

Motherhood, Fatherhood, and Politics: An Analysis of Parental Attitudes Toward Female Political Leadership

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1. Introduction

Focusing primarily on the United States, a substantial body of research highlights the importance of parenthood in shaping political attitudes and behaviour (Elder and Greene 2012; Greenlee 2014). Studies show that becoming a parent can influence levels of political participation, political interest, and broader views on representation (Burlacu and Lühiste 2021; Jennings 1979; Teney et al. 2024). At the same time, a well-established literature demonstrates that voters often evaluate male and female political actors using different criteria, particularly depending on how candidates present themselves and the extent to which they conform to prevailing gender stereotypes. More recently, scholars have turned their attention to candidates' personal characteristics—such as marital status and, especially, parental status—as factors that shape how political representatives are perceived (Bell and Kaufmann 2015; Campbell and Cowley 2018; Smith 2024; Stalsburg 2010). Despite these advances, these two strands of research have largely developed in parallel. Existing studies tend to examine either how the parenthood of political representatives affects citizens' evaluations of them, or how citizens' own parenthood shapes their political attitudes and behaviour.

This paper bridges these literatures by investigating whether citizens' parental status influences their attitudes toward female political representatives. Drawing on role congruence theory and socialization theory, we develop a set of expectations regarding how

and why motherhood and fatherhood may reshape attitudes toward political representatives.

Previous studies show that parenthood has been associated with a change toward more conservative gender ideologies (Banducci et al. 2016; Zheng et al. 2025b), which could lead to a shift toward gendered evaluations of political representatives. That said, because motherhood has a stronger impact on women's lives and identities than fatherhood does on men's (Greenlee 2014), we expect this shift on political evaluations to be more pronounced among women. Consequently, we expect a larger quantitative gap between mothers and non-mothers than between fathers and non-fathers.

However, parenthood is not the only factor that may shape attitudes toward female representatives. Mothers and fathers also differ in their experiences depending on the gender of their children. For instance, Lundberg and Rose (2002) shows that children's gender influences the gendered division of labour for fathers: they tend to work longer and harder when they have sons, with no equivalent effect for mothers. Consequently, we also investigate whether parents of daughters and parents of sons differ in their evaluations of political representatives. We test these assumptions for the Spanish case using longitudinal data from a survey conducted to a representative sample of Spanish society. The fieldwork was developed between years 2020 to 2025.

We find that parenthood is indeed linked to less support toward female political leadership among women. In contrast, while a similar trend is observed among men, the corresponding findings do not reach statistical significance. In addition, we find that the sex of the children moderates these attitudes among men, with fathers of daughters demonstrating significantly higher levels of support for female political leadership than the ones that only father sons.

Comentou [GG1]: Hasta aquí va muy bien pero esta frase se queda a medias, le falta la consecuencia.

Comentou [SB1R2]: Lo he intentado completar, así se pisa mucho con las hipótesis?

2. Parenthood and politics, and gender

A substantial body of research examines the impact of parenthood on political attitudes and behaviour. Parenthood has been associated with declines in political interest and participation (Jackson and Pietryka 2022; Bhatti et al. 2019), and the impact of this tendency seems to be stronger for mothers than for fathers: after having a child, mothers tend to become disproportionately disengaged from politics compared to fathers (Bellettini et al. 2023; Quaranta and Dotti Sani 2017; Ferrín et al. 2019; Fraile and Sánchez-Vitores 2020; Naurin et al. 2023). These patterns suggest that the gendered division of parental roles plays a key role in shaping political attitudes, making the effects of parenthood inherently gendered ((M. K. Lizotte 2016).

At the same time, it is also linked to shifts in political attitudes and values. We observe divergent tendencies for motherhood versus fatherhood, with effects varying in direction depending on the specific issue being analysed. While studies on the welfare state suggest that parenthood may lead women and men in opposite directions—with mothers supporting more progressive policies and men adopting more conservative ones (Elder and Greene 2012; Greenlee 2014)—, literature focused on gender ideologies and attitudes toward gender roles exhibits a different tendency. In this domain, evidence indicates that parenthood can be associated with more conservative views, especially on issues tied to motherhood norms and social conservatism. Furthermore, women tend to experience a bigger adjust toward more traditional value orientations, while men—who are, on average, already more conservative—show comparatively smaller shifts when becoming parents (Banducci et al. 2016). The transition to parenthood is associated with changes and realignments in values related to gender roles, caretaking, and political attitudes (Greenlee 2014), but these changes do not always work in the same way. As a result, some parents may hold more egalitarian attitudes toward certain issues—such as women's position in the

labour market or a more egalitarian division of domestic labour—while simultaneously adopting or maintaining traditional views on others, such as who should be the primary caretaker or who is more capable of caring for young children (Baxter et al. 2014).

