thus how

successful men and women are at combining work and family might vary more in the United States compared to Norway.

Policy contexts have shaped several differences related to participation in the paid labor force in the two countries. Approximately 76% of those aged 15 to 64 in Norway have a paid job, 90% of people who have completed secondary school or more have a job, while 62% of those without a secondary education have a paid job (OECD Better Life Index 2013 Norway). In terms of the men and women in the paid labor force, women are still somewhat less likely to have a paid job, with 74% of Norwegian females holding a paid job compared to 78% of Norwegian males (OECD Better Life Index 2013 Norway). The work profile is very different in the United States. Almost 10% fewer Americans have a paid job compared to Norwegians, as 67% of those age 15 to 64 in the United States have a paid job. For those who have completed secondary school or more, 80% have a job, while only 34% of those without a secondary education have a paid job (OECD Better Life Index 2013 The United States). Compared to Norway, the gap between men and women in the paid labor force is larger, 62% of American females have a paid job compared to 72% of American males (OECD Better Life Index 2013 The United States).

The differences in paid labor force participation between the two countries are likely connected to social policies, as prior research has found that benefits like leave provision and childcare services affect participation in the labor market, especially among women (Thévenon 2013). Norway provides all workers with law-protected paid parental leave, day-care, and sick-days, making it easier to participate in the paid labor force while also having a family. In the United States, there are fewer of these rights and individuals combining work and family face a different reality than their Norwegian counterparts. Thus, in the United States, parents often adopt a neo-traditional model in which women cut back on work and men increase their work participation once a family has children (Becker and Moen 1999;

Glynn 2014; Higgins et al. 2010). Altogether, the different policy contexts make it important to ask whether individuals in Norway and the United States differ in their work and family identities, and how gender comes into play.

The goal of this thesis is to provide a quantitative analysis of the strength of work and family identities in Norway and the United States. Specifically, this thesis will examine gender differences in work and family identities and how these patterns differ between the two countries. Looking at work and family identities in these two countries can shed light on how social policy contexts affect the choices that individuals make when combining work and family. As more women enter the labor force, more families will consist of two breadwinners trying to combine work and family. The results of this study may be used to inform policy decisions on how to better enable males and females to share paid and unpaid work. In the long term, developing such social policies can encourage employment for both parents, improve work conditions, and reduce gender inequalities in paid and unpaid work. Additionally, as little previous research has examined the strength of work and family identities in these two countries using cross-national data, this thesis will contribute to the work and family literature in this area.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

In Chapter Two, an overview of previous research and literature on the topic will be provided, as well as an outline of the theoretical framework for this study. Chapter Three will describe the methodological approach used in this thesis, including the sampling methods and measurement of the variables. In Chapter Four the results of the analysis will be presented. Finally, in Chapter Five, a discussion of the implications of this study, as well as limitations and areas of future research will be provided.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This thesis examines if men and women in Norway and the United States differ in the strength of their work and family identities. This chapter begins with the theoretical framework that will guide this thesis. This is followed by a review of the existing literature relating to the research question. The final part of the chapter summarizes the previous research and proposes hypotheses.

Theoretical Background

Previous research has highlighted the importance of considering the policy context that people operate in when comparing men and women in different countries (Zimmerman 2013). The welfare state regimes described by Esping-Andersen (1990) have the potential to shape attitudes and ideas about work and family identity. Previous research focusing on how welfare state regimes affect individuals has examined different questions, such as the impact of parenthood on men's and women's time use across welfare state regimes (Neilson and Stanfors 2014), the relationship between men's unpaid work behavior and national context (Hook 2006), and how national contexts affect household task segregation by gender (Hook 2010). Altogether, these studies explore how policies operating at the societal level either amplify or reduce gender differences at the individual level.

A welfare state is a system where the state is responsible for the protection of citizen's financial and social health and well-being, by providing benefits like pensions, social support, and grants when needed (Christensen and Berg 2014). Stressing the idea that there are different welfare regimes, Esping-Andersen clustered welfare states into three different

groups based on their economic and political history: liberal, conservative, and social democratic welfare states (1990: 32). When looking at countries as welfare state regimes (Esping-Andersen 1990) it becomes evident that "...certain welfare state regimes may preserve gendered behaviors more than others" (Neilson and Stanfors 2014: 1066). Thus, the potential men and women have to develop work and family identities may depend on the country they live in. The three different welfare regimes of Esping-Andersen vary from the liberal welfare states, emphasizing means-tested assistance and strict entitlement rules, to the conservative/corporatist welfare states, in which benefits are related to social insurance and entitlements vary according to income and insurance payments, and social democratic welfare states, with broad universal benefits provided by the state (1990). Previous literature emphasizes the importance of focusing on the structures in society that have potential to hinder and facilitate how men and women share unpaid work and participate in the paid labor force (Hook 2006). This thesis takes an institutional approach when examining how men and women develop their identities by considering the context of the welfare regime they live in.

Men and women's choices of participating in care work and paid work influence their everyday-life, economic standing, and social relationships (Hook 2010), as well as their work and family identities. However, the choice of whether or not to participate in the paid-labor force and care work, and the extent of such participation is not solely a decision made by the individual. National context also influences individual choices, and social policies have the potential to ease or constrain decision making related to work and family regardless of individual preferences (Hook 2006; Hook 2010). A country's work-time customs are shaped by societal regulations and norms about appropriate work time, which in turn have consequences for who will work full-time and the amount of time individuals have to spend on work outside the paid labor force (Hook 2010). This might have two consequences for the development of work and family identity. It will, on one hand, influence decision making

through the time available outside the paid labor force, and on the other hand, influence the norms in which the decision making takes place (Hook 2010). In countries where full-time work is the norm, individuals participating in the paid-labor force might be unable to spend much time on care-work, thus weakening their opportunities to develop strong family identities, but strengthening their work identities. The same norm might also keep individuals, especially women, from participating in the paid labor force because they have other obligations, such as children, thus weakening their opportunities to develop a strong work identity, while strengthening their family identities.

