WHO BRINGS HOME THE BACON?

How gender stereotypes straitjacket men and women into traditional relationships

Melissa Vink

Who brings home the bacon?

How gender stereotypes straitjacket men and women into traditional relationships

Melissa Vink

Manuscriptcommissie

Prof. dr. K. van den Bos (Universiteit Utrecht)
Prof. dr. C. Finkenauer (Universiteit Utrecht)
Prof. dr. E.S. Kluwer (Universiteit Utrecht/ Radboud Universiteit)
Prof. dr. C. van Laar (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven)
Prof. dr. D.T. Scheepers (Universiteit Utrecht/ Universiteit Leiden)
Prof. dr. C.M.C. Verbakel (Radboud Universiteit)

Who brings home the bacon?
How gender stereotypes straitjacket men and women into traditional relationships

Wie brengt het brood op de plank?
Hoe gender stereotypes mannen en vrouwen in traditionele relaties dwingen
(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan de
Universiteit Utrecht
op gezag van de
rector magnificus, prof.dr. H.R.B.M. Kummeling,
ingevolge het besluit van het college voor promoties
in het openbaar te verdedigen op

woensdag 18 november 2020 des ochtends te 11.00 uur

door

Melissa Vink

geboren op 9 september 1992
te Heemskerk

Promotoren:
 Prof. dr. B. Derks
 Prof. dr. N. Ellemers
 Prof. dr. ir. A.G. van der Lippe

Contents

Chapter 1

Overview of dissertation

Gender roles in society are changing. In western countries, more women have entered the workforce and gained higher educational degrees compared to earlier generations (OECD, 2018; Statistics Netherlands, 2011; CBS, 2015). Also, men have increased their contribution in the domestic sphere, as they do more household chores and spend more time on taking care of their children compared to the past (Hochschild & Maschung, 2012; Pew Research Center, 2018; Pleck, 1993). Furthermore, partner relationships are nowadays formed on the basis of equality, companionship and personal growth rather than more traditional motivations such as (financial) dependency among partners (Latten & Mulder, 2013; Cherlin, 2004). As a consequence, the traditional heterosexual relationship in which the man is the main provider and the woman is the main caregiver of the family is becoming less common (Portegijs & Van den Braker, 2018; Pew Research Center, 2013).

Notwithstanding these developments, relationships in which the woman has attained higher societal status than her partner remain scarce (Pew Research Center, 2013; Portegijs & Van den Brakel, 2018). On the one hand, in almost all European countries it is nowadays more likely for women to be higher educated than their male partners in romantic relationships (De Hauw, Grow, & Van Bavel, 2017). On the other hand, the percentage of relationships in which the woman earns more than her male partner remains small (e.g., only 12% of Dutch women with small/young children had a higher income than their male partner in 2018 compared to 7% of Dutch women in 2007; Portegijs & Van den Brakel, 2018). Moreover, there is growing evidence that these non-traditional couples experience more negative relationship outcomes compared to couples in traditional relationships. Individual outcomes include higher marital distress among husbands (Syrda, 2019), more worries and guilt among wives (Meisenbach, 2009) and more use of erectile disfunction medication among men and more sleep deprivation and anxiety medication among women (Pierce, Dahl, & Nielsen, 2013). Relational outcomes include lower experienced relationship quality (Bertrand, Kamenica, & Pan, 2015; Wilcox & Nock, 2006; Zhang, 2015; Blom & Hewitt, 2019; Gong, 2007) and higher rates of marriage dissolution (Goldstein & Harknett, 2006; Kalmijn, 2003, Müller, 2003).

However, much less is known what underlying mechanisms are driving these negative relationship outcomes for non-traditional couples. Having more insight in what causes these outcomes, and how they develop is important because

this identifies means to prevent or reduce them. Specifically, the influence of structural factors should be disentangled from the influence of evolved and universal factors. Some scholars argue that due to evolutionary purposes women would have a stable and universal preference for men who are good providers for their children (i.e., men with higher status), whereas men would prefer women with good nurturing skills (i.e., women with lower status, see Buss, 2011). Furthermore, it is often seen as economically efficient and rational if the man is the one with the higher status position in the relationship, because men on average still have a higher earning potential due to persisting gender inequality on the labor market (Molm & Cook, 1995; Bittman, England, Sayer, Folbre, Matheson, 2003). However, these perspectives overlook the influence of sociocultural factors such as societal expectations of gender role divisions. Scholars who have investigated the influence of sociocultural factors show that partner preferences are less stable and universal than previously assumed (for a review, see Zentner & Eagly, 2015). Furthermore, they also show that the choices that couples make are often not economically rational (e.g., women still do a proportionally large share of household chores even if they earn more than their male partner; Bittman et al., 2003). Much less is known how these sociocultural factors influence the experiences of men and women in relationships in which the woman attains higher societal status than her male partner.

In this dissertation, I reveal three sociocultural factors (i.e., perceptions of others outside the relationship, couples' own perceptions and behaviors and the national context) that shape the experiences of non-traditional couples. I do this by investigating non-traditional relationships through the lens of persisting gender stereotypes in society. Although certain gender roles have changed a lot over the past years (e.g., many women nowadays have paid jobs; OECD, 2018), there are still many domains in which traditional gender roles are maintained and cannot be explained by rational economic motives. To illustrate, men have increased their contribution in the domestic sphere, but women still do the brunt of household and childcare tasks regardless of whether they work full- or part-time (Hochchild & Maschung, 2012; Pew Research Center, 2018). Also, even though women entered the workforce in large numbers, there is still a wage gap for women compared to men and this gap widens over the course of people's working life (OECD, 2018). Furthermore, men remain underrepresented in traditionally female-dominated occupations such as healthcare and elementary education, whereas women remain underrepresented in traditionally male-dominat-

ed occupations such as technology and engineering (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013; England, 2010; 2011; Croft, Schmader, & Block, 2015).

