

Article

# Gender Still Matters: Effects of Workplace Discrimination on Employment Schedules of Young Professionals

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**Abstract:** The influx of women into the legal profession has significantly changed the landscape of legal practice. Women lawyers today no longer face the challenges to entering the legal profession they encountered thirty years ago. However, despite these advancements, research continues to demonstrate that there are still gender-based issues women have to face in the legal workplace. Among these issues to date are the difficulties in combining responsibilities of work with responsibilities of families and children that underpin women's employment and earning disadvantages. Using survey data from a national representative U.S. panel study of lawyers, we examine how work schedules, comparing full-time to part-time work, vary by personal disposition and workplace characteristics. Drawing from prominent explanations of gender inequality in the legal profession, we focus on inquiries of commitment to work, performance, ideal worker expectations, practice settings, and job satisfaction among dimensions of workplace characteristics and examine their effects on women and men lawyers' work schedules. Logistic regression results show that work schedules significantly vary by gender, parental role, and experience of workplace discrimination. We find that, although all parents experience types of discrimination, there are still major differences in work schedules between mothers and fathers. Our study adds to the gender debate of employment and organizations by examining quantitatively experiences of workplace discrimination.

**Keywords:** employment schedules; workplace discrimination; job satisfaction; gender; legal profession

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## 1. Introduction

The presence of women across legal practice settings has significantly increased over the past three decades in the U.S. and many other parts of the world. A large body of U.S. contemporary research continues to document that women, compared to men, still face greater challenges in advancing their professional careers (Albiston 2007; Dau-Schmidt et al. 2009; Epstein et al. 1995; Kricheli-Katz 2012; Rhode 2011; Williams and Richardson 2010). While women in the U.S. have been entering law schools in equal proportions to men for almost 30 years, research finds evidence that women still have not made the same progress ascending to positions of leadership and partners as men (Epstein 1981; Rhode 2001; Rikleen 2015; Sterling and Reichman 2016). In fact, the percentage of women equity partners in the U.S. has only grown from 16 percent in 2006 to 18 percent today (Chen 2015; Rikleen 2015).

Among other challenges, research overwhelmingly points to the difficulties for women, especially mothers, in balancing expectations of high status careers with responsibilities at home. Primarily, organizational structures (e.g., those that continue to view gender as an individual trait or socialized identity), practice settings/size (e.g., large firms) and personal life events (e.g., marriage and children)

are found to shape the professional careers of women and men differently (Adediran et al. 2017; Albiston 2007; Benard and Correll 2010; Budig and Hodges 2010; Cahusac and Kanji 2014; Epstein and Seron 2001; Plickert and Hagan 2011; Rhode 2011; Sterling and Reichman 2016).

Similar trends have also been documented outside of the U.S. legal profession (see Boigeol 2003; Bonelli 2013; Brockman 2001; Collier 2010; Hagan and Kay 2010; Leiper 1997; Plickert and Merkens 2012; Schultz and Shaw 2003; Sommerlad 2016; Sommerlad et al. 2010; Sullivan 2010; Thornton 2016; Thornton and Bagust 2007; Wallace 2001, 2004; Wallace and Kay 2012; Webley and Duff 2007).

Theories on gender inequality and motherhood penalties within high status jobs suggest that certain workplace characteristics re-produce such inequalities and penalties by evaluating women and men on the basis of gender stereotypes and parental roles that significantly affect the professional career choices of women and mothers and less the careers of men (Albiston 2007; Acker 1990; Budig and Hodges 2010; Correll et al. 2007; Thornton and Bagust 2007).

While a large body of research provides evidence that women, in particular mothers, are more likely to change employment schedules compared to men, comparatively fewer studies have systematically investigated the effects of multiple adverse workplace characteristics on women's employment schedules (Correll et al. 2007; Budig and Hodges 2010). For example, in an experimental study, researchers investigated the presence of a motherhood penalty and tested employers' ideal worker expectations comparing women with children to women without children and men with children to men without children (Benard and Correll 2010; Ridgeway 2011). The findings reveal that women who displayed a "hyper" workplace commitment were in fact perceived as equally committed to their jobs and competent as their "hyper" committed counterparts without children. However, hyper-committed mothers experienced discrimination in ways of being judged as less likeable and hostile. In comparison, equally committed fathers did not experience the same judgments (penalties). Benard and Correll (2010) speak of a "normative discrimination" that expects mothers to prioritize family over work.

Experiences of discrimination at work are especially prominent when children and work responsibilities collide with the absence of alternatives to manage both, professional and personal schedules (Plickert and Merkens 2012). Often, part-time employment or exits from legal practice are the pathways women take to accommodate work and family lives (Kay et al. 2013; Kay and Wallace 2009). However, part-time work or exits from legal practice only heighten disadvantages and perpetuate gender inequalities (Thornton and Bagust 2007). Switching from full-time to part-time work schedules, even if only for a short period of time, not only affects career development, but also poses challenges for future employment opportunities and advancement (Kay et al. 2013).

While children are often the reason for shifts in work schedules, they are not exclusively the motive for changes from full-time to part-time employment (Goldin 1997; Percheski 2008; Rhode 2011; Williams et al. 2006). Some qualitative research suggests that everyday conflict with the experience of an employers' ideal expectations and experience of questioning about aspects of work become not only stressful, it potentially impacts women's progress and desire for career advancement (Benard and Correll 2010; Plickert and Merkens 2012; Ridgeway 2011). Thus, to better understand differences in employment schedules among legal professionals, this study addresses the following questions: (1) To what extent do practice settings, job satisfaction and workplace discrimination impact employment schedules—full-time and part-time work—of women and men and lawyers? (2) How do experiences of workplace discrimination possibly heighten or alleviate gender differences in employment schedules? For employment schedules of mothers and fathers, do parental roles override gender effects?

Studies discussing the challenges associated with managing children and family responsibilities suggest that conflicts with work-life balance are the reasons for differences in employment status between women and men lawyers (Hagan and Kay 2010; Kay 1997b; Kaye and Reddy 2010; Reichman and Sterling 2004b; Stone 2007; Stone and Lovejoy 2004; Williams et al. 2006).

Using a nationally representative U.S. panel study of lawyer careers, we take advantage of the detailed workplace-specific information on discrimination and job satisfaction (see [Dinovitzer et al. 2009](#)). Measuring workplace discrimination quantitatively in surveys presents a challenge ([Yu and Kuo 2017](#)). Studies that describe lawyers' work and the imbalance between work and family have yet to embark upon workplace characteristics including discriminatory factors to describe the dynamics between women and men at work. Using lab experiments and qualitative responses, research suggests that employers evaluate women with children less favorably ([Correll et al. 2007](#)). Rather than focusing on the rationales for work schedule choices provided in qualitative interviews, in this study we focus on multiple workplace measures to examine work schedules in a representative sample of young lawyers.

The knowledge of these representative empirical findings is important to further understand the complexity of workplaces and how these work environments promote or disadvantage professional careers. While statistical analyses face difficulties in portraying people's choices ([Yu and Kuo 2017](#)), our quantitative approach on work schedules offers also relevant present-time explanations.

We begin by examining the research on workplace characteristics such as job satisfaction and workplace discrimination linked to gender and social role perspectives.

## 2. Approaches and Explanations

### 2.1. Workplace, Gender and Employment Schedules

To explain gender disparities in the legal profession in North America, studies have focused for example on mobility ([Dinovitzer et al. 2009](#); [Kay 1997a](#); [Rhode 2002a, 2002b](#)), promotion ([Donovan 1990](#); [Patton 2005](#)), earnings ([Reichman and Sterling 2013](#)) and parenthood penalty ([Goldin 2004](#); [Williams 2010](#)). Among one of the first Canadian panel studies of lawyers, [Kay \(1997b\)](#) found that women move out of law practice (60 percent) more quickly than men and that they tend to do so before partnership decisions are made. By the same token, almost a decade later, findings from the U.S. After the JD panel study show that 65 percent of women switched jobs compared to 60 percent of men between 2003 and 2007 ([Dinovitzer et al. 2009](#)). Some argue that women's high attrition rate from law firms is associated with women's significantly lower success rates in promotion to partnership ([Donovan 1990](#)). However, the reasons for women to seek alternatives or even exit the law practice seem to be more diverse ([Kay et al. 2013](#)). [Kay et al. \(2016\)](#) have updated the Canadian research on women leaving private practice and suggest that any aspirations for gender equality in the legal profession are threatened by the rate of female lawyers exiting the profession (p. 788).