Different approaches to understanding work and family identity have been used in the existing literature, but little research includes the context that identity development takes place within. Contextual factors, such as national policies, norms, and practices, can influence men and women and the choices they make (Hook 2006). Thus, analyzing two countries operating under different welfare regimes will increase our understanding of work and family identities by looking at them "...within the country and time period in which they are embedded, and unpacking welfare state regimes into specific policies and practices" (Hook 2006: 654). Contextual factors are rooted in both the United States and Norway and consequently affect the resources that men and women possess when balancing work and family. Their access to resources, such as parental leave, sick leave, and flexible work hours, will have consequences for their involvement in the paid labor force and care work, and these contextual factors have the potential to make it easier, or harder, to develop strong work and family identities (Hook 2006). Because prior literature emphasizes differences in work and family identities among men and women (Aryee and Luk 1996; Bielby 1992), it is important to examine if men and women's identities differ by policy context.

Literature Review

Work and family identities are important because they have the potential to “...suggest what to do, think and even feel” (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999: 417). A person can have many identities – work and family identity are two examples. These two identities are both “...major parts of the overall identity of many adults” (Walsh and Gordon 2008: 58). As people become more involved in work and family roles, they tend to create an attached identity (Aryee and Luk 1996) by “...incorporating the identity offered by membership in various social groups” (Walsh and Gordon 2008: 48). Men and women are both affected by the family dynamics, and support and satisfaction with one’s family has been found to increase family identity (Aryee and Luk 1996; Bielby 1992). However, when looking at the effect of gender, the literature indicates that men tend to identify more with the work role, while women identify more with the family role (Aryee and Luk 1996).

The time spent on work within identities, such as spending time with family or at work, tend to increase attachment to the particular identity and weaken attachment to the other. For example, the more hours women spend on childcare have been found to reduce their work identities (Aryee and Luk 1996). Previous literature has also found a positive relationship between women’s work hours and women’s work identities, along with a negative relationship between women’s work hours and women’s family identities. Thus, the more hours a woman works, the stronger her work identity and weaker her family identity (Greenhaus et al. 2012). Therefore, being employed and working full-time will likely increase the strength of women’s work identities, whereas having children and the time spent doing care work will likely strengthen women’s family identities.

For both men and women, engagement in work and family roles increases identification with those roles, but the process and balance between the two varies by gender (Bielby and Bielby 1989). Women have been found to trade off one identity for the other,

while men are able to identify with both without trading-off (Aryee and Luk 1996; Bielby and Bielby 1989). Gender also affects spillover between the two identities, women's family identities tend to spillover to work, while men's work identities tend to spillover to family (Loscocco 1997), perhaps reflecting a breadwinner mentality. Spillover theory emphasizes that stress occurring in one area of life can be brought over to other areas, such as from work to family, despite the boundaries that exist between work and family (Staines 1980). This is also reflected in the positive relationship that has been found between income and family identity for men (Aryee and Luk 1996). Regardless of gender, professionals have been found to place more emphasis on their work identity compared to individuals of lower-status occupations, thus having a stronger work identity (Walsh and Gordon 2008). Individuals of lower-status occupations may therefore be more likely to place a larger emphasis on the other parts of their overall identity, such as family identity. Cross-national research continues to highlight how policy context is an important part of explaining these gendered patterns (Hook 2006; Hook 2010; Zimmerman 2013).

Cross-national comparisons of Norway and the United States are rare in the literature. No previous research has examined work and family identity in these two countries using cross-nationally comparable data. However, there is literature that examines work identity, family identity, and social policy. Previous literature has found that countries with state support and policy approaches that aim to balance caregiving and paid employment for men and women tend to have more women participating in the paid labor force, increased working hours for mothers, and lower poverty rates (Abendroth, van der Lippe, and Maas 2012; Gornick, Meyers, and Ross 1998; Mandel and Semyonov 2006; Misra, Moller, and Budig 2007; Pettit and Hook 2005; Stier, Lewin-Epstein, and Braun 2001). Specifically, leave arrangements, such as maternity leave when a child is born or sick leave when a child is sick, along with state subsidized day care have been found to increase mothers' labor force

participation (Abendroth et al. 2012). Increasing numbers of women into the paid labor-market has contributed to women's growing economic independence, and thus strengthening their power at home and in society (Mandel and Semyonov 2006).

At the other end of the spectrum, countries with fewer of those policies have been found to favor women as caregivers and emphasize their responsibilities for their families, making women, and especially single-mothers, more prone to poverty in these countries (Misra et al. 2007). Factors such as widespread use of part-time work, disrupted employment, as well as little support for mothers in the paid labor-force have all been found to reduce women's income across the life course (Stier et al. 2001). In addition, when policy support for mothers in the paid labor-force is low, there tend to be higher wage penalties for mothers who leave the workforce to care for children (Stier et al. 2001). In countries in which the state supports working mothers through social policies, more women participate in full-time employment before and after having children (Stier et al. 2001). In these ways, then, scholarship underscores how state-level policies shape gendered patterns.

There is an increasing recognition of the importance of focusing on social policy when examining work and family questions, and in an article examining policy regimes and gender, Zimmerman argues that in order to fully explain the inequalities that exist between men and women, the role of social policies and how they influence daily life need to be recognized (2013). Despite the increase in literature focusing on social policy, there is limited research that has compared the strength of work and family identities by looking at social policies in two different welfare regimes. As argued by Zimmerman (2013), it is essential to look at how men and women in Norway and the United States are influenced by different social policies in order to explain how and why their work and family identities differ.

Policy Context

Norway has one of the most generous family policies in the world (Hardoy and Schone 2008). The strong emphasis on support for families and full employment for both men and women has led to universal service provisions in Norway, which enables parents to combine work and family (Berrick and Skivenes 2013: 424). It may therefore be that Norwegians place more importance on both work and family, and thus are able to build stronger work and family identities simultaneously. This section gives an overview of how the family policies existing in the two countries, previous literature, and background factors shape the hypotheses examined in this study.