Consistent with these persisting gendered divisions, norms about gender roles within romantic relationships remain quite traditional as many people still expect the man to be the breadwinner and the woman to be the main caregiver of the family (Park, Smith, & Correll, 2010; Morgenroth & Heilman, 2017). Although most people in western countries agree that it is acceptable for women to do at least some paid work and for men to do at least some caregiving, most people disapprove men and women who have completely reverse these roles (Portegijs & Van den Braker, 2018; Pew Research Center, 2013). To illustrate, less than 3% of Dutch inhabitants agree it is better for a family when the woman does most of the paid work and the man most of the unpaid work at home, whereas 17% agrees it is better for a family when the man does most of the paid work and the woman most of the unpaid work (Portegijs & Van den Brakel, 2018; Pew Research Center, 2013). Especially these norms about gender role divisions at home have barely changed over the last forty years, which is surprising given the increase of women who have paid jobs and have attained higher educational degrees (Dernberger & Pepin, 2020). Most people in western countries thus still expect the man to have the higher status role in the relationship compared to his female partner.

In the current dissertation, I examine in four empirical chapters how status divisions within romantic heterosexual relationships constrain the choices and opportunities for women and men in the work and home domain. The main tenet of the dissertation is that, given the strong implicit norms that men should be the ones with higher status than their female partner, in attaining societal status women are bounded by the level of societal status that their male partner has attained. More specifically, I propose that in current society it is seen as acceptable for women to achieve high societal status as long as they do not surpass their partner's societal status. I define societal status as a combination of income, educational level and prestige in society (Adler, Epel, Castellazzo, & Ickovics, 2000; Major & O'Brien, 2005) and include subjective perceptions of societal status (Chapter 2, 3, and 4) as well as objective indicators of societal status (Chapter 3 and 5). In this dissertation, a non-traditional relationship is defined as a relationship in which the woman has attained higher societal status than her male partner.

How gender stereotypes constrain men and women to traditional gender roles

Zooming in on the mechanisms that potentially explain the difficulties that non-traditional couples face, it is often explained that traditional divisions of gender roles within romantic relationships persist because of evolved and universal differences between men and women (e.g., men's greater size and strength, women's reproductive activities) or because of rational and economic reasons (e.g., men's higher earning potential than women). Fixed differences in partner preferences are argued to explain why women would prefer partners with good providing qualities (i.e., higher status men) and why men would prefer partners with caring and nurturing skills (i.e., lower status women; see for example Buss & Kenrick, 1998). However, scientific evidence shows that the impact of evolved sex differences is much less than often assumed and that many universal differences are not so fixed as proposed (for reviews, see Ellemers, 2018; Zetner & Eagly, 2015; Wood & Eagly, 2002). Notably, men and women's mate preferences are much more similar in countries with high national gender parity compared to countries with low gender parity (Zentner & Mitura, 2012). Furthermore, although many studies show negative relationship outcomes for non-traditional couples, these effects also seem to vary by culture and individuals. To illustrate, men and women preferred the husband to be the breadwinner only if they themselves believed gender differences to be fixed (e.g., the belief that there is not much people can do to really change how they will act because of their gender; Tinsley, Howell, & Amanatullah, 2015). Also, in the U.S., the risk of divorce in couples with higher educated wives (compared to their husbands) is reduced over time, which is argued to be a result of greater acceptance of gender egalitarian relationships in the U.S. (Schwartz & Han, 2014). Furthermore, according to rational and economic explanations, partners bargain paid and unpaid work in a rational way, such that the more income one partner brings home, the more unpaid work the other partner takes on (Molm & Cook, 1995). However, this economic perspective is only valid up and until the point that women earn more than their male partner, as women do proportionally more household chores even when they earn more than their partner (Bittman et al., 2003; Greenstein, 2000 & Brines, 1994). The goal of this dissertation is not to show that evolved and universal differences between men and women do not exist or that rational and economic explanations of gender differences within relationships are not valid. Rather, my aim is to show that above and beyond these explanations,

sociocultural factors have been underestimated and have an important influence on the relationship outcomes of men and women in non-traditional relationships.

I argue that sociocultural factors impacting the lives of non-traditional couples can be traced back to gender stereotypes within our society. By investigating the experiences of non-traditional couples through the lens of gender stereotypes, I aim to reveal several mechanisms that explain the persistence of traditional gender norms and roles within romantic relationships and that thereby constrain couples towards traditional gender role divisions. Gender stereotypes follow from observations of men and women in gender typical social roles, such as men who are the breadwinner of their family and have higher status roles in society and women who are homemaker and have lower status roles (social role theory; Eagly, 1987; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). In turn, gender stereotypes are not only descriptive, resulting in the belief that men are 'agentic' (e.g., ambitious, independent) and women are 'communal' (e.g., warm, concerned about others; Heilman, 2001), but also prescriptive: they dictate what men and women *should* be like and proscriptive in what men and women *should not* be like (Heilman, 2001; Prentice & Carranza, 2002). To illustrate, although weak feminine traits (e.g., being emotional, naïve) are tolerated for women, these traits are proscribed for men (Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Phelan, & Nauts, 2012). Also, although dominant masculine traits (e.g., dominance, arrogance) are tolerated for men, these traits are proscribed for women (Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman et al., 2012).