Further explanations have been focusing on women lawyers' disproportionate movements or exits in response to women's conflict between work and family schedules ([Rhode 2001, 2002b](#); [Wenk and Rosenfeld 1992](#)). A significant reason for women to choose part-time employment or exiting the profession altogether has been assumed to be the presence of children at home. [Williams \(2010\)](#) found that the amount of time spent on childcare had risen significantly for both women and men since 1985. However, despite the rise of hours in childcare, research suggests that women who worked full-time prior to having children continue to desire to work full-time after they have children ([Gerson 1985](#); [Goldin 2004](#)). In fact, a recent study by [Kay et al. \(2016\)](#) provides evidence that women who took parental leave were less likely to leave private practice. Although an array of research connects women's professional pathways and career changes to adjustments for children ([Kuperberg and Stone 2008](#); [Stone 2007](#); [Williams et al. 2006](#)), the rationale of women may have less to do with the desire to stay home as a full-time parent and more to do with perpetuation of the *Second Shift* ([Hochschild 1989](#)). [Hochschild \(1989\)](#) indicates that working women more likely shoulder the burdens of home and family responsibilities. Despite significant changes in the gender composition of the workplace, gender stereotypes and social roles seem to remain static, with the majority of women still carrying the primary family responsibilities ([Hochschild 1989](#)).

In search of finding explanations for persistent gender disparities in the legal profession, the majority of these studies centers on explanations of women's career prospects and declines.

Only a few studies incorporate men/ fathers into the equation (Fuegen et al. 2004; Collier 2010; Collier and Sheldon 2008) to understand the gender differences. While past research shows that women in the profession have experienced greater challenges compared to men, recent studies stipulate that young professionals more likely have similar expectations to advance their career and to have fulfilled personal lives (Adediran et al. 2017). Moreover, research suggests that changes in the profession have also responded to broader economic shifts (e.g., recession), which more likely impact men and women's work while developing their careers (Adediran et al. 2017; Plickert and Hagan 2011).

Studies also show that gender is vital in the relationship between work and organizations (Acker 1990; Halford and Leonard 2001; Yu and Kuo 2017). Gender stereotypes (roles) are embedded in organizational structures through the design of workplaces (Acker 1990). From a social psychological explanation, gender on the basis of sex affects judgments that cause employers to have different expectations for female and male employees (Eagly et al. 2000). Employers develop their perceptions of "adequate" work-family role expectations and gender stereotypes from their own socialization and experience (Dowd 1989). Similar trends are found with regard to parenting (parental roles). Research shows that in the workplace, mothers compared to fathers are judged by different standards on the basis of gender and parent role (Kobrynowicz and Biernat 1997). For example, Kobrynowicz and Biernat (1997) found that employed mothers were expected to provide more care than fathers and employed fathers were judged to be better parents than employed mothers. While men and fathers are free to work long hours as often expected by employers (Thornton 2016), women are conflicted in having to make the "hard choices" (Jacobs and Gerson 2004). Employed mothers not conforming to the "appropriate" gender and parent role expectations find themselves being devalued as caretaker and in their performance and competence at work (Albiston 2007; Dowd 1989; Benard and Correll 2010; Sterling and Reichman 2016). When work is structured this way, women are confronted with gender (stereotypes) and role expectations that consequently influence their work schedule as well as their career progress.

Research has also explored employers' judgment of mothers compared to fathers and employees without children to understand whether parental role or the interaction of both, gender and parental role influence employers' judgment. Research on social roles (e.g., parenthood, occupation) and perceptions provides evidence that in workplaces women and men were judged (equally) based on their role as parents (Eagly 1987; Fuegen et al. 2004) compared to women and men without children. Under these assumptions, the parent role overrides the effect of gender (stereotypes), with mothers and fathers judged by employers on the basis of parenthood (Eagly et al. 2000; Fuegen et al. 2004).

In light of the past research and the contemporary changes in the legal profession, it remains a vital subject to understand the mechanism of gender and parental role expectations in the context of work schedule differences among young lawyers. The present study examines how experiences of workplace discrimination are driven by gender stereotypes and/or parental roles in legal practice.

## 2.2. Job Satisfaction and Gender

Based on the Karasek's job-demands control model (Karasek and Theorell 1990; Karasek 1979) health risks are, in part, functions of the "decision-latitude" of a job. This includes whether a worker has the opportunity to learn and use new skills, exercise initiative and control some conditions of their work, such as choosing projects or organizing routines that ensure the completion of the work. Thus, a demanding job, even one with heavy psychological demands, will not cause stress as long as the worker has a fair amount of discretion to decide how to meet the demands of the job (Karasek and Theorell 1990). This means that "decision-latitude" enhances worker's sense of control at work and thus resulting in greater job satisfaction. In comparison, research shows that high status professionals with more control in their jobs are more likely satisfied with their work, which positively affects even demanding work schedules (Plickert et al. 2017). Yet, responsibilities in high status jobs have become increasingly demanding, leaving professionals with greater workloads, despite relatively high control

and autonomy. Thus, escalating demands may increase job dissatisfaction, particularly for women who typically bear heavier responsibility for childcare and housework (Moen et al. 2013).

A few studies show that women professionals have lower job satisfaction than men (Sloane and Ward 2001). However, most studies find evidence of women and men professionals being surprisingly similar in their levels of job satisfaction (Hagan and Kay 1995; Hagan and Kay 2007; Plickert et al. 2017). These studies suggest that overall levels of job satisfaction are similar for men and women, despite women's dissatisfaction with specific aspects of their work (Hagan and Kay 1995; Hagan and Kay 2007). Similarly, Dinovitzer et al. (2004) examined dimensions of job satisfaction and found that women were significantly more satisfied than men with the substance of their work. In comparison, dimensions of satisfaction with job setting and power track<sup>1</sup> received lower ratings by women compared to men. Studies that examine job satisfaction in the legal profession have described gender equality in job satisfaction as a notable paradox in the legal profession (Hagan and Kay 2007; Hull 1999; Mueller and Wallace 1996).

Considering these findings, we expect that job satisfaction will bolster women and men's full-time work schedules. However, we anticipate that a possible imbalance between work and family/household responsibilities will more likely decrease women's job satisfaction compared to their male counterparts.

### 2.3. Workplace Discrimination and Gender

Another dominant approach to study persistent gender inequality in high status professions is the focus on work conditions and work experiences (Mercer 1990; Sloan 2012). This focus taps into the experiences of stigmatization or discrimination at work, which have been found to pose threats to self-identity (Mercer 1990). Research suggests that distressing workplaces have the ability to endanger and alter careers and employment schedules and thus, intensify inequalities among working professionals (Cortina and Magley 2003).

One frequently cited explanation for continuing gender disparities in the legal profession is the notion that women are less motivated and committed to their careers (Budig and Hodges 2010; Coontz 1995; Epstein 1981; Gough and Noonan 2013; Kuo 2005). Some argue that stereotyped beliefs result in women receiving less challenging assignments than their male counterparts and thus affecting women's career progress and advancement (Epstein 1992; Hagan and Kay 2007).

These findings are primarily embedded in the argument that centers on gender stereotypes and social roles, where gender "spills over" into workplaces and causes employers to have different expectations for women and men (Dowd 1989; Eagly et al. 2000; Fuegen et al. 2004). Among blue-collar workers, workplaces are still dominated by masculine norms exhibited in the performance of hard labor and risky tasks (Williams et al. 2006). The need to exhibit masculinity takes on a different form among professionals. In high-status professions, such as law, the image of masculinity is perpetuated by individuals working long hours to show dedication to the workplace (Thornton 2016). For example, in private legal practice masculinity is recognized in the accumulation of billable hours, which lead to financial gains and a reputation for demonstrating a superior performance.