In contrast to Norway's generous system, it is more difficult to combine work and family in the United States. According to Berger and colleagues (2005) nearly two-thirds of American mothers return to work within 3 months after their baby is born. Federal law allows for parental leave for some group of workers, but employers are not required to offer their employees paid parental leave (Berger, Hill, and Waldfogel 2005; Berrick and Skivenes 2013; Hook and Wolfe 2013). In the United States, the most common source of maternity leave has been employer policies. Under these, "a new mother can typically stay home for up to 6 weeks, as long as she has the available leave time... and obtains a doctor's note" (Berger et al. 2005: F29). However, not all women have the available time such as vacation, sick days or temporary disability coverage, leaving them without maternity leave. In the early 1970s, some states passed laws that required firms to provide job-protected leave to employees, ranging from 4 to 18 weeks of leave (Berger et al. 2005). The policies were more formalized in 1993 when the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) was passed, making the United States "...the last industrialized country to establish an official program for maternity or family leave" (Parry 2001: 75). This act is limited compared to international standards as it "...does not cover all mothers, provides only 12 weeks of leave and makes no provision for

paid leave” (Berger et al. 2005: F29). However, the passage of FMLA did formalize American policies to an extent and women’s access to maternity leave increased as they for the first time in American history were provided the right by federal law to “...a job-protected maternity leave for qualifying employees” (Berger et al. 2005: F31). Qualified employees included those working for employers with at least 50 employees and who worked more than 1,250 hours for the same employer the year before having a child (Berger et al. 2005; Parry 2001). These restrictions made job-protected leave only applicable to roughly half of all working women in the United States. Overall, new mothers in the United States are less likely than new mothers in Norway to use job-protected maternity leave. The mothers who do, tend to have shorter leave and are more likely to be unpaid while staying home with their newborns (Berger et al. 2005). Although the twelve weeks of leave are available to both men and women, few American men say they use it (Berger et al. 2005; Parry 2001). The United States Department of Labor’s FMLA report from 2012 showed that fifty-nine percent of all employees in the United States were covered and eligible to take leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act in 2011 (U.S. Department of Labor 2012). Sixteen percent of these workers took leave, with 56% being women and 44% being men, and two-thirds received some payment while on leave. Of the sixteen percent taking leave, one out of five or about 2.8 million people took leave related to a new child. Among these, women took an average of 58 days to care for a new child compared to 22 days of leave for men.

American parental leave is in sharp contrast to Norway, in which parents are provided a total of 10 or 12 months of paid leave. Although differences in use of maternity leave might be related to personal preferences, norms, and opportunities, the great differences in family leave policies between the two countries are likely to play a role (Berger et al. 2005), and thus have an impact on the development of work and family identities. Social democratic welfare states like Norway provide its citizens with a range of universal benefits, such as

education, day care, health care, social security and dental services. A direct consequence of these benefits is the few expenses that actually exist for parents (Berrick and Skivenes 2013), making it easier for parents to combine work and family and perhaps also building stronger work and family identities for Norwegians. Benefits, such as subsidized public daycare, free education, and before-and-after school programs further encourage the development of strong work and family identities in Norway. Among fathers employed in the paid labor force in Norway, the majority take leave and fathers take an average leave of 10 weeks (Bringedal and Lappegård 2012). All mothers employed in the paid labor force take some leave as they by law have three weeks before and 14 weeks after birth set aside for them and on average they take a leave of 44 weeks (Bringedal and Lappegård 2012). All paternity leave in Norway is paid, the amount paid depends on employment status and income. Based on the previous research illustrating how policies that facilitate the combination of work and family positively impact work and family identity, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H₁: The Norwegian policy context will be related to stronger work identities than the American policy context.

H₂: The Norwegian policy context will be related to stronger family identities than the American policy context.

Having a strong work identity has been found to increase the likelihood of work-family conflict for both men and women (Greenhaus et al. 2012; Wayne, Randel, and Stevens 2006). This is consistent with findings from other studies, which indicate that there is a positive relationship between involvement with work and the strength of the attached identity (Aryee and Luk 1996; Greenhaus et al. 2012). When looking at the work profiles for Norway and the United States, the gap between men and women in the paid labor force is bigger in the United States, 62% of American females have a paid job compared to 72% of American males (OECD Better Life Index 2013). As fewer females in the United States participate in

the paid labor force compared to their Norwegian counterparts, a possible explanation is that it is more difficult for American females to work while having a family, thus decreasing participation in paid work and increasing participation in care work. Further, it might be that American females are pushed towards building stronger family identities because the American policy context provides few benefits that help them participate in the paid labor force. Based on the previous research and work profile in the United States, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H_{3a}: The Norwegian policy context will be related to stronger work identities among men.

H_{3b}: The Norwegian policy context will be related to stronger work identities among women.

H_{3c}: Policy context will matter more in predicting women's work identities compared to men's.

H_{4a}: The Norwegian policy context will be related to stronger family identities among men.

H_{4b}: The Norwegian policy context will be related to weaker family identities among women.

H_{4c}: Policy context will matter more in predicting men's family identities compared to women's.

An important difference between the United States and Norway is that in Norway, "...part of the care for children is defamilized and responsibility collectivized" (Leira 2002: 84). The broad range of benefits that exist in Norway are universal and free, enabling parents to combine work and family to a much greater extent than their American counterparts (Berrick and Skivenes 2013). In Norway, the balance of work and family includes mothers, fathers, and the state, with the aim of most policies and family programs being to improve

work conditions, encourage employment for parents, and reduce gender inequalities in paid and unpaid work (Hardoy and Schone 2008; Leira 2002; Meyers and Gornick 2003). In short, the state has more responsibility and provides more benefits for families and children in Norway compared to the United States (Berrick and Skivenes 2013), which may make it easier for Norwegians to develop strong work and family identities compared to Americans.