This pattern is consistent with evidence on the time mothers dedicate to caregiving. Not only are mothers the primary parent in terms of time spent with children, but women also tend to spend roughly the same amount of time with their children regardless of their employment status (Baxter et al. 2014; Banducci et al. 2016).

Despite extensive evidence that parenthood—particularly motherhood—shapes political attitudes, little research has examined its relationship with citizens' perceptions and attitudes towards male and female political leadership. This omission is notable given that the political arena remains highly masculinized, with men occupying a disproportionate share of key positions, thereby reflecting traditional gender role divisions. In this context, evaluations of female candidates are often filtered through gender stereotypes, which can activate biases about their suitability for political office (Bos et al. 2018), especially in policy domains where their behaviour is perceived as incongruent with such stereotypes (Anzia and Bernhard 2022; Bauer 2017; Crowder-Meyer et al. 2015).

Political leaders' parental status also plays a role in how citizens perceive them. However, the effects of motherhood—often understood as a core dimension of femininity (Katz-Wise et al. 2010)—on evaluations of female candidates remain ambiguous. Motherhood may help female candidates align with traditional gender expectations, thereby mitigating potential penalties (Teele et al. 2018; Bell and Kaufmann 2015; Campbell and Cowley 2018; Smith 2024). However, it may distance them from traits typically associated with leadership, which are often coded as masculine (Cavazza and Pacilli 2021; Deason et al. 2015), since women are more strongly penalized than men in counter-stereotypical contexts

(Hammond-Thrasher and Järvikivi 2023; Davidson-Schmich et al. 2023). By contrast, male candidates do not appear to face penalties for signalling fatherhood (Denner et al. 2022).

Taken together, these insights suggest that if parenthood is a meaningful dimension in shaping both citizens' attitudes and politicians' public images, it is also likely to influence how citizens shape their orientations towards male and female political leaders. We explore this possibility in the following section.

3. Motherhood, fatherhood and attitudes towards political leadership of women

Motherhood and fatherhood carry distinct meanings, particularly in terms of identity. The transition to parenthood introduces a new social role for both women and men, but this role becomes more central to women's identities than to men's. Mothers tend to incorporate the parental role as a core component of the self, whereas fathers are, on average, less strongly identified with parenthood and continue to prioritize identities such as worker and breadwinner (Kaźmierczak and Karasiewicz 2019). In this sense, motherhood reshapes how women understand themselves, becoming a defining element of their identity (Greenlee 2014, 195) and entailing greater responsibility for childrearing (Rúðólfssdóttir and Auðardóttir 2024).

These identity shifts are accompanied by broader changes in attitudes and social dynamics following the arrival of children. In particular, gender-role attitudes often become more traditional (Royo Prieto 2011; Zheng et al. 2025a), especially among women, reinforcing existing divisions of labour and reproducing gendered expectations within the household (Katz-Wise et al. 2010). This is consistent with cognitive dissonance theory, which suggests that women, after becoming mothers and assuming the primary caretaker role, adjust their gender ideology to align with this new reality. In line with this, women who hold more traditional gender ideologies bear a disproportionate burden of domestic chores and have

substantially lower levels of labour market participation (Zheng et al. 2025b). As a result, the experience of motherhood not only intensifies identification with caregiving roles but also strengthens the normative framework that underpins gender inequalities.

Within this context, the values associated with motherhood may come into tension with those linked to political leadership. The Social Role Theory distinguishes between communal traits—such as care, empathy, and sensitivity, typically associated with women and the private sphere—and agentic traits—such as competitiveness, assertiveness, and strength, commonly associated with men and the public sphere (Diekmann and Schneider 2010; Eagly and Karau 2002). Political leadership is widely perceived as requiring agentic qualities (Alexander and Andersen 1993; Cavazza and Pacilli 2021; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993; Sanbonmatsu and Dolan 2009), whereas communal traits are often seen as less compatible with effective leadership (Bauer 2015a, 2015b).