In comparison, women, especially mothers, face stereotypes about being less committed to work, undervalued in their performance and unable to fulfill an expected ideal workload (Epstein et al. 1995; Rhode 2011). In the context of the U.S. workforce, the ideal worker is someone who works weekly 40 hours and overtime, is consistently available to the employer, and has little or no time taken off for childbearing or childrearing (Williams 2010). When work is structured in this way, caregivers face challenges in performing and fulfilling the expectations vital to the organization (Stone 2007; Galinsky et al. 2003; Hagan and Kay 2010; Percheski 2008). The perception about women lacking commitment to work may begin the moment women marry, since there is an assumption that they will

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<sup>1</sup> Power track here refers to the compensation and opportunities of advancement in legal work settings.

become pregnant. Williams (2010) refers to this phenomenon as hitting the “maternal wall.”<sup>2</sup> After returning from family leave, women notice that they are treated differently: they are passed over for plum assignments, they are questioned about their commitment to work, and sometimes they are treated as if they have become less competent as a result of having a child (Williams 2010).

Research by Dodd-McCue and Wright (1996) notes that it is assumed once women have children, they cannot be committed to both work and family. However, the authors demonstrate that it is work experiences, not gender or family roles that predict commitment to work (Dodd-McCue and Wright 1996). Legal work is primarily defined in relation to client time, responding to client demands and lawyer’s 24/7 availability. Thus, expectations of commitment tied to full-time schedules are part of an organizational culture and resistant to change (Epstein and Seron 2001; Epstein 2004; Leiper 1997; Reichman and Sterling 2002; Wallace 2004). Because of these differences in perceptions of cultural “ideal work” expectations of mothers and fathers, women are not expected to choose full-time work (Stone 2007) and to achieve the rewards of an ideal worker.

For men, full-time work schedules and family are seen as compatible devotions while the same combination for women are viewed as competing devotions (Epstein 2004). This is a reflection of the on-demand culture at law firms. Essentially these gendered notions of commitment and performance pose challenges in maintaining full-time employment schedules. Merely the anticipation that a lawyer may want to modify their full-time work schedule is an indication of lack of commitment to the firm and the practice of law.

Thus, there are reasons to assume that organizational aspects of work may have important implications for employment schedules. For instance, part-time work schedules may hinder professionals in their capability to manage career progress and advancement. Likewise, demands and control may yield diverging effects in different work settings and for different work schedules, sometimes even contradicting the theoretically based assumptions (Corral and Isusi 2004; Sverke et al. 2000). For some workers with temporary or part-time work schedules, high demands may represent an opportunity to show one’s skills in order to secure renewed or full-time employment (Sverke et al. 2000).

We hypothesize that differences in work schedules are reinforced by the experiences of workplace discrimination among mothers compared to fathers. The experiences of discrimination are greater among mothers than fathers independent of the number of children and similarity of work. Therefore, we propose that parent roles will intensify the effects of gender (stereotypes) and negatively affect full-time work schedules.

### 3. Data and Method

#### 3.1. The After the JD Study

The data we analyze are drawn from a nationally representative panel study, the After the JD Study (AJD), which started with a random sample of more than 5000 U.S. women and men lawyers who began their career in the year of 2000 and were surveyed in 2002 and 2007 (see Plickert and Dinovitzer 2007; Dinovitzer et al. 2009). The AJD study tracks longitudinally the professional careers and experiences of women and men lawyers and how their professional identity coincides with personal roles. The sample includes lawyers from eighteen legal markets, ranging from the four largest markets (i.e., New York City, the District of Columbia, Chicago, and Los Angeles) to fourteen smaller metropolitan areas or entire states. The first wave—AJD1—consists of 4538 eligible respondents, which resulted in a response rate of 71 percent. The second wave—AJD2—resulted in a 70.4 percent response rate of 4160 sample members who had responded to AJD1, plus a 27 percent response rate of individuals who did not respond to Wave 1 (referred to as Wave 1 non-respondents). In both waves,

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<sup>2</sup> Williams notes that the “maternal wall” is the form of bias found in the workplace. It is suggested that women hit the maternal wall long before they come up against the glass ceiling.

AJD1 and AJD2 minority attorneys were oversampled (see [Dinovitzer et al. 2009](#)). To examine the effects of work and personal characteristics on employment status, the current study includes only women and men lawyers who responded to both waves of the survey. In total, the analysis includes 2873 lawyers for whom we have complete data for the measures of interest. The descriptive statistics and measures included in the analyses are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Weighted Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables by Gender and Parent Status.

Variables	A		B		C		D		E		F	
	Mothers		Non-Mothers		All Women		Fathers		Non-Fathers		All Men	
	(N = 703)		(N = 645)		(N = 1348)		(N = 883)		(N = 642)		(N = 1525)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
<b>Employment Status</b>												
Full-time	0.74 <sup>bc</sup>	-	0.96	-	0.85 <sup>a</sup>	-	0.98	-	0.98	-	0.98	-
Part-time	0.26 <sup>bc</sup>	-	0.04	-	0.15 <sup>a</sup>	-	0.02	-	0.02	-	0.02	-
<b>Practice Setting</b>												
Solo	0.09	-	0.06	-	0.07 <sup>a</sup>	-	0.09	-	0.11	-	0.10	-
Firms 21–100 Lawyers	0.29 <sup>b</sup>	-	0.23	-	0.26	-	0.32	-	0.29	-	0.31	-
Firms >100 Lawyers	0.19	-	0.17	-	0.18	-	0.22	-	0.18	-	0.20	-
Public and nonprofit	0.28 <sup>c</sup>	-	0.36	-	0.32 <sup>a</sup>	-	0.19	-	0.23	-	0.21	-
Business	0.16	-	0.19	-	0.18	-	0.19	-	0.20	-	0.19	-
<b>Structural Work Characteristics</b>												
Job Satisfaction with												
Substance of work	5.69 <sup>bc</sup>	1.12	5.52	1.23	5.61 <sup>a</sup>	1.18	5.61	1.18	5.45	1.301	5.55	1.23
Job setting	5.53 <sup>bc</sup>	1.15	5.38	1.20	5.47 <sup>a</sup>	1.18	5.48	1.15	5.34	1.144	5.42	1.15
Power track	4.78 <sup>b</sup>	1.46	4.61	1.55	4.70	1.51	4.97	1.46	4.75	1.518	4.88	1.49
Workplace Discrimination												
Questioning Commitment	0.39 <sup>c</sup>	0.49	-	-	0.39 <sup>a</sup>	0.49	0.14	0.35	-	-	0.14	0.35
Impact on Performance	0.31 <sup>c</sup>	0.46	-	-	0.31 <sup>a</sup>	0.46	0.04	0.20	-	-	0.04	0.20
“Ideal Worker” Expectations	0.25 <sup>c</sup>	0.43	-	-	0.25 <sup>a</sup>	0.43	0.13	0.34	-	-	0.13	0.34
<b>Personal Background Characteristics</b>												
Household Tasks	-1.03 <sup>c</sup>	1.96	-1.18	1.64	-1.11 <sup>a</sup>	1.82	1.60	1.61	-0.89	1.757	0.59	2.06
No Children	-	-	0.49 <sup>b</sup>	-	0.49 <sup>a</sup>	0.50	-	-	0.42	-	0.42	0.49
One Child	0.47 <sup>bc</sup>	-	-	-	0.24 <sup>a</sup>	0.43	0.33	0.47	-	-	0.19	0.40
Two Children	0.42 <sup>bc</sup>	-	-	-	0.22 <sup>a</sup>	0.41	0.44	0.50	-	-	0.26	0.44
Three and more	0.11 <sup>bc</sup>	-	-	-	0.06 <sup>a</sup>	0.23	0.23	0.42	-	-	0.13	0.34
Married	0.92 <sup>b</sup>	-	0.52	-	0.73 <sup>a</sup>	0.44	0.97	0.18	0.55	0.498	0.79	0.41
Minority	0.18 <sup>bc</sup>	-	0.23	-	0.20 <sup>a</sup>	-	0.13	-	0.21	-	0.16	-
Law School Rank	3.17 <sup>bc</sup>	1.08	2.99	1.11	3.08	1.10	3.14	1.07	2.98	1.102	3.09	1.08

Notes: Standard deviations are shown in parentheses. <sup>a</sup> Significantly different from Men ( $p < 0.05$ ); <sup>b</sup> Significantly different from Non-mothers ( $p < 0.05$ ); <sup>c</sup> Significantly different from Fathers ( $p < 0.05$ ).