Looking back, the generous family policy system in Norway is relatively new. Before the 1980s, maternity leave was limited and more similar to the United States. Today, however, there are major differences between the United States and Norway. In Norway, the male breadwinner model is no longer a common pattern and has been replaced with the dual-earner family and there has been a shifting gender balance of employment and care. In addition, support for combining work and family has increased greatly (Leira 2002), further supporting the combination of a strong work identity and a strong family identity for Norwegian males and females. State sponsoring of childcare services has enabled mothers to return to work, challenged traditional gender roles, and mothers are more equal to fathers as economic providers than before. In the United States, there are few universal benefits comparable to those of Norway. Public education throughout high school is universal and publicly available for all, but day-care before, and education beyond this, are purchased on the private market for Americans who can afford to do so (Berrick and Skivenes 2013). Although some services are publicly subsidized for low-income families, benefits like health care, dental services, and social security, for the majority of Americans are either purchased through an employer or the private market, illustrating the highly commodified market of the United States. Based on the research illustrating the necessity for Americans to access these benefits through employment the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₅: Norwegians, regardless of gender, will be more likely to hold a strong work and family identity compared to their American counterparts.

Background Factors

There are also a number of background factors that this thesis takes into account when analyzing if men and women in Norway and the United States differ in the strength of their work and family identities. These include age, level of education, income, employment status, and marital status. Age is taken into account because males and females may have access to different resources over the life course making it more or less difficult to combine work and family (Arber 2004). Education is considered because highly educated individuals may have access to resources that make it easier to combine family and work (Arber 2004; Taniguchi and Rosenfeld 2002). Income is taken into account because more access to resources may make it easier to combine work and family, thus strengthening both identities (Arber 2004). Employment status is included because being employed full time has been found to increase independence and power in the home and society, which as a consequence, might lead to an increase in work identity (Mandel and Semyonov 2006). Marital status is included because support from a spouse may make it easier to combine work and family (Taniguchi and Rosenfeld 2002). Employment status and marital status in this study are viewed as potentially shaping work and family identities rather than as actual aspects of these identities. This is because, for example, married individuals likely vary in the importance they place on family.

Summary and Organization of the next Chapter

This chapter analyzed several aspects of work and family identity. No previous research has examined importance placed on work and family in these two countries using cross-nationally comparable data. The goal of this thesis is to contribute to this gap and to provide evidence of how crucial social policies are in the development of an individual's identity. In Chapter Three the methodological approach used in this thesis will be described,

as well as information about the dataset used. In addition, the operationalization of the variables and the analytical strategy utilized to answer the research question will be explained.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this thesis is to utilize a quantitative approach to examine if men and women in Norway and the United States differ in their work and family identities. This chapter provides a discussion of the methodology used to analyze the research question. The chapter begins with a detailed description of the data used, followed by an overview of the measurement of the variables. The final part of the chapter provides a discussion of the analytical strategy that will be used to answer the research question.

Data

The dataset utilized in this study is from the fifth wave of the World Values Survey. Beginning in 1981, the study conducts nationally representative surveys in close to 100 different countries throughout the world. The interviews for the fifth wave were done between 2005 and 2009, with those in the United States in 2006 and in Norway in 2007. There were a total of 83,975 respondents in the survey from all the countries. For the two countries in this study, the total number of respondents was 2,274, of which 1,249 were American and 1,025 were Norwegian. All respondents in the two countries had to be adults who were 18 or older in order to participate in the survey. This study only considers those who are employed because it is difficult to develop a work identity when one is not employed, and there are so many different factors likely shaping why someone is unemployed. Therefore, to make comparisons more straightforward, only people who were employed at the time of the survey were included in this study.

In the United States, the data was collected through a company called Knowledge Networks by using random digit dialing sampling techniques of the entire residential telephone population (World Values Survey Methodological questionnaire 2005). When a household was contacted and agreed to participate, they were sent surveys in English over the Internet to their e-mail address. If they did not have Internet or an e-mail address, Knowledge Networks provided a temporary e-mail address and access to Internet to encourage their participation. For the World Values Survey, a sample of eligible members was drawn from Knowledge Networks panel. The sample was stratified by age, education, ethnicity, and gender in order to have a representative sample that matched the most recent US Census Bureau Population Survey data. The interviews were self-administered over the Internet. In the United States, 1,710 respondents were drawn of which 461 did not respond, resulting in 1,249 respondents and a response rate of 73.04%. After excluding unemployed respondents, the total sample size was 738 respondents.

The Norwegian respondents were either interviewed through face-to-face interviews or interviews over the telephone. Regardless of method, all interviews in Norway were done in Norwegian. In Norway, random sampling was used in two stages to establish a sampling frame for the face-to-face interviews. This was done according to Statistics Norway's standard sampling frame in which the country first was divided into a number of primary sampling areas and then into 109 subpopulations called strata. In the first stage of the random sampling, one primary sampling area in each strata was selected. In the second stage, the respondents were randomly drawn from a populations register. In Norway, 1,700 respondents were drawn of which 35 were not old enough to participate and 640 did not respond, resulting in a final sample size of 1,025 and a response rate of 60.29%. After excluding unemployed respondents, the total sample size was 622 respondents.

Measures

Dependent Variables

Work identity was measured with one item that asked respondents “For each of the following, indicate how important it is in your life – Work” (World Values Survey Questionnaire, 2005). Responses ranged from (1) *very important*, (2) *rather important*, (3) *not very important*, and (4) *not at all important* (4). The variable has been reverse-coded so that higher scores indicate stronger work identity (i.e. 1 = not at all important to 4 = very important).

Family identity was measured with one item that asked respondents “For each of the following, indicate how important it is in your life – Family” (World Values Survey Questionnaire, 2005). Responses ranged from (1) *very important*, (2) *rather important*, (3) *not very important*, and (4) *not at all important* (4). The variable has been reverse-coded so that higher scores indicate stronger family identity (i.e. 1 = not at all important to 4 = very important).

The use of importance as a way of measuring work and family identity is similar to measurement used by other studies looking at identity (Lloyd, Roodt, and Odendaal 2011; Mannon, Minnotte, and Brower 2007).

Independent Variables

The analysis includes two main independent variables: sex and policy context. *Sex* was originally measured with (1) = male and (2) = female, but it was recoded so (1) = male and (0) = female. *Policy context* was measured with (0) = the United States and (1) = Norway.

