

# **Women's housework decreases fertility - Evidence from a longitudinal study among Finnish couples**

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## **Abstract:**

Changes in the gendered divisions of domestic work are often assumed to influence couples' childbearing behaviour, but existing evidence is mixed and mostly limited to cross-sectional data. We study how the amount and division of housework and childcare predict subsequent childbearing among Finnish couples using Finnish Time Use Survey 1999–2000 (FTUS1999) time diary data linked with register data on subsequent births. Results show that women's housework hours were negatively associated with the likelihood of having children at all parities. Men's contribution to domestic tasks, measured in relative terms, had no impact on childbearing. However, a higher male share of childcare time slightly increased the couple's likelihood of having a second child. Results are markedly robust to the inclusion of socioeconomic factors. We conclude that while women's excessive domestic work in itself may decrease fertility, men's housework share is not associated with continued childbearing.