### 3.2. Measures

#### 3.2.1. Outcome

*Employment Schedule.* The outcome measure, employment schedule is a binary outcome, coded 1 for working full-time and coded 0 for working part-time. Respondents were asked to describe their current employment at the time of the survey. The response choices were (1) working full-time, (2) working part-time, and (3) not employed. For the purpose of this study, we only consider the responses to full-time and part-time work. About 4.16 percent of the sample members selected for the analysis were not employed at the time of the survey. Those who responded to not being employed skipped the questions of interest we want to address in our study. Thus, conceptually we decided to exclude this small number of responses since the “n” size is inadequate for inclusion in the binary measure (on inclusion of cases, see also [Allison 1999](#); [DeMaris 1995](#)).

#### 3.2.2. Independent Variables

*Practice Settings.* A series of dummy codes were created including four separate measures: (1) Solo, (2) Small and medium law firms, (3) large private law firms, (4) public and non-profit legal sector,

and (5) Business. In the analyses, solo practice has been excluded as a reference group. The descriptive results in Table 1 show that the majority of respondents work in smaller-midsize firms or in the public—nonprofit sector.

*Job satisfaction.* Based on factor analyses of 5 separate items, three scales were created that represent dimensions of job satisfaction: satisfaction with (1) substance of work, (2) job setting, and (3) power track. Respondents were asked: “How satisfied are you with each of the following aspects of your current position?” Response categories for each of the dimensions of satisfaction are scales ranging from “highly dissatisfied” coded 1 to “highly satisfied” coded 7.

Satisfaction with substance of work is composed of the following five items: satisfaction with (1) level of responsibility you have; (2) opportunities for building skills; (3) tasks you perform; (4) substantive area of your work; and (5) intellectual challenge of your work. Responses were averaged; higher scores indicate greater satisfaction with substance of work ( $\alpha = 0.903$ ).

The second item, satisfaction with job setting is a five-item scale that measures: (1) balance between personal life and work, (2) control one has over the amount of work one does, (3) control one has over how one does the work, (4) job security, and (5) relationships with colleagues. Responses were averaged with higher scores indicating greater satisfaction with job setting ( $\alpha = 0.782$ ).

The final constructed scale under job satisfaction describes power track. The four-item scale measures: (1) method by which compensation is determined, (2) opportunities for advancement, (3) recognition one receives for the work, and (4) performance evaluation. We averaged the responses; higher scores indicate greater satisfaction with power track ( $\alpha = 0.847$ ). These three indicators have been used in other research relying on AJD data (see [Dinovitzer et al. 2009](#); [Sterling et al. 2007](#)) and studies demonstrate the importance of job satisfaction for each of these dimensions on lawyers’ work.

*Workplace Discrimination.* Based on factor analysis, we created three items (1) commitment, (2) performance, and (3) ideal worker expectations. Respondents were asked: As a result of having had a child, have you experienced any of the following adverse consequences at work? Check all that apply. Response choices were “yes” coded 1 and “no” coded 0.

*Commitment.* Respondents were asked if they experienced any questioning of commitment to work as a result of having children. Experiences of questioning commitment to work are coded 1 and no experiences are coded 0. *Performance.* We created an indicator that measures experiences with: (1) delay in promotion, (2) loss of seniority, (3) loss of clients, and (4) loss of challenging assignments. We summed the responses; higher scores indicate experience of workplace discrimination in performance ( $\alpha = 0.70$ ). *Ideal worker expectation* is composed of (1) experienced pressure to work while on parental leave and (2) unreasonable workload following parental leave. We summed the two items; higher positive scores indicate experience of unfulfilled employer’s expectations ( $\alpha = 0.63$ ).

### 3.2.3. Control Variables

*Individual background characteristics.* Gender is coded 1 for women and 0 for men. For respondents’ race and ethnicity, we contrast “Minority,” coded 1 with “White,” coded 0. Marital status contrasts currently married, remarried, and cohabitating (coded 1) with never married or currently not cohabitating (coded 0). We included a measure of number of children under the age of 18 residing in the household, ranging from 0 to 4. We also control for respondents’ law school rank. Responses to rankings match five possible tiers: (1) top 10 tier, (2) top 11–20, (3) 21–100, (4) tier 3 [101–137], and (5) tier 4 [138–178]. The rank order of these five categories is based on the groupings of law schools published by the U.S. News and World Report in 2003. Previous studies have shown that in the U.S., law school ranking is significantly associated with type of practice, income and promotion, that is, graduates from top tier schools experience greater opportunities initially compared to graduates from lower tier schools.

A categorical variable was constructed measuring respondents’ involvement in household tasks. Respondents were asked to report who is primarily responsible for cooking meals, grocery shopping, house cleaning, overseeing household repairs, looking after household finances, laundry, and when

applicable, arranging child care, leaving work for children's needs, looking after the children during daytime hours, and looking after children during evening hours. Three response choices were possible and coded as follows: (1) Respondents answering "myself" is coded  $-5$ , (2) "shared equally" is coded  $0$ , and (3) responses of "my spouse/partner" or "someone else" are coded  $+5$ . We averaged the responses; higher positive scores indicate fewer responsibilities of household tasks ( $\alpha = 0.783$ ). Plickert and Merkens (2012) investigated work schedules of women and men lawyers in two German cities and found evidence of limited work opportunities for women largely as a result of women's significant role in household tasks and childcare. Thus, taking into account the debate on work-life balance or imbalance, we predict that the primary responsibility for household tasks will affect a person's employment schedule. Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) for the study variables are presented in Table 1.

### 3.3. Analytical Approach

To examine employment schedules between women and men and parents, we compare full-time work to part-time work in the statistical analysis. We use logistic regression analysis (see also Allison 1999) to investigate the independent effects of lawyers' personal disposition, practice setting, and workplace characteristics on individuals' full-time employment schedules. As part of the workplace characteristics, we include respondents' experiences of workplace discrimination. We contribute to the literature on legal work and gender by estimating quantitatively the effects of three aspects of workplace discrimination (questioning commitment, performance, and ideal worker expectations). Our analyses exclude lawyers who were not engaged in the labor force at the time of the survey administration.<sup>3</sup>