Men and women who break with these gender stereotypes are likely to receive social and economic penalties (a process called 'backlash'; Rudman et al., 2012; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Heilman & Wallen, 2010; Eagly & Karau, 2002). The status incongruity hypothesis proposes that especially men and women who violate gender role expectations that threaten the gender hierarchy risk prejudice and backlash (Rudman et al., 2012). The gender hierarchy implies that men by virtue of their gender are automatically associated with high status (Ridgeway, 2001), whereas women are automatically associated with low status (Rudman & Killianski, 2000). As people are motivated to believe that they live in a just society, they are also motivated to justify the current gender hierarchy (Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004). SIH implies that men who succeed in feminine occupations -domains that are still seen as lower in status- tend to be viewed as weak and are consequently disrespected and less preferred as boss. This

process is termed the 'weakness penalty' (Heilman & Wallen, 2010; Rudman et al., 2012). Similarly, women who succeed in masculine occupations -domains that are still seen as higher in status- tend to be viewed as interpersonally hostile and, therefore, disliked and less preferred as boss. This penalty has been termed the 'dominance penalty' (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Rudman et al., 2012).

Besides being confronted with negative evaluations of others when violating prescriptive gender stereotypes, people actively seek meaning of the social groups that they belong to and they do this through self-categorization and self-stereotyping (Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999). This also applies to gender, such that men and women themselves care about acting in line with gendered behaviors and traits. Gender norms about what is or isn't appropriate have a strong influence on people and people often try to avoid gender role violations (Amanatullah & Morris, 2011; Wallen et al., 2017; Cherry & Deaux, 1978). Also, in reaction to perceived gender role violations, people adhere even more to prescriptive gender stereotypes (Bosson et al., 2009; Cheryan et al., 2015; Willer, Rogalin, Conlon, & Wojnowicz, 2013). For these reasons, gender stereotypes persist and are quite resistant to change (Haines, Deaux, & Lofaro, 2016).

Overview and contributions of dissertation

In this dissertation and in four empirical chapters, I investigate why heterosexual couples in which the woman has attained higher societal status than her male partner experience negative relationship outcomes. I do this by investigating the influence of persisting gender stereotypes on relationship outcomes of non-traditional couples. First, I show why others judge non-traditional couples less positively than traditional couples by examining how backlash mechanisms operate when the woman has higher status than her male partner. Second, I show how these backlash mechanisms operate within couples by examining how men and women in non-traditional relationships evaluate their partner and how these evaluations relate to their relationship outcomes. Third, I show how women's own implicit gender stereotypes impact how they deal and cope with their non-traditional relationship at a daily basis. Last, I examine how a countries' gender stereotypical culture (i.e., the actual gendered outcomes within a country as well as inhabitants' average implicit gender stereotypes) further

affect relationship outcomes of men and women in non-traditional relationships.

Furthermore, I investigate the main research question -why non-traditional couples experience negative relationship outcomes- by combining social psychological and sociological theories and methods. Social psychological theories and methods stand out in tackling underlying mechanisms that explain social phenomena, in this case the experiences of couples in non-traditional relationships compared to traditional couples. Sociological theories and methods excel in putting the experiences of non-traditional couples into context. Investigating underlying mechanisms in small steps often makes it difficult for social psychologists to take the context into account, whereas investigating the context requires sociologists to make assumptions about the underlying mechanisms. I move beyond these disadvantages of both methods by combining social psychological and sociological theories and methods in the current thesis. Specifically, the status-incongruence hypothesis provides insight in the negative evaluations that men and women potentially face when they break with traditional gender role expectations (Rudman et al., 2012). Adding the context to this, a country's gender stereotypical culture (e.g., level of gender equality) also influences decisions, behaviors and feelings of couples (e.g., Ridgeway & Correll, 2000; Maume, Hewitt, & Ruppanner, 2018; Bertrand, Cortes, Olivetti, & Pan, 2016). Studies with experimental designs provide means to disentangle how negative evaluations operate and influence relationship outcomes of non-traditional couples, whereas cross-national studies with survey designs provide means to test these underlying mechanisms in the broader, national context. Combining these theories and methods provides a more thorough understanding of the underlying mechanisms that explain negative relationship outcomes for non-traditional couples.

By combining sociological and social psychological theories and methods, I am able to investigate how the salience of gender stereotypes on the micro-level (e.g., backlash mechanisms and women's internalized gender stereotypes) as well as on the macro-level (e.g., countries' gender stereotypical culture) have an impact on the negative relationship outcomes for non-traditional couples. This way, I provide a better understanding of how contextual factors related to gender stereotypes affect couples' daily lives. I add to the existing literature that previously examined the negative outcomes for non-traditional couples by disentangling mechanisms on micro- and macro-level that explain these negative

outcomes for couples. Although there is increasing knowledge on how gender stereotypes affect people's lives, much less is known how gender stereotypes have their impact on non-traditional couples. Filling this knowledge gap is not only of scientific relevance, it is also of social relevance as people's romantic relationships play a very central role in their lives. Romantic relationships contribute to a great extent to people's mental and physical health, but also social well-being (Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Proulx, Helms, & Buehler, 2007; Robles, Slatcher, Trombello, & McGinn, 2014; Umberson, Williams, Powers, Liu, & Needham, 2006; Warner & Kelley-Moore, 2012). Furthermore, understanding the impact of gender stereotypes on romantic relationships is also important for next generations, as parent's attitudes and child-rearing practices are major influences on the values and ideals of their children (Zentner & Renaud, 2007). For instance, daughters are more likely to express counter-stereotypical preferences and ambitions when their fathers take a less stereotypical role in their family (by doing at least half of household duties; Croft, Schmader, Block, & Baron, 2014).