This mismatch produces a well-documented incongruity. The Role Congruent Theory (RCT) predicts that women are often perceived as less suitable political leaders because gender stereotypes conflict with leadership expectations (Schneider and Bos 2014; Koenig et al. 2011). Moreover, even when women meet or exceed leadership expectations, they are frequently evaluated less favourably than men, because of stereotyped prejudice (Rudman et al. 2012; Schneider et al. 2022; van der Pas et al. 2024). Motherhood may intensify this incongruity. As a role strongly associated with communal values, mothering stands in direct contrast to the agentic traits linked to political leadership (Stalsburg 2010). Whether due to identity transformation—where motherhood becomes central to self-definition—or to the practical demands and constraints of childcare, women may come to perceive political leadership as less compatible with their lived experience as mothers (Weeks 2025). Consequently, motherhood may lead women to adopt more conservative views regarding

the suitability of women as political leaders, as the image of a female leader appears increasingly incongruent with their own identity and role.

This suggests that the distinction between mothers and non-mothers is analytically relevant. Differences in attitudes may arise either from self-selection—where women who prioritize motherhood already hold more traditional views, a pattern consistent with evidence linking fertility intentions to ideological self-placement showing that individuals on the right and far right express a stronger desire to have children than those in the centre or on the left (Arpino and Mogi 2024)—or from the transformative effect of parenthood itself, which reshapes identity and preferences (Greenlee 2014). The stronger the identification with the maternal role, the more likely it is that attributes associated with private life are generalized to women as a group, thereby influencing attitudes towards women in politics (Denner et al. 2022). In turn, both descriptive and prescriptive gender stereotypes are activated, reinforcing biases about how political leaders should behave in ways that conflict with the expectations associated with motherhood (Eagly and Karau 2002; del Carmen Triana et al. 2024). As a consequence, although women can and do engage in counter-stereotypical behaviour in the political sphere (Bernhard 2022; Karl and Cormack 2023), the experience of motherhood may heighten awareness of the structural and normative limits associated with gender roles, thereby reinforcing perceptions of incompatibility between being a woman, a mother, and a political leader.

Building on this argument, and extending existing research by considering how individual experiences condition the activation of gender stereotypes, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1. Mothers are less positive about the suitability of women as political leaders than non-mothers.

In general, regardless of parental status, men tend to hold more conservative positions than women on social policy preferences (Burlacu and Lühiste 2021; Cassese and Barnes 2019; Caughell 2016; M.-K. Lizotte 2020; Oswald and Powdthavee 2006), as well as on gender roles and the sexual division of labour (Coffé and Reiser 2023; Kim and Kweon 2022; Noh and Shalaby 2024; Wäckerle 2023). Consistent with these patterns, men are also more likely to perceive women as less suitable for political leadership. However, unlike motherhood, fatherhood does not appear to generate a comparable tension with dominant gender norms in the political sphere. Whereas motherhood is strongly associated with communal roles that may conflict with leadership expectations, fatherhood is largely compatible with traditional masculine and agentic norms. Moreover, becoming a father does not typically entail the same degree of identity transformation or reprioritization of roles observed among mothers (Katz-Wise et al. 2010; Zheng et al. 2025b). As a result, fatherhood is less likely to challenge existing beliefs about gender roles or to reshape attitudes toward women in politics.

Taken together, these arguments suggest that, while men may hold more conservative views overall, the transition to fatherhood itself should not produce significant attitudinal change regarding female political leadership.

H2. There is no difference in attitudes toward female political leadership between fathers and non-fathers.

Finally, the sex of the child may moderate how parenthood shapes attitudes among women and men. Recent research highlights a bidirectional process of parent–child socialization: children are socialized by their parents, but parents also adapt their values and beliefs

through their experiences of raising children (Pedraza and Perry 2020). However, evidence on the political effects of children's sex is mixed and, in most cases, focuses on fathers rather than mothers.

From the perspective of political elites, findings are inconclusive. Some studies find no evidence that male members of Congress are more supportive of gender equality policies when they have daughters rather than sons (Costa et al. 2019; Ashton III et al. 2024). Others, however, report that congressmen vote more liberally when they have daughters, especially on reproductive rights (Washington 2008). Still others suggest that representatives may behave more conservatively when they have sons compared to daughters (Pope and Schmidt 2021).