Control Variables

The analysis also takes into account several control variables including employment status, marital status, age, level of education, and income. *Age* was measured in years.

Employment status was recoded into three dummy variables. *Full time employed* was coded as (1) = full time employed and (0) = all others, *part time employed* was coded (1) = part time employed and (0) = all others, and *self-employed* was coded (1) = self-employed and (0) = all others. The variable full-time employed is the comparison category. *Marital status* was coded so that (1) indicates married/living together as married and (0) indicating all other situations. *Level of education* was originally measured with nine categories, but no formal education and incomplete primary school have been recoded to no formal education, and vocational school and university prep have been recoded into one attribute measuring secondary school attainment. The coding for education is now (1) no formal education, (2) completed primary school, (3) incomplete secondary school, (4) completed secondary school, (5) university level but no degree, and (6) university level degree or higher. *Income* was measured in deciles ranging from the lowest decile (1) to the highest decile (10). In Norway, the respondents were asked to estimate the household's full income and after collecting all data, income was grouped into 10 equally sized groups, ranging from 1 to 10. Income was coded from low to high, with 1= low and 10 = high. In the United States, the respondents were told that income was divided into 10 groups, in which 1 indicated the lowest income decile in the country and 10 indicated the highest income decile in the country. The respondents were then told to specify which group their household belonged to. The actual income in dollars/Norwegian krone is not known.

Analytic Strategy

To provide background information on the sample, descriptive statistics including means and standard deviations for each country will be presented, as well *t* tests comparing the means across the two countries. To test Hypothesis 1 (The Norwegian policy context will be related to stronger work identities than the American policy context) all respondents will be included in an Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression predicting work identities. An

OLS regression including all respondents will also be used to test Hypothesis 2 (The Norwegian policy context will be related to stronger family identities than the American policy context). Hypothesis 3a, 3b, and 3c (The Norwegian policy context will be related to stronger work identities among men; The Norwegian policy context will be related to stronger work identities among women; Policy context will matter more in predicting women`s identities compared to men`s) will be tested by conducting separate OLS regressions by gender. This will also be done to test Hypothesis 4a, 4b, and 4c (The Norwegian policy context will be related to stronger family identities among men; The Norwegian policy context will be related to weaker family identities among women; Policy context will matter more in predicting men`s family identities compared to women`s). For Hypothesis 5 (Norwegians, regardless of gender, will be more likely to hold a strong work and family identity compared to their American counterparts) a new variable will be created with people considered to have a strong work and family identity (i.e. scored a 4 on both work identity and family identity) coded as 1 and all others as 0. A logistic regression will then be utilized to see if being from Norway significantly increases the odds of having two strong identities.

Summary and organization of the next chapter

This chapter began with a detail description of the dataset that will be used to examine the research question. This was followed by the measurement of the variables included in this thesis. The final part of the chapter provided a discussion of the analytical strategy that will be utilized to answer the research question. Chapter Four will discuss the findings of this thesis.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This study examines how men and women in Norway and the United States differ in the strength of their work and family identities. This chapter presents the findings. First, descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, are provided. Second, the results from the multivariate analysis that was conducted using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression will be presented, followed by the results from the logistic regression. The chapter also includes discussion of whether the results provide support for the hypotheses.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1. For the first dependent variable, the Norwegian respondents had, on average, significantly ($t = -10.049, p < .001$) stronger work identities ($M = 3.56, SD = .54$) than the American respondents ($M = 3.24, SD = .70$). For the second dependent variable, Americans had slightly stronger family identities ($M = 3.93, SD = .27$) than Norwegians ($M = 3.91, SD = .31$). On average, the Norwegian respondents were significantly ($t = -3.203, p < .001$) older ($M = 42.79, SD = 11.83$) than the American respondents ($M = 40.71, SD = 12.86$). More Americans worked full time (84.3%) and more were self-employed (15.1%) compared to Norwegians (80.2% and 10.3%), but Norwegians worked part time more often (9.5%) compared to Americans (.6%). The Norwegian respondents had significantly higher ($t = -7.692, p < .001$) incomes, with an average in the sixth income decile ($M = 6.09, SD = 2.56$), compared the American respondents who had an average in the fifth income decile ($M = 5.18, SD = 1.76$). On average, fewer Americans were married or living together as married (55%), compared to Norwegians (71%). Slightly more

than half of the American (54%) and Norwegian (52%) respondents were men. On average, the Norwegian respondents had significantly higher ($t = -15.303, p < .001$) levels of education ($M = 4.67, SD = 1.23$), compared to Americans ($M = 3.85, SD = .75$).

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics* ($N = 738$ Americans and 717 Norwegians).

Variables	The United States		Norway	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Work Identity	3.24	0.70	3.56*	0.54
Family Identity	3.93	0.27	3.91	0.31
Sex	0.54		0.52	
Age	40.71	12.86	42.79*	11.83
Full time employed	0.843		0.802	
Part time employed	0.006		0.095	
Self-employed	0.151		0.103	
Marital Status	0.55		0.71	
Level of Education	3.85	0.75	4.67*	1.23
Income	5.18	1.76	6.09*	2.56

* A t test of the difference between the means was significant at the .05 level or higher (t tests were only performed on non-dummy variables).

Regression

OLS regression was performed to examine the relationships between policy context, gender, and work and family identities. Table 2 presents the results of the regression. The results indicate that 7.3% of the variation in work identity ($R^2 = .073$) and 5% of the variation in family identity ($R^2 = .050$) is explained by the independent and control variables in the sample.

Results for work identity can be found in Table 2. Policy context was significantly and positively ($\beta = .289, p < .001$) related to work identity. Therefore, in this sample of American and Norwegian respondents, Norwegians had stronger work identities. It was found that marital status was significantly and negatively ($\beta = -.071, p < .05$) related to work identity, which indicates that individuals who were married or living together as married had

weaker work identities than the other respondents. Education level was also found to be significantly and negatively ($\beta = -.063, p < .05$) related to work identity, which indicates that individuals with higher education had weaker work identities. Overall, the results from Table 2 indicate that Hypothesis 1 was supported, as the Norwegian policy context was related to stronger work identities than the American policy context.