What do people think of non-traditional relationships? Women and men in non-traditional relationships face backlash

In Chapter 2, I investigate whether backlash mechanisms explain why people often evaluate non-traditional couples more negatively than traditional couples (MacInnis & Bulliga, 2019; Hettinger, Hutchinson, & Bosson, 2014). I hypothesize that women with higher societal status than their partner are perceived to be the dominant and agentic one *relative to* their partner, whereas men with lower societal status than their partner are perceived to be the weak one *relative to* their partner. As consequences of these dominance and weakness perceptions, I expect that people perceive status-incongruent relationships as less satisfying, find these women less likeable and have less respect for these men.

I conduct two experimental studies in the United States ($N = 233$) and the Netherlands ($N = 269$) in which I manipulate women's status relative to their male partner by presenting participants with a vignette about a fictional couple (Ryan and Anna), as well as information about their occupations. I manipulate three conditions: one in which Anna has a higher status occupation than Ryan, one in which Anna and Ryan have an occupation with equal status, and one in which Anna has a lower status occupation than Ryan. Furthermore, I orthogonally manipulate Ryan's absolute status (medium vs. high) in order to test whether

backlash in the relationship domain is indeed predicted by the relative status of the woman compared to the man, instead of the absolute status of the man.

In both studies, the results reveal firstly that when people think that Anna has an occupation with higher status than Ryan, they perceive Anna to be the dominant one in the relationship and Ryan to be the weak one in the relationship. Also, in this condition, people dislike Anna because of her relative dominance and have less respect for Ryan because of his relative weakness. Moreover, people expect the relationship to be less satisfying when they rate Anna to be the dominant one and Ryan to be the weak one in the non-traditional relationship. Importantly, these effects of the status distribution between Anna and Ryan are found over and above the effects of the absolute societal status of Ryan. It is thus not low absolute status of the man that predicts backlash, rather the fact that the female partner has surpassed the male partner in status predicts social penalties for the couple.

Interestingly, I also find that Anna's relative agency can buffer against backlash for her. People evaluate Anna to be the agentic one in her relationship when she has higher status than Ryan. As a consequence of her relative agency, people also perceive Anna to be more likeable and have more respect for her. This finding is in line with a growing body of literature showing that the role of agency has changed for women due to societal developments that made it more common for women to take up agentic roles in western societies (Croft, Schmader, & Block, 2015; Twenge, 1997; 2009; Diekman & Eagly, 2000; Abele & Wojciszke, 2007). This suggests that people think more positively of women who have higher status roles, but that the positive evaluations associated with women's status are bounded by the level of societal status that their male partner has attained.

In sum, men and women thus risk backlash when they are in a non-traditional relationship in which the woman has the highest status occupation of the two. However, for women, being the agentic one in a non-traditional relationship can have some positive effects on how she is perceived by of others.

Focusing on men and women *in* non-traditional relationships: *Women's* perception that their partner is weaker than they are predicts negative relationship outcomes

The aforementioned backlash mechanisms show how people outside the relationship react when they are confronted with other people's relationship in which the woman has higher societal status than the man. Although these perceptions of others are important to understand why gender stereotypes about heterosexual relationships persist, it remains to be seen to what extent these people will have similar negative perceptions of their *own* partner when they are in a relationship in which the woman has highest societal status.

In Chapter 3, I investigate whether men and women in non-traditional relationships evaluate their partner to be the dominant or weak one. Furthermore, I examine how non-traditional couples' negative evaluations are related to their own relationship outcomes. I conduct a correlational partner study ($N = 188$, 94 dyads) in which I ask both partners how they perceive status dynamics within the relationship (i.e., by asking them to rate their own and their partner's position on a ladder that represents the society in which people on the highest rung have the best education, highest income and most prestige in society; Adler et al., 2001). Furthermore, I investigate whether partners who perceive that the male partner has lower societal status than the female partner also perceive the man to be the weak one in the relationship, the woman to be the dominant one in the relationship and whether this predicts negative relationship outcomes (i.e., lower relationship satisfaction and commitment, and more conflict, and sexual dissatisfaction). Moreover, I investigate to what extent a man and woman in the same relationship have similar perceptions about their relative status division, each partner's relative dominance and weakness, and relationship outcomes.

On the one hand, it is not self-evident that perceptions that outsiders have of non-traditional relationship (as studied in Chapter 2) are shared by the men and women in non-traditional relationships, because partners have a much more detailed and complete mental representation about one another compared to outsiders (Trope & Liberman, 2010). On the other hand, gender norms about what is (not) appropriate can have a strong influence on people and people often try to avoid gender role violations (Amanatullah & Morris, 2011; Wallen, Morris, Devine, & Lu, 2017; Cherry & Deaux, 1978). Also, in reaction to perceived gender role violations, people adhere even more to prescriptive gender stereotypes (Bosson, Vandello, Burnaford, Weaver, & Wasti, 2009; Cheryan, Cameron, Katagiri, & Monin, 2015; Willer, Rogalin, Conlon, & Wojnowicz, 2013). This evidence suggests that non-traditional couples might have similar dominance and

weakness evaluations of each other as those outside the relationship.