At the mass level, results are similarly ambiguous. Some studies suggest that having daughters leads to changes in party identification—either toward more liberal parties (Oswald and Powdthavee 2006) or toward more conservative parties (Conley & Rauscher, 2013)—while others find that children's gender has no significant effect on partisanship (Lee & Conley, 2014). For the purposes of this study, however, the key question is how having children—and particularly the gender of those children—impacts gender attitudes. Some studies show that fathering a daughter is associated with more egalitarian attitudes, both within the household (Shafer and Malhotra 2011; Borrell-Porta et al. 2019; Sun et al. 2023) and in the political domain (Sharro et al. 2018). In contrast, other research finds that fathers become more conservative after having daughters (Perales et al. 2018), while still others detect no significant effect (Lee and Conley 2016; Clayton et al. 2023; Fulton et al. 2025). Compared to fathers, mothers have received less attention; when examined, they tend either not to be affected by the child's sex or to become more traditional (Perales et al. 2018). Taken together, these divergent findings point to competing expectations regarding how children's sex may shape attitudes toward women's political leadership.

On one hand, having a daughter may heighten awareness of the constraints imposed by gender roles, as parents observe how these dynamics affect—or may affect—their daughters. This exposure could foster less conservative attitudes toward gender roles and greater support for women in politics (Greenlee et al. 2020). Such an effect may be stronger among men, who are less directly exposed to gender-based constraints prior to parenthood than women.

H3a. Fathering a daughter has a positive effect on attitudes toward women's political leadership, compared to fathering a son, whereas no such effect is expected for mothers.

On the other hand, the birth of a daughter may reinforce traditional gender norms among both parents. From this perspective, parenthood may reproduce prevailing social stereotypes, leading parents of daughters to emphasize conformity with conventional gender roles.

H3b. Parenting a daughter has a negative effect on attitudes toward women's political leadership, compared to parenting a son, for both women and men.

4. Methods

4.1. Data and case study

This study relies on longitudinal online panel data collected in Spain over five waves spanning the period from 2020 to 2025. The data were compiled by a professional survey firm using quota sampling to ensure that each wave is broadly representative of the adult population in terms of sex, age, educational attainment, and territorial region. To preserve the panel structure while addressing attrition—a common challenge in longitudinal surveys—new respondents were recruited at each wave to replace those who dropped out. This approach allows for both within-individual analyses over time and the maintenance of

adequate sample sizes and population balance across waves. In total, the dataset comprises 16,272 respondents observed across the five waves.

Spain serves as our case for analysing the intersection of parenthood and political attitudes due to the coexistence of two different social realities: an institutional design that has achieved significant progress in gender equality over recent decades —particularly in the political arena— alongside a more traditional caretaking model, rooted in the gendered division of labour.

On one hand, Spanish institutions have implemented strategies such as the 2007 Gender Equality Law, alongside an increased women's presence in Parliaments (Verge 2012). Consequently, for over two decades, the Spanish public has been familiar with seeing women hold a high proportion of legislative seats across all levels of government. This long-term exposure could be aligned with more progressive, egalitarian views regarding the suitability of women for political leadership.

On the other hand, despite high rates of female labour force participation and strong legal frameworks supporting egalitarian access to public positions, the private sphere remains a gendered space (Hupkau and Ruiz-Valenzuela 2022; Bravo-Moreno 2021). Even after recently observed convergence in the use of time, mothers continue to perform the majority of reproductive labour, and the country faces a significant 'care gap' in childcare (Román 2024), suggesting that mothering remains strongly linked to primary caregiving expectations (López and Guerrero 2015). Due to the insufficient childcare provision, and the absence of fully universal, state-funded childcare (León 2007)—unlike the more robust universal systems provided for education or healthcare—families often rely on informal support networks (Valarino et al. 2018), primarily grandparents. This structural deficit disproportionately impacts mothers, reinforcing the 'motherhood penalty' (Hupkau and Ruiz-Valenzuela 2022).

This suggests that while the Spanish institutional model has successfully alleviated certain barriers to public office, it has not sufficiently addressed the domestic requirements of motherhood. This creates a unique context in which the tension between the maternal role and professional/public life remains highly salient, making it an ideal setting to test whether parenthood conditions citizens' attitudes toward women's political representation.

