



Engender Database extract

GEOGRAPHIC

Continent
Europe (EU)

Country
Italy
Spain

BASIC DETAILS

Language
English

Sector: Labour market and employment

Title (EN): Gender Equity and Fertility in Italy
and Spain

Abstract description (EN):

Gender equity and its effects on fertility vary across socio-political contexts, particularly when comparing less with more developed economies. But do subtle differences in equity within more similar contexts matter as well? Here we compare Italy and Spain, two countries with low fertility levels and institutional reliance on kinship and family, but with employment equity among women during the 1990s slightly greater in Italy than Spain. The European Community Household Panel is used to explore the effect of this difference in gender equity on the likelihood of married couples having a second birth during this time period. Women's hours of employment reduce the birth likelihood in both countries, but non-maternal sources of care offset this effect to different degrees. In Spain, private childcare significantly increases birth likelihood, whereas in Italy, father's greater childcare share increases the likelihood, particularly among employed women. These results suggest that increases in women's employment equity increase not only the degree of equity within the home, but also the beneficial effects of equity on fertility.

These equity effects help to offset the negative relationship historically found between female employment and fertility.

Keywords: Gender equity, fertility, Italy, Spain

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