If non-traditional couples have similar dominance and weakness evaluations of each other, it can be more difficult for them to avoid the negative consequences of backlash mechanisms completely. Furthermore, these backlash mechanisms in the relationship will provide an explanation why couples who break with traditional gender stereotypes of romantic relationships experience difficulties and report more negative relationship outcomes (Bertrand, Kamenica, & Pan, 2015; Wilcox & Nock, 2006; Zhang, 2015; Pierce, Dahl, & Nielsen, 2013). As these prior studies use one indicator of societal status (i.e., relative income difference), they provide less insight into both partner's subjective perceptions of status and other indicators of status (i.e., education level and prestige in society; Adler et al., 2000). Furthermore, these studies mainly include relationship quality as proxy for relationship outcomes, but in order to predict relationship health and persistence, it is argued that other relational outcomes need to be included as well (e.g., need fulfillment in terms of intimacy and security; Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998). For this reason, I include men and women's subjective perceptions of societal status as well as their experienced relationship commitment, conflict, and sexual dissatisfaction.

The results of the study partially support my predictions. Importantly, I find that men and women strongly agree on the status division within their own relationship. However, among men and women in non-traditional relationships, women -but not men- negatively evaluate their partner and as a consequence, experience more negative relationship outcomes. Specifically, women in non-traditional relationships perceive the man to be the weak one in the relationship resulting in lower relationship satisfaction, lower sexual satisfaction and higher relationship conflict compared to women in more traditional relationships. In non-traditional relationships, men do perceive that they are the weak one in the relationship, but this has no detectable effect on their relationship outcomes. There are no effects for men and women in traditional relationships.

These findings are a first indication that at least some backlash mechanisms operate within non-traditional relationships. Furthermore, it seems that especially women in non-traditional relationships negatively evaluate their partner and experience negative relationship consequences of this evaluation. This chapter thus reveals one mechanism by which prescriptive gender stereotypes about

romantic relationships put pressure on non-traditional relationships: Women in such relationships penalize their partner for being the weaker one and, as a result, are less satisfied with the relationship.

Consequences of 'wearing the pants in the relationship': Traditional women adjust their behavior to fit the gender norm and egalitarian women feel guilty towards their partner

In Chapter 4, I aim to replicate the negative relationship outcomes for women in non-traditional relationships in two studies: a cross-sectional and a daily dairy study. Furthermore, by investigating how women's own implicit gender stereotypes affect their daily relationship and life outcomes, I examine another way how gender stereotypes dissuade women from non-traditional relationships.

Prescriptive gender stereotypes not only have their impact on romantic relationships via backlash mechanisms, they also have their influence on how men and women interact and engage in romantic relationships. According to the gender deviance neutralization idea, men and women who violate gender norms will try to reduce their deviance by showing more traditional behaviors (e.g., doing household tasks; Bittman et al., 2003; Greenstein, 2000; Brines, 1994). Gender norms make women feel that they should do or want to do household tasks as these tasks are perceived to be feminine ('doing gender'; West & Zimmerman, 1987), and thus by engaging in these feminine behaviors, women can reassure themselves and their partners that they are 'good' and 'proper' women, regardless of their professional status. For this reason, we argue that women who perceive to have higher societal status than their partner (intend to) adjust their behavior to fit the gender norm.

Furthermore, I expect that these negative effects of surpassing one's partner in status shall be especially strong among women who have internalized traditional gender stereotypes. Gender stereotypes affect us without us realizing it (Ellemers, 2018; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). People may be reluctant to explicitly claim that men should be breadwinners and women should be caregivers, but at the same time most of us are likely to automatically associate family words more easily with women and career words more easily with men (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). Although these beliefs are implicit, they can have actual affective and behavioral consequences. For instance, couples who implicitly believe that

women need to be protected by men are more likely to prioritize the man's need for intimacy over the work ambitions of the woman (Hammond & Overall, 2015). Also, mothers with strong implicit gender stereotypes evaluate boys and girls playing with gender incongruent toys less positively (Endendijk et al., 2014). For this reason, I expect that especially women who have internalized traditional implicit gender associations experience negative outcomes and (intend to) adjust their behavior to fit the gender norm when they have surpassed their partner in status.

In order to test these hypotheses, I conduct a cross-sectional study ($N = 314$) and a daily diary study ($N = 112$) among working women in the Netherlands. Firstly, in both studies, I replicate the effects that women experience more negative relationship outcomes (e.g., lower daily and general relationship satisfaction, more work-family conflict) when they have surpassed their partner in status. Interestingly, I find in the diary study that among women who have higher status relative to their partner, it are especially the women with more traditional implicit gender associations who on a daily basis think about how they could adjust their behavior to fit the gender norm (e.g., by sacrificing leisure time and reducing working hours in favor of their family). Interestingly, women with more egalitarian associations who have higher status relative to their partner, do not think about adjusting their behavior. This does not mean, however, that these women are protected against the negative effects of surpassing one's partner in status. I find that the more that these women have surpassed their partner in status, the more they report feeling guilty towards their partner on a daily basis.

In sum, I show how women feel and cope when they surpass their partner in societal status. Successful women experience negative outcomes at home when they surpass their partner in status, because these women report more negative relationship outcomes. Furthermore, these women walk a tightrope as women with traditional implicit gender associations try to adjust their behavior, but still report lower relationship quality and wellbeing, whereas women with egalitarian implicit gender associations feel guilty towards their partner. So, although the effects of being in a non-traditional relationship is different for women with traditional and egalitarian gender associations, either way these women experience negative consequences of having higher societal status than their male partner. Furthermore, I show that women's romantic relationships are another reason why it is so difficult to achieve gender equality, because women who have

surpassed their partner in status experienced negative work-related outcomes (e.g., work-family confict), and women with traditional implicit associations even thought about reducing their work hours when they had surpassed their partner in status.