## 4. Results

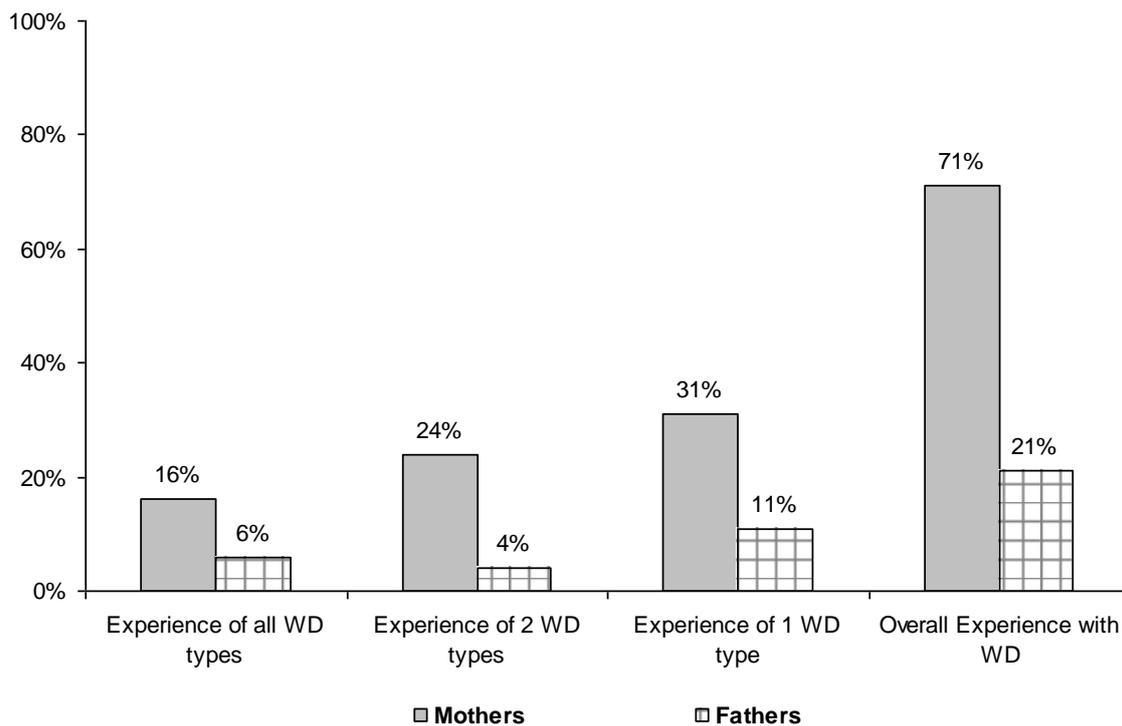
### 4.1. Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the dependent and independent variables by gender and parental role. Comparisons between parents and non-parents show significant differences in employment schedule by gender, practice setting, dimensions of job satisfaction, household tasks, and workplace discrimination. Mothers are significantly different from non-mothers, fathers and non-fathers with regard to employment schedule, experience of work discrimination, job satisfaction and personal background characteristics (see Table 1 column A).

In our sample, 74 percent of mothers work full-time compared to 96 percent of non-mothers, and 98 percent of fathers and non-fathers respectively. Another striking difference exists between mothers and fathers in their experience of workplace discrimination. Overall, 71 percent of mothers compared to 21 percent of fathers have experienced some type of workplace discrimination (see also Figure 1). Experience of workplace discrimination by type shows that mothers are more likely questioned about their commitment to work (39 percent mothers/14 percent fathers), their job performance (31 percent mothers/4 percent fathers), and experience unfairness as part of employers' ideal worker expectations (25 percent mothers/13 percent fathers) (see Table 1 columns A and D). While fathers experience significantly smaller amounts of discrimination at work because of children, mothers seem to face significantly greater job specific problems while bearing the primary burden of household responsibilities.

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<sup>3</sup> The inclusion of non-employed respondents (0.02 percent of the total sample) resulted in zero cell problems and unstable estimates of coefficients and standard errors (DeMaris 1995). Thus, it is conceptually inapt to combine lawyers who were not employed with either of the full-time or part-time categories in this analysis.



**Figure 1.** Number of Experiences with Workplace Discrimination (WD) by Parent Status (N = 1587).  
**Note:** Types of Workplace Discrimination include: (1) Questioning commitment to work, (2) questioning performance, and (3) employers' expectations of the ideal worker expectations.

For household tasks, we find that mothers are more likely “doing the work” (−1.03) (i.e., negative values refer to our respondent carrying the burden of performing more household tasks and positive values indicate our respondent is responsible for fewer tasks) compared to fathers (1.60) (i.e., having a lower share of responsibilities) (see Table 1 columns A and D). Independent of the number of children, men (0.59) are responsible for a smaller share of household tasks than women (−1.11) and mothers (−1.03) (see Table 1 columns A, C and F).

For workplace characteristics, we also include three dimensions of job satisfaction. The mean scores for satisfaction with substance of work and job setting are significantly higher for women than men. Mothers report significantly higher satisfaction with substance of work and satisfaction with job setting compared to non-mothers. It is important to note that, while women are less satisfied with the power track, mothers are significantly more satisfied with this dimension (see Table 1 columns A and B). This trend for mothers might correspond with findings on part-time work schedules, possibly offering opportunities for re-entry to full-time work (Sverke et al. 2000) and thus creating opportunities of advancement after a period of part-time work.

Among the personal background characteristics, we find that more women lawyers (49 percent) than men lawyers (42 percent) have no children. If women do have children, they are more likely to have only one child (24 percent women/19 percent men) while men are more likely to have two or more children (22 percent women/26 percent men report having two children and 6 percent women and 13 percent men have three or more children). About 76 percent of our respondents are married or cohabitating, with women significantly more likely to be divorced, widowed, separated, or single (about 27 percent women compared to 21 percent men,  $p < 0.05$ ). For minority status, our sample of women and men lawyers is composed of 20 percent of female minority lawyers and 16 percent of male minority lawyers (see Table 1 columns C and F).

#### 4.2. Predicting Employment Schedules

Table 2 estimates the effects of respondents' background characteristics, practice setting, and dimensions of job satisfaction on the probability of working full-time. Model 1 examines the background characteristics of respondents predicting full-time work. We find that for each law school rank (prestige) the probability of working full-time increases by almost 28 percent (odds = 1.275,  $p < 0.001$ ). Moreover, fewer household responsibilities (odds = 1.196,  $p < 0.001$ ) are associated with higher probability of full-time employment. In contrast, the odds of working full-time are 96 percent less likely for young female lawyers (odds = 0.041,  $p < 0.001$ ). Further, the probability of full-time work decreases for respondents who are married by 19 percent (odds 193,  $p < 0.001$ ) and especially for respondents who have children (odds = 0.84,  $p < 0.01$ ), given the other variables in the model are held constant. Racial differences are not significant among these characteristics.

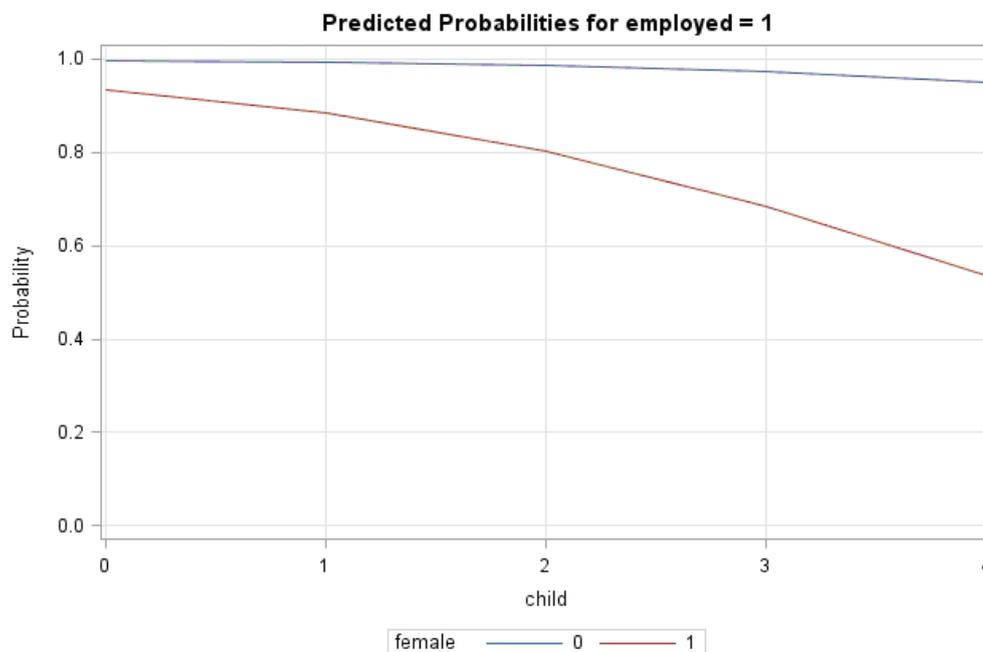
**Table 2.** Logistic Regression Models Predicting Full-time Work of Lawyers Seven Years into Practice (N = 2890).