4.2. Variables and estimations

The dependent variable captures attitudes toward female political leadership. It is measured by a survey item asking respondents to indicate their level of agreement with the statement: "Generally, men are better political leaders than women." Responses are recorded on a four-point scale ranging from "Totally disagree" to "Totally agree." This formulation provides a direct assessment of gendered leadership stereotypes. At the same time, such items are likely to be affected by social desirability bias, as respondents may underreport prejudiced views. For this reason, the measure can be interpreted as a conservative estimate of negative attitudes toward women's political leadership. Moreover, because the question is framed in abstract terms and does not refer to any specific political figure, it minimizes the risk of partisan bias that could arise from evaluations of particular leaders.

The main independent variable is parenthood, operationalized as a binary indicator coded 0 for non-parents and 1 for respondents who have children. To further capture heterogeneity among parents, an additional categorical variable distinguishes between three groups based on the sex composition of their children: (1) parents with one or more sons (reference category), (2) parents with one or more daughters, and (3) parents with both sons and daughters.

The dependent variable has been treated as a continuous variable to maximize the efficiency and robustness of the empirical estimates. An additional reason why we chose linear regression over ordinal logit is that in the panel format, the latter only allows for random effects. Estimating fixed effects, besides being a more robust approach, is key to empirically modelling our hypotheses. While estimating panel regression with fixed effects is considered a robust method for handling panel-structured data, it does have some limitations. Fixed effects estimate within individual variation, that is, the extent to which a one-unit change in the independent variable entails change in the dependent variable. Thus, the first challenge was that time-invariant variables such as gender do not contribute to the estimates (Longhi & Nandi, 2015, p. 186). Following Allison (1994), we segmented the sample and estimated each equation separately for men and women.¹ A second caveat of this approach is that it is very conservative, and small effects are to be expected, since only within-unit variation is modelled (Nichols, 2007, p. 513). Nonetheless, this approach has the advantage of allowing us to precisely model parenthood status change, in line with our hypotheses.

5. Results

Before turning to the hypothesis tests, Figure 1 illustrates baseline gender differences in attitudes toward female political leadership. Two patterns stand out. First, overall levels of support are high: most respondents express disagreement with the statement that men are better political leaders than women. This generally positive distribution likely reflects, at least in part, the influence of social desirability bias, which tends to suppress the open expression of gender-prejudiced views in survey responses. Second, and consistent with prior research, a substantial gender gap persists despite these overall favourable attitudes.

¹ The sex of the respondents was registered automatically by the survey Company and thus it is not possible to have a more nuanced measure of gender.

Women are significantly more supportive of female political leadership than men, indicating that gender remains a key factor structuring these views. Importantly, this gap exists even within a context of broadly positive evaluations, suggesting that men are comparatively more likely to hold residual scepticism toward women in leadership roles.

This baseline pattern has implications for the interpretation of the subsequent analyses. Even if the proposed hypotheses receive empirical support, women’s attitudes are already highly favourable on average, which may limit the observable magnitude of any additional effects.

Figure 1. Attitudes towards female political leadership, by sex.

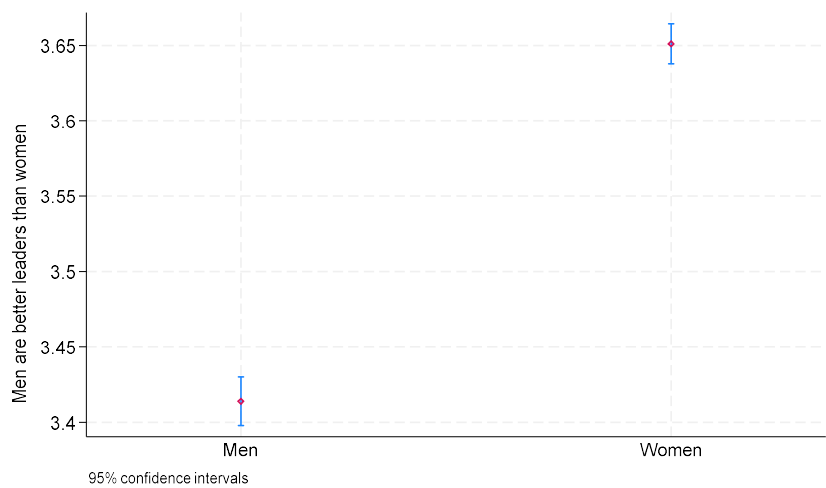


Table 1 presents the empirical tests of our hypotheses. Models 1 and 2 introduce respondents’ parenthood status as the key independent variable, allowing us to assess H1 and H2. The results provide support for our expectations regarding women (H1): becoming a parent is associated with a shift toward more conservative attitudes, reflected in less