Does national context matter when women surpass their partner in status?

I show how gender stereotypes affect couples in non-traditional relationships on the individual level (i.e., by women's own implicit endorsement of gender stereotypes). However, it remains to be seen to what extent these findings remain valid in different national contexts. The gender stereotypical culture of a country influences relationship dynamics (Bertrand et al., 2016; Ruppanner, 2010; Maume, Hewitt, & Ruppanner, 2018). For example, highly educated women are less likely to be ever married than women with less education in more traditional countries (i.e., countries where people on average agree that men have more right to a job than women when jobs are scarce; Bertrand et al., 2016). On the other hand, married men who do a larger share of household chores are less likely to divorce in countries in which the social policies are more egalitarian (e.g., U.S.) compared to countries that reinforce the male breadwinner model (e.g., Germany; Cooke, 2006).

In Chapter 5, I argue that gender stereotypes on the national level (i.e., the gender stereotypical culture of a country) also affect non-traditional couples. Furthermore, I investigate objective indicators of societal status in Chapter 5, as indicated by women's relative income, education level and working hours in relation to their partner (Duncan, 1961; Blom & Hewitt, 2019). This way, I am able to replicate the findings of previous chapters as a consequence of men and women's *subjective* perceptions of their relative status in the relationship and extent these findings to *objective* indicators of status.

I predict that the culture in gender egalitarian countries makes it easier for couples to maintain an egalitarian or non-traditional relationship compared to the culture in more traditional countries. The culture in a country influences decisions, behaviors and feelings of people directly through its social policies as well as indirectly through the implicit norms that are endorsed (e.g., Ridgeway & Correll, 2000; Payne, Vuletich, & Lundberg, 2017). Also, social role theory

predicts that gender stereotypes follow both from cultural norms as well as the observation of men and women in typical social roles (Eagly, 1987; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). Following these lines of reasoning, I conceptualize the salience of the gender stereotypical culture by including two indicators: 1) an associative, normative indicator of culture (i.e., average country-level implicit gender stereotypes) and 2) an indicator of institutionalized outcomes of gender inequality (i.e., women's representation in non-stereotypical roles).

With regard to the associative indicator, I use data between 2014 and 2018 of the Gender-Career Implicit Association Task made available by Project Implicit (https://implicit.harvard.edu; Nosek et al., 2010; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). Similar to my measure of women's own implicit associations in Chapter 4, the Gender-Career IAT measures respondents' association strength of the groups *men* and *women* with the concepts *career* and *family*. With regard to the indicator of institutionalized outcomes, I use United Nation's Gender Empowerment Measurement (GEM) index, which is based on four measures: (1) women's share of legislators in the national parliament, (2) the percentage of female managers, legislators and senior officials, (3) amount of female employees in professions and (4) the female-to-male wage ratio among full-time employees (United Nations, 2013).

In this chapter, I test two pre-registered hypotheses with the second wave of the European Sustainable Workforce Survey (ESWS; Van der Lippe, Lippényi, Lössbroek, Van Breeschoten, Van Gerwen, & Martens, 2016). The ESWS is a multiactor organizational survey and is conducted in nine different countries; Bulgaria, Finland, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. I include all participants who are in a heterosexual relationship ($N = 2748$). First, I aim to replicate previous findings and hypothesize that the higher women's status relative to their male partner (i.e., the higher women's relative income, educational degree and working hours relative to their male partner), the more negative relationship- and life outcomes (i.e., relationship quality, work-life satisfaction, time pressure and negative emotions) men and women will report. My results suggest that especially women's income and -to a lesser extent- educational degree relative to their male partner negatively predict relationship outcomes. Specifically, when men and women are in a relationship in which the woman earns more than the man, they reported lower relationship quality and experienced more negative emotions. Moreover, when

men and women are in a relationship in which the woman has attained a higher educational degree than the man, both men and women experience more time pressure.

Second, I hypothesize that men and women in a relationship in which the woman has higher status relative to her male partner will experience more negative outcomes when they live in a country with traditional gender attitudes rather than in more egalitarian countries (as indicated by combining the countries' average IAT score and their GEM index). Here, I find that men and women living in countries with a traditional gender stereotypical culture report lower relationship quality when they are in a relationship in which the woman earned more than her partner. This is not the case for participants living in countries with an egalitarian gender stereotypical culture. Furthermore, I find that couples in relationships in which the woman is more highly educated than the man report higher relationship quality in egalitarian countries, but not in traditional countries. I do not find these negative outcomes on time pressure, work-life satisfaction and experienced negative emotions.

In sum, my results counter evolutionary explanations that men and women have fixed and evolved preferences for traditional gender role divisions. Specifically, my results suggest that a countries' gender stereotypical culture has their influence on men and women in relationships in which the woman earns more than her partner and -to a lesser extent- on men and women in relationships in which the woman is more highly educated than her partner. Importantly, I find this using a combination of two different indicators of gender inequality; the average implicit gender stereotypes of countries' inhabitants as well as a country's gender empowerment (i.e., representation of women in senior positions). As some of these effects were driven by one influential country, my results should be further examined in future research that includes more countries. This work provides first evidence that the national context determines the degree to which individuals are stimulated to establish traditional relationships in which men are the one with the highest status of both partners.