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
	Odds	Odds	Odds
<b>Background Characteristics</b>			
Female	0.041 *** [0.031, 0.053]	0.038 *** [0.029, 0.049]	0.037 *** [0.028, 0.049]
Nonwhite <sup>a</sup>	0.920 [0.744, 1.136]	0.892 [0.720, 1.104]	0.908 [0.731, 1.128]
Law School Rank	1.275 *** [1.203, 1.350]	1.328 *** [1.249, 1.412]	1.338 *** [1.257, 1.424]
Married or cohabitating <sup>b</sup>	0.193 *** [0.123, 0.301]	0.206 *** [0.133, 0.320]	0.185 *** [0.117, 0.294]
Children <sup>c</sup>	0.841 ** [0.757, 0.934]	0.853 ** [0.764, 0.952]	0.841 ** [0.752, 0.940]
Household Tasks <sup>d</sup>	1.196 *** [1.156, 1.237]	1.168 *** [1.127, 1.210]	1.178 *** [1.136, 1.221]
<b>Practice Setting <sup>e</sup></b>			
Firm of 21–100 lawyers	-	2.885 *** [2.145, 3.880]	2.818 *** [2.066, 3.844]
Firm of >100 lawyers	-	3.080 *** [2.218, 4.276]	3.289 ** [2.308, 4.687]
Non-profit <sup>f</sup>	-	4.627 *** [3.367, 6.357]	4.766 *** [3.427, 6.630]
Business	-	3.379 *** [2.436, 4.687]	3.555 *** [2.575, 5.025]
<b>Workplace</b>			
Job Satisfaction with			
Substance of Work	-	-	1.166 ** [1.068, 1.274]
Job Setting	-	-	1.095 * [1.002, 1.198]
Power track	-	-	1.043 [0.971, 1.120]
Intercept	4.568	3.382	1.895
–2 Log L	5521.62	5394.00	5320.00
Pseudo Rsquare	0.71	0.73	0.74

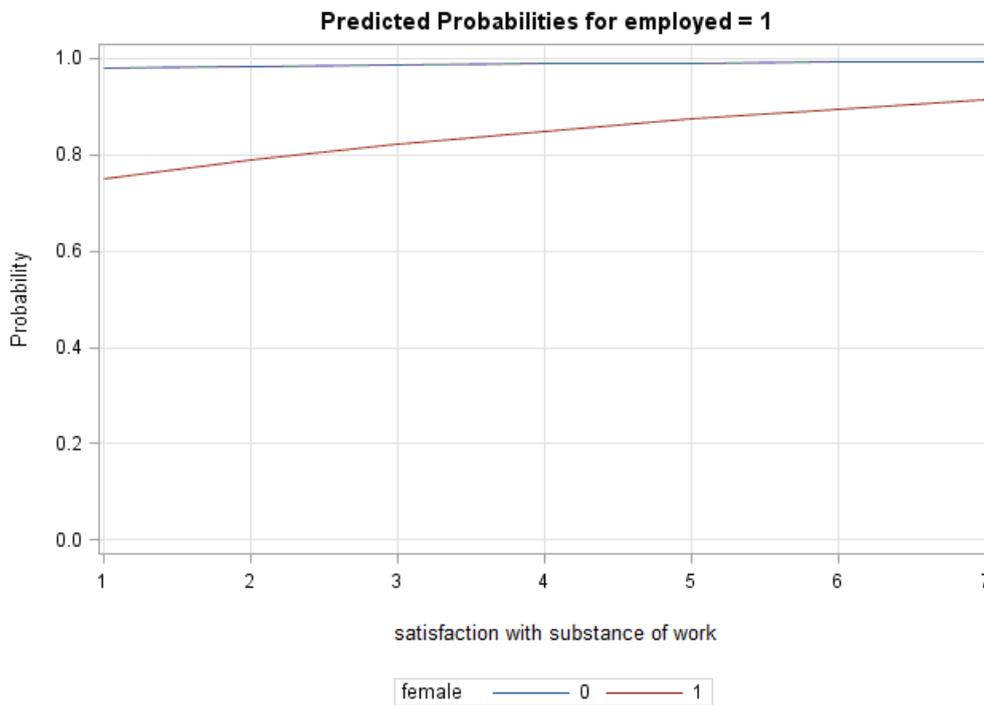
Note: \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$  (two-tailed). Results show the odds. Numbers in parentheses present the 95% confidence intervals. All analyses are weighted. <sup>a</sup> Reference group is white. <sup>b</sup> Reference groups is never married or not cohabitating. <sup>c</sup> Categorical measure ranging from 0 to 4 children residing in the household. <sup>d</sup> Higher values for Household tasks refer to fewer household responsibilities, meaning someone else is doing the work. <sup>e</sup> Reference group is solo practice. <sup>f</sup> Nonprofit combines the following settings: Federal, State, Legal, and Public Interest.

Model 2 adds a series of practice settings with solo practitioners as a reference group. The results indicate that lawyers work full-time across all practice settings. While some practice settings may provide more flexible work schedules (e.g., non-profit settings), the findings imply that the direct effects of practice setting are not solely predicting differences in employment schedules. Though, adding practice setting to model 2, the effects of gender and children reinforce the disparities of full-time employment. For example, Figure 2 illustrates that having more than two children the likelihood of full-time work decreases for women but not for men. These results correspond with findings from Hagan and Kay (2007) and others (Plickert and Merkens 2012; Wallace 2004) who emphasize the number of children associated with women's intermittent or permanent work exits.

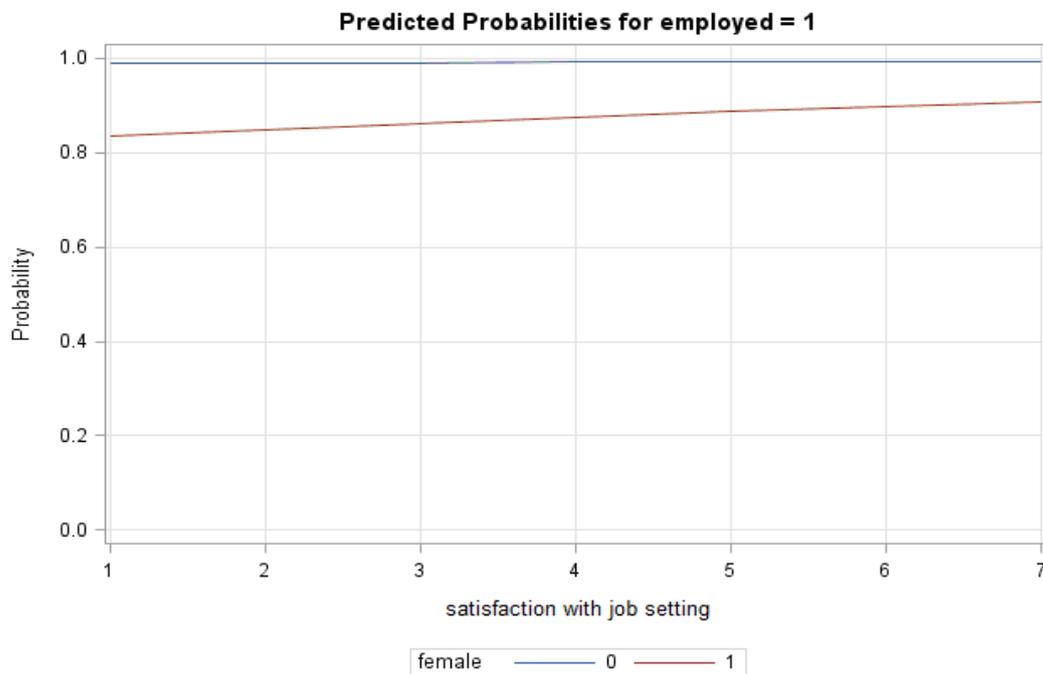
The final model 3 in Table 2 investigates the effects of job satisfaction on employment schedule. A number of studies have investigated job satisfaction in the legal profession, across practice settings (Dinovitzer et al. 2004; Hagan and Kay 1995, 2007; Wallace 1997), legal markets (Heinz et al. 1999; Hull 1999; Reichman and Sterling 2004a, 2004b) and the life course (Plickert et al. 2017) to understand the importance of work conditions on lawyers' professional careers and wellbeing. Model 3 examines three dimensions of job satisfaction, satisfaction with substance of work, with job setting, and power track. As predicted, our findings show that the probability of full-time employment increases for respondents with higher levels of satisfaction with substance of work (odds = 1.166,  $p < 0.01$ ) and satisfaction with job setting (odds = 1.095,  $p < 0.05$ ). One unit increase of satisfaction with substance of work is associated with a 17 percent increase in the predicted odds of full-time work. Similarly, one unit increase in satisfaction with job setting increases the odds of full-time work by almost 10 percent. Regardless of women's initial lower likelihood of working full-time, Figures 3 and 4 illustrate that higher levels of satisfaction (with substance of work and job setting) increase women's probability of full-time work schedules. Across all three models we find no independent significant effects of minority status on workplace schedules when taking into account practice setting, job satisfaction and individual controls.