positive views of female political leadership. This finding is consistent with the argument that parenthood may reinforce traditional gender roles among women.

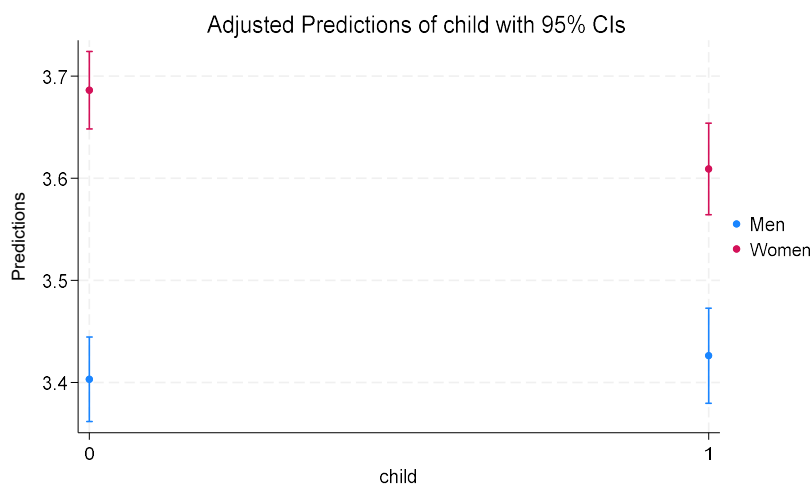
By contrast, the pattern for men is weaker and does not reach conventional levels of statistical significance (H2). Although the estimated coefficient points in a negative direction—suggesting that fatherhood may also be associated with slightly less supportive attitudes—the effect is not distinguishable from zero. Taken together, these findings indicate that the attitudinal consequences of parenthood are more pronounced among women than among men.

Table 1. Modelling the effect of parenthood on attitudes towards female political leadership

	Parenthood		Parenthood (including step-children)		Child's sex		Compared to no parents	
	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women
Has a child	0.023 (0.043)	-0.077+ (0.041)						
Has a child at home (including stepchildren)			0.003 (0.044)	-0.090* (0.040)				
Has a girl (Ref. has a boy)					0.293+ (0.153)	-0.105 (0.141)		
Has a girl & a boy (Ref. has a boy)					-0.039 (0.125)	-0.041 (0.096)		
Has a girl (Ref. no child)							0.246** (0.079)	0.073 (0.077)
Has a girl and a boy (Ref. no child)							0.094 (0.088)	0.112 (0.088)
Only sons (Ref. no child)							0.023 (0.073)	0.129+ (0.077)
Constant	3.403*** (0.021)	3.686*** (0.019)	3.412*** (0.022)	3.692*** (0.019)	3.339*** (0.079)	3.653*** (0.066)	3.364*** (0.026)	3.609*** (0.027)
R-squared	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.004	0.000	0.002	0.001
Observations	7632	7286	7632	7286	3189	2985	7246	6953
Standard errors in parentheses: + p<0.10, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001								

Figure 2 provides a more intuitive visualization of the patterns reported in Table 1 and helps clarify their substantive implications. It shows that fathers' attitudes toward female political leadership are not statistically distinguishable from those of men without children, reinforcing the conclusion that fatherhood does not have a meaningful effect in this regard. In contrast, the pattern for women is markedly different. Mothers display significantly less positive attitudes toward female political leadership compared to women without children. This gap is both statistically and substantively meaningful, highlighting that the transition to motherhood is associated with a shift toward more conservative views on women's leadership. The figure underscores that the impact of parenthood is gendered, with motherhood—but not fatherhood—driving the observed differences in attitudes.