Conclusions of this dissertation

With this dissertation, I provide a better understanding why men and women in non-traditional relationships experience negative relationship outcomes (Syrda,

2019; Blom & Hewitt, 2019; Bertrand, Kamenica, & Pan, 2015; Wilcox & Nock, 2006; Zhang, 2015; Goldstein & Harknett, 2006; Kalmijn, 2003, Müller, 2003; Gong, 2007; Meisenbach, 2009; Pierce, Dahl, & Nielsen, 2013). I reveal important underlying mechanisms that explain these negative effects by investigating non-traditional relationships through the lens of persisting gender stereotypes in society.

First, I show how backlash mechanisms operate when people evaluate non-traditional relationships. People negatively evaluate relationships of others and have negative evaluations of the partners and negative expectations about the relationship quality of men and women who break with the traditional gender hierarchy. Non-traditional couples thus face social disapproval and are likely to experience lack of understanding or social support for their life choices. This is a strain in itself and deprives couples from important resources that can help them cope with the stresses of a dual-career couple. Furthermore, when it comes to people's own relationship, especially women in non-traditional relationships negatively evaluate their partner and experience negative relationship consequences of this evaluation. Although men penalize other non-traditional couples, it seems that they do not negatively evaluate their own partner when they perceive to have lower societal status than their partner. So not only do non-traditional couples have to deal with the disapproval of others, they in part also explain why non-traditional couples themselves experience more negative relationship outcomes too.

Second, I reveal how gender stereotypes shape the dynamics of women in non-traditional relationships by examining how women cope when they perceive to have surpassed their partner in status. I show that women with traditional implicit gender associations try to adjust their behavior, but still report lower relationship quality and wellbeing. Women with egalitarian implicit gender associations do not try to adjust their behavior, but also report -above lower relationship quality and well-being- more guilt towards their partner. This implies that individual characteristics of women determine how they deal with the non-traditionality of their relationship. However, it seems that women in non-traditional relationships walk a tightrope for breaking with traditional gender norms, because it does not matter what these women do (or not do), either way they are worse off compared to women who have not surpassed their partner in status. Furthermore, this also implies that women's romantic relationships are another reason

why it is so difficult to achieve gender equality.

Third, I reveal how the gender stereotypical context shapes the experiences of men and women in non-traditional relationships. Specifically, I have investigated how individual-level and national-level characteristics in the context that non-traditional operate in affect their relationship outcomes. With regard to the individual level, I show that women's own implicit gender stereotypes shape their intentions to adjust their behavior and their feelings of guilt towards their partner. With regard to the national level, I show that non-traditional relationships suffer more in countries with a traditional gender stereotypical culture compared to countries with an egalitarian culture. This adds another layer of understanding which is important because my findings imply that the negative relationship outcomes experienced by non-traditional couples are influenced by sociocultural factors rather than fixed or evolved individual characteristics. In order to reduce or prevent negative relationship outcomes for non-traditional couples, systematic and structural change is needed rather than (well-intended) interventions or help for couples individually.

Contributions of this dissertation

In this dissertation, I have combined theories and measures from social psychology and sociology in all chapters and have used both sociological and psychological research designs across the chapters. Overall, this interdisciplinary approach has revealed three underlying mechanisms on different levels (i.e., interpersonal as well as national level) that explain negative relationship outcomes for non-traditional couples that I would not have found with a monodisciplinary approach. To illustrate, the gender deviance neutralization idea states that women who earn more than their partner try to neutralize their deviance from the gender norm by engaging in more feminine behaviors (e.g., household chores) and has previously been investigated with sociological measures only (Bittman, et al., 2003; Greenstein, 2000; Brines, 1994). By investigating this idea in a daily diary setting, I am able to show how gender deviance neutralization operates at a daily level and interacts with women's personal implicit gender stereotypes. This combination has revealed why both women with traditional and egalitarian implicit associations are worse off when they have surpassed their partner in status compared to women who have not. Furthermore, my finding that the gender stereotypical culture of a country influences relationship

outcomes of non-traditional couples extends our understanding of how the status-incongruence hypothesis operates within the relationship domain (Rudman et al., 2012). In societies in which the culture is more gender egalitarian, couples in which the woman has surpassed their partner in status might be perceived as less status-incongruent compared to societies in which the culture is more gender traditional. The consequences of status-incongruency (e.g., societal acceptance of non-traditional couples) are thus also dependent on the stereotypical context in which couples operate. Furthermore, I find that there is a strong association between the average implicit gender stereotypes per country and actual outcomes of gender equality per country (i.e., the representation of women in senior professions), which confirms theories of implicit gender associations stating that people's implicit associations are based on what roles men and women have in their society (Payne, Vuletich, & Lundberg, 2017). The representation and cultural acceptance of non-traditional couples thus provide a way to reduce traditional implicit gender stereotypes. In order to break the vicious cycle of traditional implicit gender stereotypes and actual outcomes for non-traditional couples it is thus important to have more men and women in non-traditional roles on national level.