**Figure 2.** Probability of Full-time Work Schedule by Gender and Number of Children. Note: Female = 1 and Female = 0 refers to male. Model fit computed including all variables in Model 3 in Table 2.



**Figure 3.** Probability of Full-time Work Schedule by Gender and Satisfaction with Substance of Work. Note: Female = 1 and Female = 0 refers to male. Model fit computed including all variables in Model 3 in Table 2.



**Figure 4.** Probability of Full-time Work Schedule by Gender and Satisfaction with Job Setting. Note: Female = 1 and Female = 0 refers to male. Model fit computed including all variables in Model 3 in Table 2.

#### 4.3. Workplace Discrimination, Parenthood and Full-Time Employment

The results in Table 2 show evidence for persistent gender differences in employment schedule as a result of lawyers' individual background characteristics. Primarily differences in employment schedules are explained by gender, children, and household tasks.

To further understand the effect of children coupled with the parent role and household tasks, we next investigate respondents' job satisfaction and experience of workplace discrimination and examine these effects on mothers and fathers' employment schedules (see Table 3). The models presented in Table 3 include all estimates of individual background characteristics, practice setting and dimensions of satisfaction.<sup>4</sup>

**Table 3.** Full-time work schedules over part-time work between mothers and fathers.

	Mothers	Fathers	Parents
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
	Odds	Odds	Odds
Mothers <sup>1</sup>	-	-	0.052 *** [0.039, 0.069]
Children	0.841 * [0.751, 0.943]	2.291 ** [1.427, 3.678]	0.899 [0.803, 1.007]
Household Tasks <sup>2</sup>	1.186 *** [1.142, 1.231]	1.043 <sup>ns</sup> [.906, 1.201]	1.172 *** [1.129, 1.217]
<i>Structural Workplace Characteristics:</i>			
Workplace Discrimination due to child			
Workplace Discrimination (combined) <sup>3</sup>	-	-	0.140 *** [0.091, 0.216]
Questioning Commitment	0.810 * [0.671, 0.977]	0.183 ** [0.058, 0.577]	-
Questioning Performance	0.361 *** [0.275, 0.473]	0.053 ** [0.007, 0.412]	-
Ideal Worker Expectation	0.908 <sup>ns</sup> [0.755, 1.092]	0.502 <sup>ns</sup> [0.202, 1.247]	-
Intercept	0.730	-0.741	2.721
-2 Log L	3773.28	694.00	5320.00
Pseudo Rsquare	0.87	0.63	0.76

Note: \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$  (two-tailed). Results show the odds. Numbers in parentheses present the 95% confidence intervals. All the analyses are weighted. The models for mothers and fathers include all estimates of individual background characteristics, practice setting, and dimensions of job satisfaction. <sup>1</sup> Reference group is fathers. <sup>2</sup> Household tasks—higher scores represent fewer household responsibilities. <sup>3</sup> Work discrimination combined refers to the sum of experiences.

In Table 3, models 1 and 2 compare the results for each type of workplace discrimination between mothers and fathers. Model 3 includes both parents and the combined experience of workplace discrimination. As illustrated in Figure 1, mothers (71 percent) more than fathers (21 percent) experience some type of discrimination in the workplace because of having a child or children. The results in Table 3 (Models 1–3) support these differences between mothers and fathers. While both, mothers and fathers experience being questioned about their commitment to work and their performance at work, the likelihood of full-time work decreases significantly for mothers compared to fathers (see also Figure 5). Figure 5 illustrates that experiences of workplace discrimination reduce

<sup>4</sup> Results of complete models are available upon request.

the likelihood of full-time work by almost 40 percent, decreasing from about eighty to forty percent. Although the majority of mothers and fathers have on average two children, assuming similar parental responsibilities for both, the experience of workplace discrimination suggests different effects on employment schedules of mothers compared to fathers. Similar to Models 1 and 2, the combined effects in model 3, Table 3 predict a decrease of full-time work for mothers, but less so for fathers with similar experiences of workplace discrimination (see Figure 5). Moreover, for household tasks results show that an increase in household responsibilities decreases the probability of full-time work, while conversely fewer household tasks suggest a greater likelihood of full-time work. For fathers, children (odds = 2.291,  $p < 0.01$ ) predict full-time employment showing opposite effects for their female counterparts.

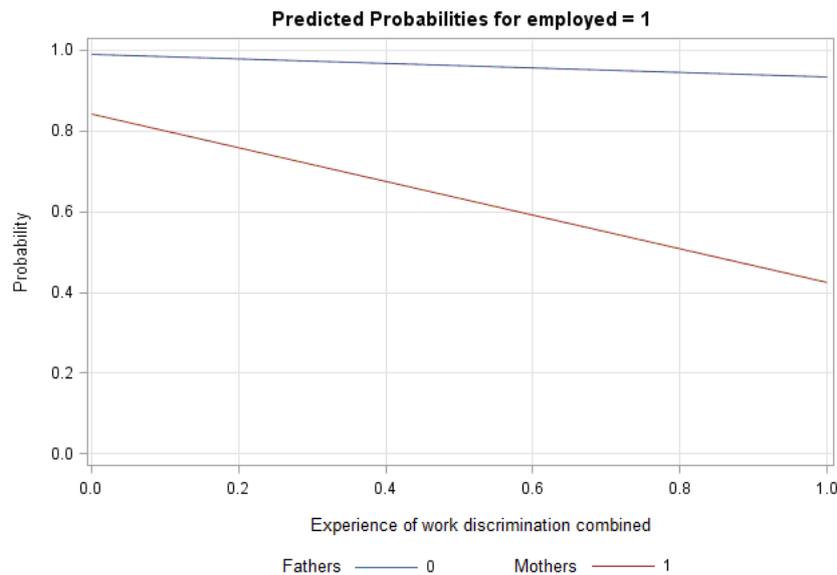
Results in Table 2 model 3 indicate that satisfaction with aspects of work increase the likelihood of full-time work. We then examined mothers and fathers' job satisfaction while experiencing workplace discrimination. We intended to test whether satisfaction reduces the effect of discrimination. Findings indicate that mothers with high levels of job satisfaction are still more likely to change their work schedule, primarily because of some experience with discrimination in the workplace. Figure 6 illustrates the probability of mothers' full-time work by satisfaction with substance of work and experience of workplace discrimination. We find that mothers with low (=1) and high levels of satisfaction (=7) are almost alike in their propensity to change their work schedule. The mere satisfaction with one's job does not prevent mothers from considering other employment schedules<sup>5</sup>.

While the experiences of workplace discrimination are evident among mothers, we find that fathers also experience workplace discrimination after having children. However, the instances are far fewer than those of mothers (see Figure 1). The descriptive results show that less than 6 percent of fathers have experienced all three types of workplace discrimination due to children. Comparison across the different types of workplace discrimination show that 11.4 percent of fathers report a negative experience in at least one of the types of discrimination (e.g., questioning performance). Overall however, the majority of fathers (79 percent) have not encountered any form of discrimination. To better understand whether and to what extent children adversely affect the careers and employment schedules of fathers, research needs to move beyond descriptive results. There are still too few empirical studies on the topic of father's workplace experiences (Dau-Schmidt et al. 2009). One of the few studies by Coltrane et al. (2013) takes a preliminary look at what happens to men who opt for the "daddy track" and found that men who reduce their hours for family reasons do experience earnings penalties. However, it is not clear due to limited sample size, if they are penalized more or less than their female counterparts.

