



Does the disruptive effect of grandparents' divorce on patterns of care for grandchildren vary by social context?

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Research questions

- Does marital status of grandparents influence the provision of child care and its frequency?
- Does the divorce affect grandmothers and grandfathers differently?
- Does the divorce effect vary across different social contexts?
- Does the difference between divorce effect for grandmothers and grandfathers vary by social context?

What do we know?

- **Married grandparents are more likely** than unmarried grandparents to have contact with or provide care for their grandchildren
- Influence of **gender**
 - **Strong negative effect among grandfathers**
 - **No effect or weak effect among grandmothers**

Possible explanations

- divorced grandfathers are more disadvantaged than divorced grandmothers.
- grandmothers as **kin-keepers**/ mediators
- the absence of a male partner could weaken ties between grandmothers and their children and grandchildren, or reduce resources that may be important, for example, for traveling to child's house

BUT

Measurement issues- contrasting married and unmarried is no longer sufficient

Unexplored variations in divorce effect

Does the divorce effect differ across contexts?

- No comparative research on patterns of intergenerational caregiving
- Inspiration: Divorce effect on well-being (Kalmijn 2010)
- The effect is **stronger**:
 - in **less familialistic** countries (lack of support from extended family)
 - in countries where **divorce is less common** (stigma)
 - among religious persons (in countries with **stronger norms against divorce**)

Our hypotheses

- 1) **Divorce is disruptive:** Divorced grandparents are **less likely** to provide child care to their grandchildren than married grandparents
- 2) **Divorce is less disruptive for females:** Divorce reduces care among grandfathers much more than among grandmothers

Hypotheses...

3) Divorce effect differs across contexts (groups of countries)

Contradictory expectations

A) It may be the **very strong** in **traditional countries** (if the stigmatization and high conflict prevail), or **very weak** (if familialistic values protect families from the disruptions)

B) It may be the **weak** in **Nordic countries** (little conflict, little stigma, institutionalized post-divorce arrangements), or it may be **strong** there (familialistic values are relatively weak)

C) It may be relatively **strong** in **continental countries** (familialistic values are weak and post-divorce institutionalization), or relatively **weak** (little stigma)

Hypotheses...

4) There is a three-way interaction between **divorce**, **grandparental gender**, and **country type**

Again contradicting expectations

- The effect of divorce may be particularly **strongly** affected by grandparental gender in traditional countries (high level of pre-divorce conflict, divorcing men are strongly ostracized), or may be relatively **weak** (strong familialy values prevent divorcing men from loosing touch with (grand-)children)
- The effect of divorce is more symmetric between genders in Nordic countries (lower levels of pre-divorce conflict,...)

Data

- Survey of Health, Ageing, and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) – 2004 and 2006
- 13 European countries: **Nordic** (Sweden, Denmark), **continental** (Austria, Germany, Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Belgium, Czech Republic) and **traditional** (Spain, Italy, Greece, and Poland).
- Grandparents with at least one grandchild younger than 16: multiple grandchildren may be nested within grandparents
- Level-1 observations (“child-child of a child” pair) – 16602
- Level-2 observation (grandparents) – 10 693

Data and method

- Dependent variables
 - **provision of care** (yes/no),
 - **frequency of care** (almost daily, almost every week, almost every month, less often, never)
- Key explanatory variable – **marital status** (married, divorced, widowed, never married)
- Multi-level logistic regression
- Multi-level tobit regression

Models

M1: marital status+ sex+ age+ health+ number of grandchildren+ employment+ education+ geographic proximity+
+ child's marital status+ child's sex+ child's employment+ age of the youngest grandchild of a particular child+
+ country type

M2: M1 + marital status*sex

M3: M1 + marital status*country type

M4: M1 + marital status*sex*country type

Descriptive stats (grandparents)

Percentage distribution of marital status:	
married	69%
divorced	10%
widowed	20%
never married	1%
Percentage distribution of sex:	
male	44%
female	56%
N=10693.	

Per cent divorced within categories	
Sex:	
male	7%
female	12%
Country type:	
Nordic	13,5%
continental	12%
traditional	4,5%

Multi-level logistic models

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Marital status (married or registered partnership is reference category)			
Divorced	-0.705***	-0.146	-0.321
Widowed	-0.493***	-0.269**	-0.451*
Never married	-0.725*	-0.35	-0.964†
Respondent male	-0.652***	-0.403***	-0.665***
Country type (Nordic is reference category)			
Continental	-0.114	-0.149†	0.019
Traditional	-0.906***	-0.923***	-0.952***
Interactions			
divorced x male		-1.605***	
widowed x male		-0.732***	
never married x male		-0.924	
divorced x continental			-0.593**
divorced x traditional			-0.267
widowed x continental			-0.337
widowed x traditional			0.384†
never married x continental			0.183
never married x traditional			0.995