Table 2 also shows the results for family identity. Gender was significantly and negatively ($\beta = -.086, p < .01$) related to family identity, which indicates that women had stronger family identities. It was found that policy context also was significantly and negatively ($\beta = -.088, p < .01$) related to family identity. Therefore, in this sample of American and Norwegian respondents, Americans had stronger family identities. Marital status was found to be significantly and positively ($\beta = .219, p < .001$) related to family identity, which indicates that individuals who were married or living together as married had stronger family identities than the other respondents. Overall, the results from Table 2 indicate that Hypothesis 2 was not supported. The Norwegian policy context was not related to stronger family identities than the American policy context. Instead, the analysis indicated that the American policy context was related to significantly stronger family identities in this study.

Table 2. *Regression Analysis Predicting Work and Family Identity (N = 1,445).*

Variables	Work Identity			Family Identity		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Sex	-.025	.035	-.020	-.050	.016	-.086**
Policy Context	.375	.038	.289***	-.050	.017	-.088**
Age	.002	.001	.037	-.001	.001	-.032
Marital Status	-.095	.039	-.071*	.131	.018	.219***
Education	-.037	.018	-.063*	-.005	.008	-.021
Income	.011	.009	.039	.000	.004	.002
Part time employed ^a	-.041	.084	-.013	.044	.038	.032
Self-employed ^a	-.042	.053	-.021	.002	.024	.003
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.073			.050	

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. ^aFull time employed is used as the reference category.

OLS regression was performed to examine the relationship between policy context and work identity, with the analysis run separately by gender. Table 3 presents the results of the regression for work identity. The results indicate that 7.9% of the variation in work identity for men ($R^2 = .079$) and 8.3% of the variation in work identity for women ($R^2 = .083$) is attributable to the combined effects of the independent and control variables in the sample.

Policy context was the only significant variable related to men's work identity. It was significantly and positively ($\beta = .295$, $p < .001$) related to work identity, indicating that Norwegian men had stronger work identities than American men. This finding indicates that Hypothesis 3a was supported; the Norwegian policy context was related to stronger work identities among men.

Three variables were significant in predicting women's work identity: policy context, marital status, and education. Policy context was significantly and positively ($\beta = .300$, $p < .001$) related to work identity. Therefore, in this sample, Norwegian women had stronger work identities than American women. It was found that marital status was significantly and

negatively ($\beta = -.194, p < .001$) related to family identity, which indicates women who are married or living together had significantly weaker work identities than other women. Education level was also found to be significantly and negatively ($\beta = -.090, p < .05$) related to work identity, which indicates that women with higher education had weaker work identities. Overall, the findings indicate that Hypothesis 3b was supported; the Norwegian policy context was related to stronger work identities among women. When comparing the overall results for men and women in Table 3, the findings also indicated that hypothesis 3c was supported. The analysis indicated that policy context mattered more in predicting women's work identities ($\beta = .300, p < .001$) compared to men's ($\beta = .295, p < .001$).

Table 3. *Regression Analysis Predicting Work Identity (N = 774 men and 681 women).*

Variables	Men			Women		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>B</i>
Policy Context	.387	.052	.295***	.383	.056	.300***
Age	.002	.002	.043	.002	.002	.035
Marital Status	.025	.053	.018	-.253	.058	-.194***
Education	-.031	.024	-.052	-.052	.025	-.090*
Income	.005	.012	.017	.024	.013	.087
Part time employed ^a	-.294	.181	-.059	.066	.094	.028
Self-employed ^a	-.109	.069	-.057	.065	.081	.031
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.079			.083	

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. ^a*Full time employed is used as the reference category.*

OLS regression was performed to examine the relationship between policy context and family identity, with the analyses performed separately by gender. Table 4 presents the results of the regression for family identity. The results indicate that 5.7% of the variation in family identity for men ($R^2 = .057$) and 2.7% of the variation in family identity for women ($R^2 = .027$) is attributable to the combined effects of the independent and control variables in the sample.

Two variables were significant in predicting men's family identities: policy context and marital status. Policy context was significantly and negatively ($\beta = -.110, p < .01$) related to family identity. Therefore, in this sample, American men had stronger family identities than Norwegian men. Marital status was found to be significantly and positively ($\beta = .253, p < .001$) related to family identity, which indicates that being married or living together as married was associated with stronger family identities for men. Overall, the results indicated that Hypothesis 4a was not supported. In contrast, the analysis showed that it was the American policy context that was related to stronger family identities among men.

Only one variable was significant in predicting women's family identities. Marital status was found to be significantly and positively ($\beta = .158, p < .01$) related to family identity, which indicates that women who were married or living together as married had stronger family identities than other women. Hypothesis 4b was not supported because there was not a significant association between policy context and family identity for women. When comparing the overall results for men and women in Table 4, the findings indicated that Hypothesis 4c was supported (policy context will matter more in predicting men's family identities compared to women's). The analysis indicates that policy context was significant in predicting men's family identities, but not women's family identities.

Table 4. *Regression Analysis Predicting Family Identity (N = 774 men and 681 women).*

Variables	Men			Women		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Policy Context	-.070	.025	-.110**	-.021	.022	-.042
Age	-.001	.001	-.047	.000	.001	-.009
Marital Status	.170	.026	.253***	.079	.023	.158**
Education	-.002	.012	-.007	-.012	.010	-.054
Income	-.002	.006	-.013	.005	.005	.047
Part time employed ^a	-.012	.089	-.005	.061	.038	.067
Self-employed ^a	.012	.034	.012	.000	.032	.000
<i>Adjusted R</i> ²		.057			.027	

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. ^aFull time employed is used as the reference category.

