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2) Vous traduirez en français le passage entre * *, de: "The reason for the varying potency of..." à : "either through choice or financial necessity".

Want your daughter to earn more? Be a working mother

There might not be a single policy that can eliminate gender inequality, but a new Harvard Business School study shows that being raised by a working mum comes close

“Concerning and troubling”, “watching society dissolve around us”, “the disintegration of marriage”, “something going terribly wrong”, “hurting our children” and “tearing us apart”. These are just a handful of Fox News pundits’ responses to the revelation that 40% of American mothers have become their family’s sole or primary breadwinner.

These were not isolated opinions. In recent years, headlines across a number of publications have ranged from “Working mothers ‘damage their child’s health’”, to “Working mothers risk damaging their child’s prospects” to (at the more extreme end of the spectrum) “How feminism demeans women and destroys families.” And, according to a 2007 survey by the Pew Research Center, 41% of the US population agreed that the trend towards mothers working outside the home was a bad thing for society. Just 22% believed it to be a good thing.

But a new study from Harvard Business School’s recently launched Gender Initiative shows that working mothers are not the destroyers of marriage and society that some would have us believe. The as-yet-unpublished study of 50,000 adults in 25 developed countries found that women who grew up with working mothers not only earn more than their peers with stay-at-home mothers, but are also more likely to have supervising roles at work.

In the US, for example, adult daughters of working mothers earned 23% more than those whose mothers had not worked outside the home, earning an annual average income of \$35,474 compared with \$28,894. More than 33% held supervisory positions, compared with roughly 25% of their counterparts whose mothers stayed at home. Across all the countries in the survey, women whose mothers had worked outside the

home earned 6% more than daughters from households with a stay-at-home mother. And 21% worked as supervisors, compared with 18% of women with stay-at-home mothers.

In addition, the study revealed that men who had working mothers spend significantly more time caring for their own children. While the salaries and positions of the US men surveyed were not affected, those who had working mothers spent nearly twice as many hours on family and childcare as those who did not—a weekly average of 16 hours compared with 8.5 hours.

* The reasons for the varying potency of having a working mum are worth considering. According to the *New York Times*, “the effect was strongest in countries in which there was a bigger divide in opinions about the role of women, such as the United States and Israel, and in countries where gender attitudes were more conservative, such as Russia and Mexico. It was smallest in countries where there was widespread acceptance of working women, such as the Nordic countries.”

Kathleen McGinn, a professor at HBS and one of the authors of the study, sums up what the findings mean: “There is no single policy or practice that can eliminate gender gaps at work and at home. But being raised by a working mother appears to come very close.”

This should not, however, be interpreted as an attack on mothers who stay at home, either through choice or financial necessity.* Speaking over email, McGinn, HBS researcher Mayra Ruiz Castro and Elizabeth Long Lingo of Mount Holyoke College, who authored the study, are keen to stress that they “are not advocating that all women should work or that mothers who choose to stay at home are limiting their daughters’ career potential”. But: “Giving your children opportunities to see and know people—men and women—making lots of different choices at work and at home will help your children see lots of options possible in their own

lives. Our study shows that having a mother who works for pay is one promising avenue for improving women's outcomes in the workplace and increasing men's involvement at home."

Contrary to widespread belief, the researchers also found little evidence to suggest that a mother's choice to work or to stay at home has any major impact on their children's happiness. "Controlling for education, employment, income and other demographic variables, children of working mums and children of stay-at-home mums report equal levels of happiness as adults—not happier, not less happy."

The results suggest that instead of looking to demonise one set of mothers for getting it "wrong", we can instead celebrate the fact that there are benefits to be reaped from a wide variety of women's personal choices. "We hope these findings will challenge stereotypes about working mums 'harming' their children," say the report's authors, "and will help working mums feel confident that they are contributing to their sons' and their daughters' lives in lots of positive ways. We also hope the findings from our research will promote respect for the spectrum of choices women and men make at home and at work."

So instead of criticising women's choices for hurting their families, it is time to celebrate them for the varied and rich benefits they bring. And while we're at it, we might also stop to wonder why fathers' parenting decisions and career choices rarely appear in the debate at all.

Laura Bates, *The Guardian*, 22 May 2015 15.18 BST