Figure 2. Effect of parenthood on attitudes towards female political leadership, by sex

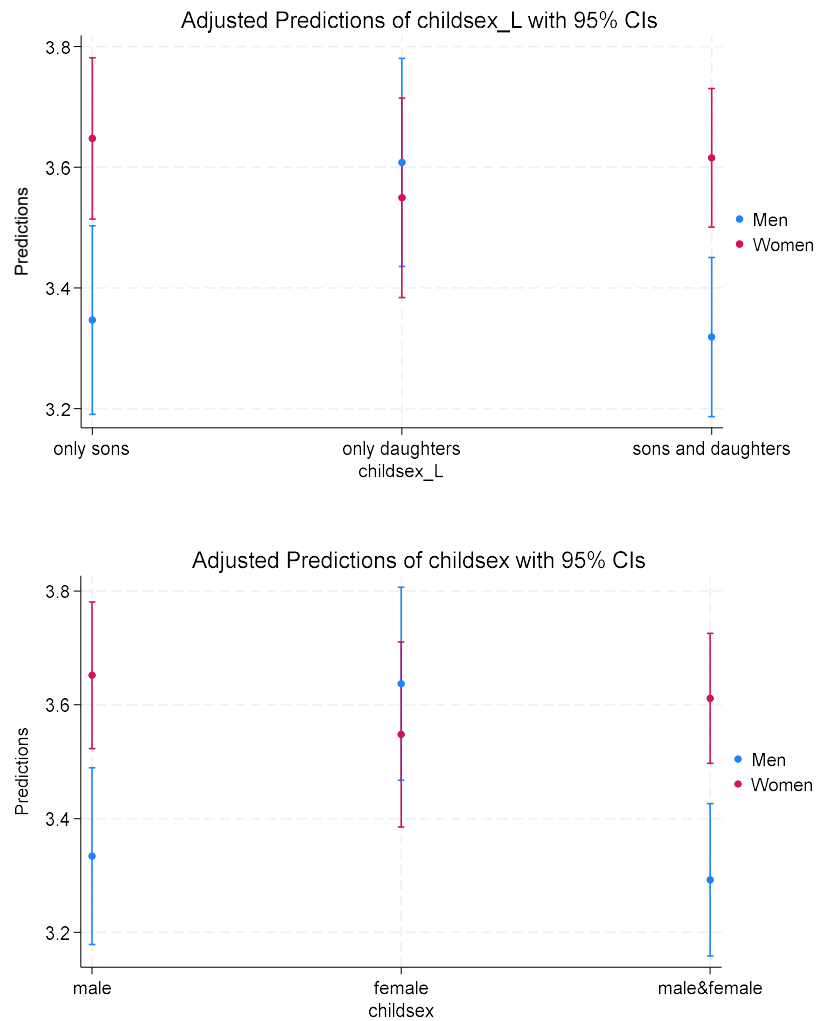


Models 3 and 4 in Table 1 turn to the role of children's sex and provide a test of H3. The results offer support for H3a. Fathers who have at least one daughter exhibit more positive attitudes toward female political leadership compared to fathers with only sons or with both sons and daughters. This pattern is consistent with the idea that close exposure to

daughters may heighten men's awareness of gender inequalities and, in turn, foster more supportive views of women in politics.

Figure 3 illustrates these differences more clearly. Among women, attitudes toward female political leadership do not vary significantly with the sex of their children: mothers' views remain largely stable regardless of whether they have sons, daughters, or both. Among men, however, the pattern is notably different. Fathers of daughters are significantly more supportive than other fathers, suggesting that the experience of raising a daughter has a distinct attitudinal impact. These findings lend support to the socialization and learning mechanism, whereby parenthood—specifically fatherhood of daughters—can increase gender awareness and translate into more egalitarian attitudes in the political domain.