Significance levels: † $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

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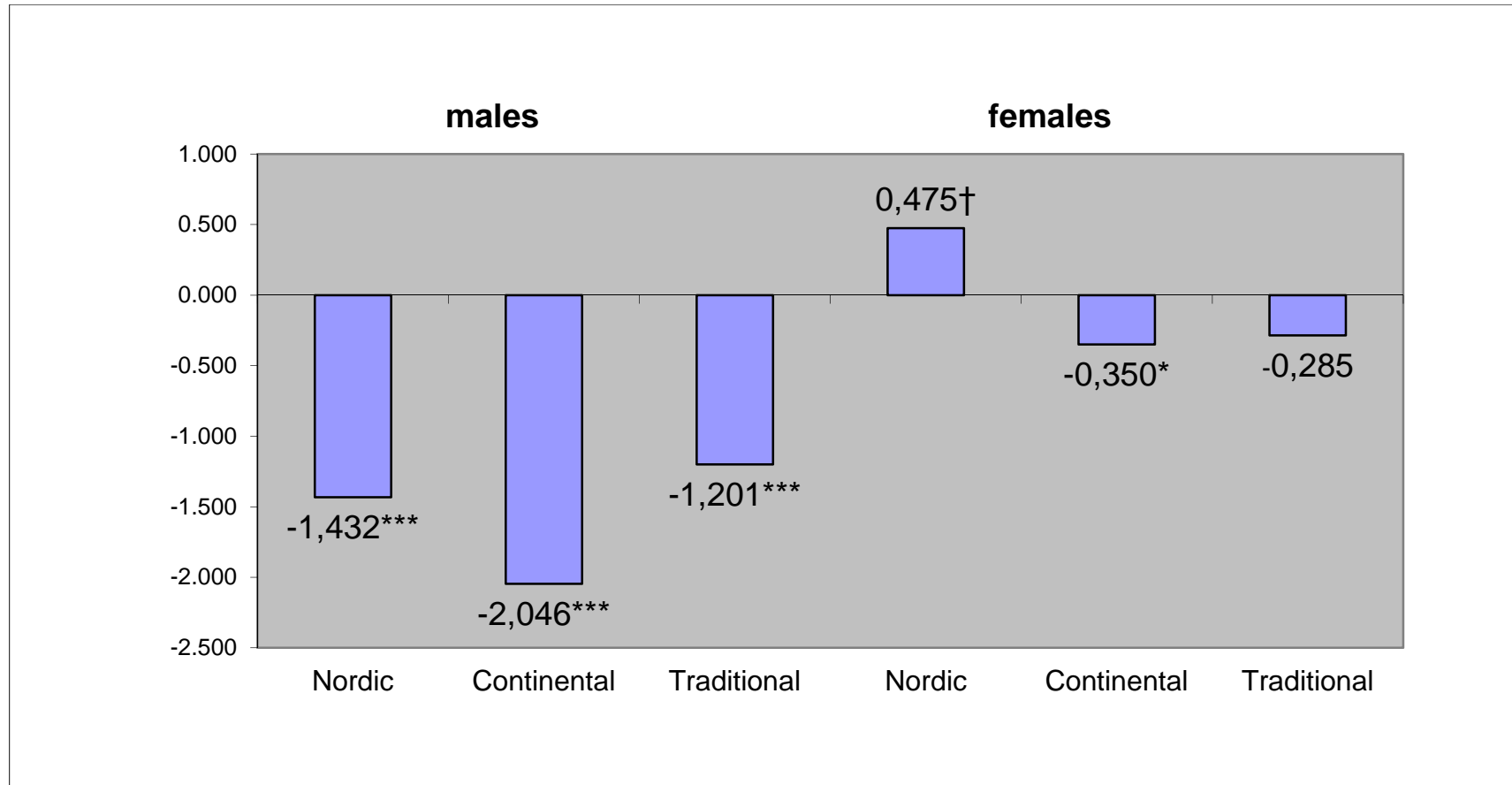
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	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Marital status (married or registered partnership is reference category)				
Divorced	-0.705***	-0.146	-0.321	0.475 [†]
Widowed	-0.493***	-0.269**	-0.451*	-0.153
Never married	-0.725*	-0.35	-0.964 [†]	-0.28
Respondent male	-0.652***	-0.403***	-0.665***	-0.398**
Country type (Nordic is reference category)				
Continental	-0.114	-0.149 [†]	0.019	0.004
Traditional	-0.906***	-0.923***	-0.952***	-0.914***
Interactions				
divorced x male		-1.605***		-1.907***
widowed x male		-0.732***		-0.910*
never married x male		-0.924		-1.624
divorced x continental			-0.593**	-0.825**
divorced x traditional			-0.267	-0.760 [†]
widowed x continental			-0.337	-0.387
widowed x traditional			0.384 [†]	0.23
never married x continental			0.183	-0.331
never married x traditional			0.995	0.808
male x continental				-0.00517
male x traditional				-0.055

Effect of divorce (vs. marriage) from model 4 (logit)