Logistic regression was performed to examine the odds of holding two strong identities. Table 5 presents the results of the logistic regression. The results indicated that the model was significant ($X^2 = 62.554$, $df = 8$, $p < .001$) and three of the variables, policy context, age, and education level, were significant in predicting the odds of holding two strong identities. Policy context was found to significantly and positively increase the odds of holding strong work and family identities ($e^B = 2.415$, $p < .001$). The findings indicated that as age increases, the odds of holding two strong identities increases ($e^B = 1.010$, $p < .05$), and as education level increases, the odds of holding two strong identities decreases ($e^B = .864$, $p < .05$). Overall, the findings in Table 5 indicate that Hypothesis 5 was supported because the Norwegian policy context significantly increased the odds of holding two strong identities.

Table 5. *Logistic Regression Predicting Log Odds of Holding Two Strong Identities (N = 1,455).*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>e^B</i>
Policy Context	.882***	.126	2.415
Age	.010*	.005	1.010
Sex	-.149	.114	.861
Marital Status	.045	.130	.965
Education	-.147*	.058	.864
Income	.003	.029	1.003
Part time employed ^a	.084	.273	1.088
Self-employed ^a	.063	.173	1.65
-2 log likelihood	1798.942		
X^2 (8, <i>N</i> = 1,455)	62.554***		

p* < .05. *p* < .01. ****p* < .001. ^aFull time employed is used as the reference category.

Summary and Overview of Next Chapter

This chapter presented the findings of this research. Descriptive statistics including means and standard deviations were described. The results of the multivariate analysis indicated that policy context, marital status, and education level were significantly related to work identity, while sex, policy context, and marital status were significantly related to family identity. For men, policy context was significantly related to work identity and policy context and marital status were significantly related to family identity. For women, policy context and marital status were significantly related to work identity and marital status was significantly related to family identity.

Chapter Five will present a summary of the results, relating the findings back to the literature on policy contexts and work and family identities. The contributions of this research to the current literature will be outlined, along with its implications for work and family identities. The chapter ends with a discussion on the limitations of the research and how future research should explore social policy and work and family identity.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter a summary of the results is presented, relating the findings to the literature on policy contexts and work and family identities. A discussion is provided on how this thesis contributes to the current literature, as well as the implications this research has for work and family identities. Lastly, the limitations of the research are presented and the areas future research should examine related to work and family identities are explored.

Discussion

This study examined how men and women in Norway and the United States differed in the strength of their work and family identities. An institutional approach was taken that considered the context of the welfare regime individuals live in. Five hypotheses were created and tested using OLS and logistic regression with data from the fifth wave of the World Values Survey collected between 2005 and 2009. Several background variables were controlled for in the models, including sex, policy context, age, employment status, marital status, level of education, and income. The findings indicate that the policy context for men and women affects their work and family identities, and as a result the identities of the Norwegian and American respondents in this study differ.

Men and Women's Work Identity in Norway and the United States

When controlling for gender, the study indicated that among both men and women, policy context was significantly and positively related to work identity. The results show that Norwegian men had stronger work identities compared to American men, while Norwegian women had stronger work identities compared to American women. This research shows

that, although policy context significantly predicts work identity for both men and women, it matters more in predicting women's work identities. This finding is consistent with previous literature that has found that in countries that support individuals through social policies, more individuals participate in the paid labor force (Stier et al. 2001). As a consequence, women and men in these countries are likely to have stronger work identities because work hours have been found to have a positive relationship with work identity (Aryee and Luk 1996; Greenhaus et al. 2012). It might be that because women in the past were less likely to participate in the paid labor force, the social policies have had a bigger impact on their abilities to combine work with family, thus strengthening their work identities. Because men's role in the past was to be the breadwinner, the social policies might have a weaker impact on their work identities. In addition, a large majority of social policies related to work and family in Norway aims at enabling more women to participate in the paid labor force and more men to participate in unpaid work (Hardoy and Schone 2008; Leira 2002; Meyers and Gornick 2003), perhaps focusing more on women's work identity and men's family identity.

Men and Women's Family Identity in Norway and the United States

When controlling for gender, this study indicated that among men, policy context was significantly and negatively related to family identity, while among women, policy context was not significantly related to family identity. The results show that American men had stronger family identities compared to Norwegian men. Over the past decades, Norway has developed public policies with the goal of promoting the dual-earner/dual-carer model in which men and women share care work and paid work (Haas and Rostgaard 2011), and as a consequence, the male breadwinner model is less common today. However, this transformation has not taken place in the United States, and it may therefore be that American men are more likely to identify with the male breadwinner model and have a stronger commitment to the family compared to Norwegian men. Another explanation for

why American men had stronger work identities than Norwegian men in this study might be that the United States, as a liberal welfare state, places a greater emphasis on caregiving within the family (Berrick and Skivenes 2013; Sainsbury 1996) compared to Norway, a social democratic welfare state, in which the state has more responsibility for caregiving (Berrick and Skivenes 2013). American men might therefore have a stronger family identity because the lack of social policies might force them to take more responsibility for the welfare of their families. The research also shows that policy context does not significantly predict women's family identity, and consequently the policy context matters more in predicting men's family identities compared to women's family identities. It might be that the effect of social policies has a greater impact on women's work identity compared to their family identity. As women traditionally have had more responsibility for care work, social policies might have a smaller effect on their family identities because social norms expect women to take part in this type of work. Men, on the other hand, have just recently begun to receive benefits like paternity leave, and social policies might therefore have a bigger impact on their family identities. These supportive policy contexts might encourage strong family identities for men, but do not have a significant impact on women's family identities.

Two Strong Identities in Norway and the United States

This study indicated that policy context was significantly and positively related to holding strong work and family identities. The results show that Norwegians were more likely to have two strong identities at the same time compared to Americans. This is partially consistent with prior research that has found that women tend to trade off one identity for the other (Aryee and Luk 1996; Bielby and Bielby 1989). Although previous research indicates that men tend to be able to identify with both work and family identity without trading-off (Aryee and Luk 1996; Bielby and Bielby 1989), it might be that the Norwegian policy context enables greater percentages of men and women to hold two strong identities without

trading-off. Prior literature emphasizing how the Norwegian policy context aims to encourage employment for parents and reduce gender inequalities in paid and unpaid work (Hardoy and Schone 2008; Leira 2002; Meyers and Gornick 2003) supports such an interpretation.