Figure 3. Effect of the sex of the child on attitudes towards female political leadership, by sex



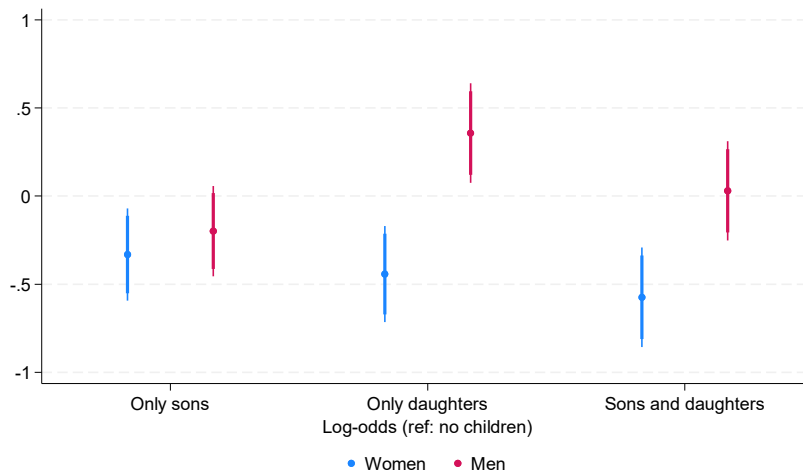
5.1. Robustness checks

These robustness checks use a random-effects ordered logit model, which allows us to include respondents without children as the reference category. The results are consistent with the main findings and reveal an additional pattern. Among women, having children is associated with less favourable attitudes toward female political leadership across all family compositions, and the effect increases with the presence of sons: mothers with only sons ($b = -0.332$, $p < 0.05$), only daughters ($b = -0.443$, $p < 0.01$), and both sons and daughters ($b = -0.574$, $p < 0.001$) all display more negative attitudes than childless women, with the mixed composition producing the strongest effect. Among men, only having exclusively daughters is associated with a significant shift in attitudes, and in the opposite direction: fathers of daughters are more supportive of female political leadership than childless men ($b = 0.358$, $p < 0.05$), while having only sons or a mixed composition produces no distinguishable effect. The contrasting direction of the daughter effect across sexes — more egalitarian attitudes among men, more conservative among women — reinforces the argument that parenthood operates through distinct mechanisms depending on the respondent's gender: motherhood through the lived experience of caregiving and the internalization of traditional gender roles, fatherhood of daughters through exposure and empathy.

Random-Effects Ordered Logit: Child Sex Composition and Attitudes toward Female Political Leadership

	Women	Men
only sons	-0.332* (0.133)	-0.199 (0.131)
only daughters	-0.443** (0.139)	0.358* (0.144)
sons and daughters	-0.574*** (0.144)	0.030 (0.144)
cut1 Constant	-6.556*** (0.187)	-5.577*** (0.135)
cut2 Constant	-4.856*** (0.128)	-3.638*** (0.095)
cut3 Constant	-1.503*** (0.073)	-0.146* (0.065)
sigma2_u Constant	3.580*** (0.310)	4.489*** (0.294)
N	6953.000	7246.000
Log-likelihood	-4839.774	-6443.200
Wald chi2	23.034	10.299

Reference category: no children. * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001



6. Discussion and conclusions

The results obtained from our analysis lead to a series of conclusions: we now know that parenthood has a conservative impact on the evaluation of women's political leadership abilities, and that this impact is significant for women. This is aligned with the literature exposed previously and meets our theoretical expectations.

This is also congruent with one of our claims: when we analysed the literature, we realised that one part (more focused on public policies and welfare state) signalled a progressive effect of motherhood and conservative effect of fatherhood. But when we looked at the literature that analysed items related to gender ideologies, we realised the effect would be conservative for both, and specially for women. This makes sense both because motherhood is more impactful for women than fatherhood for men and because women have a more progressive starting point than men (women without children are the most progressive group for gender ideologies-related items) so it makes sense that the conservative shift is more prominent for them.

The evidence that the evaluation of women's political leadership abilities is congruent with other gender ideologies-related items supports the claim that the evaluation individuals make of our item is related to their ideological standpoint on gender and that it made sense to bring both literatures (impact of parental status on political issues and gender ideologies) together.

We also add an extra layer to our analysis, which is more explorative since there's not that big of a theoretical development in the topic. Our results show that, for men, parenting women has a progressive impact on their evaluation of women's political leadership abilities. So now our results show that having at least one daughter acts as a moderating factor for fathers, and this adds key empirical evidence to an area that is still partially unexplored. A key line of work for the future would be to explore some of the possible

mechanisms that could make the correlation we empirically demonstrated here make theoretical sense. We have some ideas on why this could work out in the way it does (maybe they get in touch with gendered disadvantages) but there's not much literature on the topic and right now we are at the point where we know there is something going on and we need further development.

7. References

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