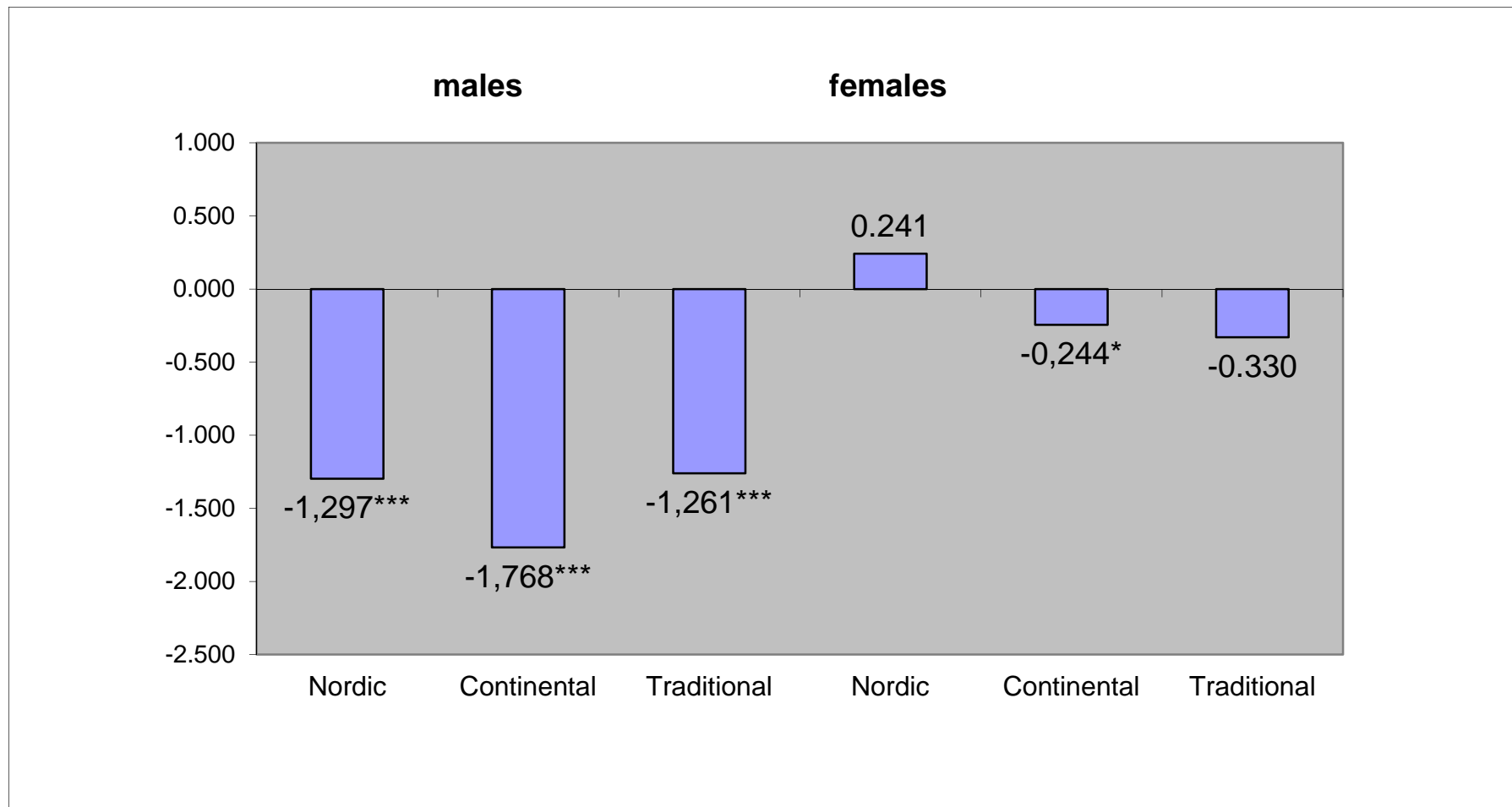
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Multi-level tobit models

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Marital status (married or registered partnership is reference category)			
Divorced	-0.592***	-0,144	-0.325*
Widowed	-0.376***	-0.169*	-0.350*
Never married	-0.489*	-0,249	-0,646
Respondent male	-0.546***	-0.332***	-0.553***
Country type (Nordic is reference category)			
Continental	0,05	0,021	0.133 [†]
Traditional	-0.341***	-0.354***	-0.360***
Interactions			
divorced x male		-1.417***	
widowed x male		-0.780***	
never married x male		-0,6	
divorced x continental			-0.382*
divorced x traditional			-0,287
widowed x continental			-0,214
widowed x traditional			0,243
never married x continental			0,167
never married x traditional			0,421

Significance levels: [†] $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Effect of divorce (vs. marriage) from model 4 (tobit)



Significance levels: † $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$, N = 16602.

Summary- the size of the divorce effect by country type and gender

	Grandmothers	Grandfathers
Nordic	0/+	-
Continental	-	- -
Traditional	0	-

Discussion

Disruptive effect of divorce seems to **be weaker** in countries with **high incidence of divorce**

- more institutionalized “peaceful” patterns of post-divorce interactions
- higher share of low-conflict splitting families

Consequence: only limited potential for rising divorce rates to reduce the odds and frequency of intergenerational caregiving, since

- divorce less disruptive at higher CDRs
- most care is provided by grandmothers, whose caregiving is only slightly impacted by divorce

Next steps

Include age at divorce

Differentiate re-marriage

Add country-level explanatory variables

Use fixed-effects (within person estimator)

Any other suggestions???