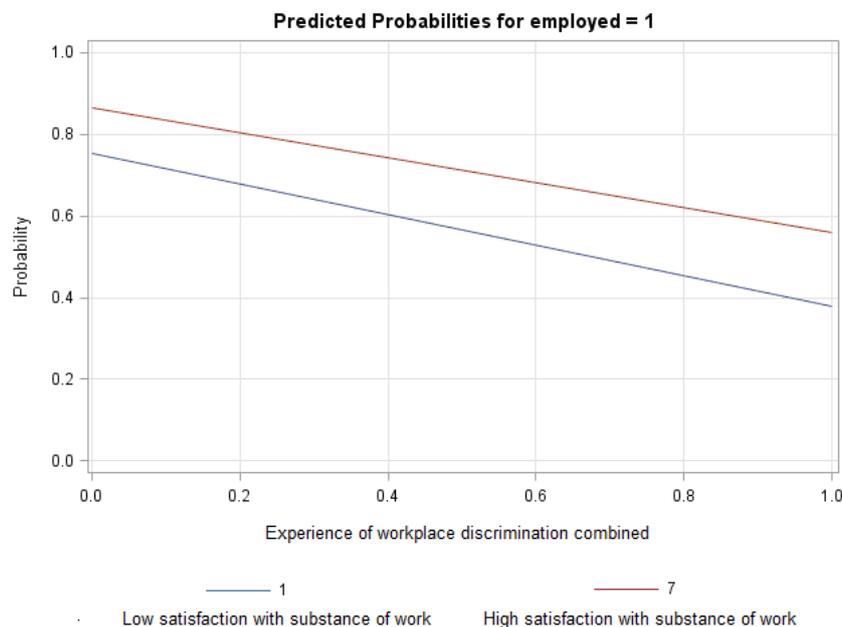
On the one hand, experiences of work discrimination significantly affect mothers' employment schedules, creating a so called work-family conflict, and on the other hand, the burden of family responsibilities, such as caring for children and handling most of the household tasks, result in a family-work conflict (Wallace 2004).

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<sup>5</sup> Results of complete models are available upon request.



**Figure 5.** Probability of Full-time Employment by Experience of Workplace Discrimination between Mothers and Fathers. Note: Workplace discrimination combined refers to the sum of all possible experiences. The estimates are based on the parent model controlling for personal characteristics, firm setting, and dimensions of job satisfaction. Estimates are based on model 3 shown in Table 3.



**Figure 6.** Probability of Full-Time Employment by Experience of Workplace Discrimination and Satisfaction with Substance of Work (Mothers only). Note: Estimates are based on model 3 in Table 3.

### 5. Conclusions

Studies of women’s advancement in the legal profession continue to show persistent inequalities affecting women and mothers rather than men and fathers (Budig and Hodges 2010; Cahusac and Kanji 2014; Correll et al. 2007; Epstein and Seron 2001; Kay et al. 2013; Plickert and Hagan 2011; Sommerlad et al. 2010; Thornton and Bagust 2007). While existing qualitative research shows that women and especially mothers are potentially held to stricter standards in the workplace compared to men (Correll et al. 2007; Fuegen et al. 2004), we know relatively little about how the relationship

between experience of workplace discrimination, job satisfaction and specific personal characteristics (e.g., household responsibilities) affect employment schedules of young lawyers.

Drawing responses from a large nationally representative study on U.S. lawyers, the aim of this research was to systematically examine how adverse workplace experiences affect employment schedules and to what extent these workplace characteristics create further disparities between young women and men in the legal profession. Overall, the findings show that women lawyers, especially mothers, still report significantly lower probabilities of full-time employment than men. While job satisfaction increases the likelihood of full-time employment, the experience of workplace discrimination appears to burden mothers' work schedules and consequently impact career and personal life trajectories.

We argue that gender still matters. Based on explanations of gender and social role theory (e.g., parental role), we find that the legal profession is still structured in ways that give primary value to masculine workplace expectations where employees are willing to work long hours and also prioritize work over family life (Thornton 2016). Yet, high expectations, rigid performance evaluation/demands, long and inflexible work schedules are significant factors and most likely among the main reasons for women to not work full-time (Kay et al. 2013). Finally, our findings show that marital status and carrying more household responsibilities and/or care for children reduces the likelihood of full-time employment. Weighing gender and marital status against practice settings, the findings continue to show that the differences in employment schedules persist between women and men (Kay et al. 2013; Thornton and Bagust 2007).

While we also find that both, mothers and fathers, experience questioning about their commitment to work and their performance, the probability of full-time employment significantly decreases for mothers but not for fathers. Feeling empowerment, together with strong career commitment at work are characteristics that foster not only greater satisfaction, but also opportunities to increase competency, skill development and personal growth (Karasek and Theorell 1990). However, workplaces that undervalue and question employees' work commitment and performance appear to drive particularly women with children out of the full-time workforce. In comparison, our results show that men with children are significantly less likely to experience workplace discrimination and if they do, the effects do not cause a change in their work schedule. These results are consistent with existing research on standards and inferences about job competence between gender and parental role (Benard and Correll 2010; Fuegen et al. 2004; Sterling and Reichman 2016; Thornton 2016).

Our findings contribute to the literature emphasizing the importance of work environments to better understand women's professional pathways and access to opportunities within legal practice (Kay et al. 2016; Plickert and Hagan 2011; Reichman and Sterling 2004a). The use of detailed measures of workplace discrimination allowed us to deconstruct differences in employment schedules in a representative sample of women and men lawyers in their first ten years of practice. While experiments and qualitative responses provide useful snapshots of underlying processes, the knowledge of the current quantitative findings are equally important to broaden our understanding of the complexity of social roles, gender and workplaces in a representative way.

Although this study has made a valuable contribution to examine the relationship between adverse workplace characteristics and professionals' employment schedules, we nonetheless acknowledge a number of limitations. First, our findings inform us about the impact of work and home on employment schedules. However, to identify potential causal relationships, measures and approaches are needed that estimate long-term effects between work and personal spheres to better understand the dynamics between these spheres and social roles.

Second, the questions on workplace discrimination are only asked of mothers and fathers in the workforce at the time of data collection for wave 2 and wave 3. Respondents who did not work full- or part-time in either of the two waves have no responses to "current" experiences of workplace discrimination. We remind the reader that the aim of this study was to investigate the detailed measures of workplace discrimination in a sample of young lawyers engaged in the workforce.

Finally, understanding and estimating the relationship between work decisions and work-life balance remains a challenge for quantitative and qualitative research. Merging information from both approaches may present us with a more holistic picture of the challenges/choices and decision-making processes of women and men.

Our study has emphasized the importance of examining workplace discrimination, job satisfaction and personal background influences that affect employment schedules primarily of women lawyers. The multiple experiences of workplace discrimination impede women's work-life integration. Thus, workplace inequality arises when "job satisfied" women juggle with being both—a lawyer/professional and a mother (see also Fuegen et al. 2004).

Future research should consider workplace discrimination measures that also assess the experiences of women and men with no children and account for other social roles and responsibilities (e.g., caring for parents, experience of severe illness, emotional stress, or disability). These roles and responsibilities are equally important to understand the mobility patterns and career trajectories of professionals. To further enrich and expand the analysis and concepts of equality in the legal profession, it will also be valuable to identify workplace environments that promote diversity (Dowd 1989; Rhode 2011; Sommerlad et al. 2010) and choice—away from traditional family-work workplace expectations. Whether and to what extent the legal profession is ready to respond to personal diverse choices of present-day professionals will remain subject to further investigation.

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**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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