Control Variables, Work Identity, Family Identity, and Two Strong Identities

When looking at work identity with the analysis conducted separately by gender, marital status and education were significantly and negatively related to women's work identity, but not men's work identity. A possible explanation for this finding might be that as women get married or move in with their partners, they might prioritize family over work. This explanation is supported by literature on work-family spillover, in which women's family identity has been found to spillover to work, while men's work identity has been found to spillover to family (Loscocco 1997). If family identity spillover to work occurs, for example being late for work because of a family event or having to stay home with a sick child, it might have a negative effect on women's work identity. As the majority of the control variables in this study were insignificant in predicting work identity (age, income, and employment status), this suggests that there are other variables that were not included in this study that impact work identity. For example, workplace support, coworker support, or job autonomy might play important roles because these variables are likely to increase how satisfied individuals are with their job which might strengthen their work identities.

When looking at family identity by gender, marital status was significantly and positively related to men and women's family identity. A possible explanation for this finding might be that men and women who are married or living with their partner engage more in their roles related to family, thus increasing their family identity. Prior literature supports this explanation, as engagement in work and family roles has been found to increase identification with those roles for both men and women (Bielby and Bielby 1989). However,

age, education, income, and employment status were not significantly related to men or women's family identity. As the majority of the control variables in this study were insignificant, this suggests that there are other variables that were not included in this study that might shape family identities. Number of children and relationship with partner might be important because having children and a satisfying relationship with one's partner might increase satisfaction with the family itself and thus strengthen an individual's overall family identity.

When looking at the odds of holding two strong identities at the same time, an increase in age was found to significantly increase the odds, while an increase in education was found to significantly decrease the odds of holding two strong identities. A possible explanation for this finding might be that older individuals have access to resources that better enable them to hold two strong identities at the same time. For example, they are more likely to have older children with less demands like sick days or parental leave, and they are likely to have a more stable financial situation, which might enable them to pay for services that make it easier to combine work and family. This explanation is supported by prior research that has found that men and women have access to different resources over the life course that affect the combination of work and family (Arber 2004). The study showed that age, sex, marital status, income, and employment status were not significant in predicting the odds of holding strong work and family identities. As the majority of the control variables were insignificant in predicting the odds of holding two strong identities, this suggests that there are other variables that were not included in this study that might shape the possibility of holding to strong identities. For example, having a family friendly workplace, flexible work hours, or support from family that might affect the odds of holding two strong identities in Norway and the United States because all these variables are likely to better enable an individual to combine work and family and strengthen these identities.

The results of this research emphasize the importance of considering policy context when examining work and family identities. The findings indicate that the welfare state regimes (Esping-Andersen 1990) described in the beginning of this study influence the potential men and women have to create and develop work and family identities. Consistent with prior research that has emphasized the importance of considering the policy context that people operate in (Zimmerman 2013), the results of this study show that the development and strength of an individual's identity differ according to gender and policy context. The findings further emphasize the argument that in order to fully understand how and why men and women's identities differ, policy contexts need to be considered (Hook 2006; Hook 2010; Zimmerman 2013).

Implications

This study has several important implications for government and professional organizations. First, social policies that support participation in the labor force while having a family are important. If the goal of a society is to have men and women with strong work and family identities, it is important that policy makers and governments consider how and to what extent social policies affect men and women. Social policies that enable men and women to build strong work and family identities are not only benefitting the individuals, but also the society at large. When men and women are able to balance participating in paid work and care work, there might be an increase in individuals having children, thus avoiding an inverted population pyramid and benefitting the economy and larger society. In addition, if more individuals are able to participate in the paid labor force, there will be an increase in taxable income and thus an increase in tax revenue that can be spent on programs, such as education, social security, and health. Also, family-friendly work environments that enable men and women to combine work and family are imperative in today's workforce. As more women enter the paid labor force, a higher percentage of families will consist of two parents

combining paid and care work. Providing them with the means to balance work and family, such as flexible work hours, parental leave, and allowing employees to work from home when needed, is likely to strengthen their attached identities.

Limitations and Future Research

There are some limitations of this research that should be taken into consideration. First, there could be other explanations for the findings. For example, gender socialization patterns may differ in Norway and the United States, leading to the creation of different work and family identities. Second, this study only included employed individuals. The sample of respondents might have stronger work identities compared to the overall society in Norway and the United States. The strength of family identities in the sample might also be different when unemployed individuals are included. Another limitation is individuals' tendency to overrate themselves. The respondents in the sample might rate family as very important because society expects this of them, when they actually feel differently.

Future research should take into account participation in the paid labor force by looking at actual work hours. Though this study compares full time, part time, and self-employed individuals, examining the amount of work hours would allow a broader understanding of its impact on identities. For example, individuals working fewer hours might have stronger family identities, but weaker work identities, while individuals working more hours might have stronger work identities, but weaker family identities. Future research should also study how supportive networks at home and in the workplace affect the development of work and family identities and how these differ by context. Studies comparing different welfare regimes might also benefit from examining social policies in more detail, such as focusing on how access to state subsidized day care or parental leave affect the combination of work and family identities. Future research should also consider looking at the effect of income. The present study examine income groups, and using income

in numbers might give a more detailed picture on the effect of income on strength of identities. As Norwegian respondents' benefits are provided regardless of labor force participation, income might have less impact on the strength of their identities compared to their American counterparts whose benefits largely are purchased through employer or on the private market.

Summary

The findings from this thesis suggest that gender and policy context are both related to work and family identities in Norway and the United States. Although respondents from both countries express strong work and family identities, a greater percentage of Norwegians hold two strong identities. This study adds to the literature on policy context and work and family identities. It extends the understanding of how work and family identities are created, and the impact policy context has on these identities. It is important to recognize the power of the social policies and benefits an individual can access and how they affect the opportunities men and women have to develop and hold strong work and family identities.

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