Not only has my interdisciplinary approach informed both sociological and social psychological theories, it has also allowed me to investigate my research questions from different angles. Specifically, sociological theories have revealed how the presence of gender stereotypes in national contexts shape the experiences of men and women in non-traditional relationships, whereas social psychological theories have revealed how gender stereotypes of non-traditional relationships operate (i.e., by backlash mechanisms and through implicit gender associations). With regard to research methods, a strength of large cross-national surveys (e.g., European Sustainable Workforce Survey in Chapter 5) is that these methods have allowed me to investigate a very large sample of men and women in different national contexts. However, a weakness of these surveys is that they have provided less insight in the specific processes that played a role within relationships. Here, the strength of experiments and diary studies is that I have been able to understand why people evaluate couples in a non-traditional relationship less favorably, as well as how men and women deal with their non-traditional relationship themselves. The weaknesses of these methods are that my sample sizes are much smaller, and the convenience sampling has prevented me to reach specific subsets of the population (e.g., lower educated

couples). However, combining the outcomes of these experiments and diary study with the cross-national survey has provided more confidence in the generalizability of the effects.

By complementing sociological and social psychological theories and methods, I have gained a more thorough understanding of the difficulties that couples in non-traditional relationships face on multiple levels (e.g., national level, but also interpersonal level). For this reason, I encourage other researchers to conduct interdisciplinary research as well.

Implications of this dissertation

Men and women who try to break gender stereotypes face a vicious cycle of negative evaluations and dynamics. As I find that relationship outcomes of men and women in non-traditional relationships are dependent on the context that they are in, theories that suggest that women have evolved and universal preferences for breadwinning male partners, whereas men have evolved and universal preferences for nurturing female partners fail to cover the complex reality that non-traditional couples face. In order to deal with the difficulties that non-traditional couples experience, it seems more effective to understand and tackle gender stereotypes rather than helping men and women in non-traditional relationships individually. Specifically, my findings suggest that the negative outcomes for men and women in non-traditional relationships can be prevented by tackling both women's own implicit gender stereotypes as well as the gender stereotypes that are salient in the environment of the couple. As gender stereotypes follow both from cultural norms and the observation of men and women in typical social roles (Eagly, 1987; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000), I suggest that the best way to break the vicious cycle is by increasing the representation as well as the cultural acceptance of non-traditional couples in societies. Here, governmental agents as well as policy makers in organization can play a crucial role as they can implement social policies that help non-traditional couples to thrive. For example, governmental agent could implement policies that move away from the male breadwinner model (Cooke, 2006). Furthermore, HR professionals and managers in organizations can facilitate non-traditional couples by acknowledging and facilitating the needs of employees with regard to their careers as well as their relationships (Petriglieri, 2018). They can do this for instance by considering the careers of employees' partners during performance

reviews and by stepping away from the expectation that a good employee is someone who prioritizes their work 24/7. If an employer is aware of the career of an employee's partner, they might also better understand if this employee is not working overtime or uses flexibility arrangements without assuming that this employee is less committed to the job (for a review how to do this, see Petriglieri, 2018).

If it becomes easier to maintain a non-traditional relationship, these relationships might also become more common and thereby more accepted. To illustrate, it has become more accepted over time for women to possess agentic traits and engage in agentic roles, because women have entered male-dominated roles in large numbers (Diekman & Eagly, 2000; Twenge, 2009; Croft, Schmader, & Block, 2015). Similar patterns can be expected for the representation of couples who break with the traditional gender hierarchy within their relationship. Last, representation and cultural acceptance of non-traditional couples also provide a way to form weaker implicit associations of men with work and women with family, as people's implicit associations follow from their experiences in their own context (Payne, Vuletich, & Lundberg, 2017).

Another reason why it is important to break the negative vicious cycle that non-traditional couples face is that moving away from traditional gender roles can benefit the quality of relationships. My findings suggest that women's *personal* status is associated with several positive relationship outcomes (e.g., higher relationship satisfaction and less relationship conflict). This is in line with other work showing that couples who adhere to stereotypical gender roles have been found to be less happy with their relationship than couples who did not adhere to stereotypical gender roles (Helms et al., 2006). Also, both men and women perceive spouses who possess both agentic and communal traits as most desirable (Marshall, 2010). Moreover, women who feel that their husband is not doing enough household tasks are less satisfied and more likely to divorce compared to women who share household tasks with their partner (Frisco & Williams, 2003). Furthermore, empowering women to gain personal status is also important to achieve gender equality. As I find that women who have surpassed their partner in status experience negative work-related outcomes (e.g., work-family conflict), and women with traditional implicit associations even think about reducing their work hours when they have surpassed their partner in status, women's romantic relationships are another reason why it is so difficult to

achieve gender equality.

It is worth to consider the implications of the negative relationship outcomes for non-traditional couples, without undermining the severity of these outcomes for couples themselves. Although I find that non-traditional couples experience less satisfaction with their relationship, more time pressure and negative emotions, I do not find that these couples have more conflict or are less committed to their relationship than traditional couples. Couples with higher socioeconomic status report to be happier with their marriages and are less likely to divorce compared to couples with lower socioeconomic status (Wilcox & Marquardt, 2010). One way to become a couple with higher socioeconomic status is that the woman also has a successful career (Bartley, Blanton, & Gilliard, 2005; Belle, 1990). Also, an important predictor of whether a relationship persists is the support that both partners provide each other (Petriglieri, 2019; Rusbult, Martz, Agnew, 1998). Partners are better able to support one another when their relationship is equal as well as when they feel that they can both be communal (e.g., providing warmth and being understanding) regardless of their gender (Rosenbluth, Steil, & Whicomb, 1998; Reis & Gable, 2003). So although women penalize their male partner when he has lower societal status than themselves, traditional men in higher status roles do not provide an ideal alternative as these men are less likely to fulfill their partner's needs for support (Miller, Caughlin, & Huston, 2003).

In order to deal with the negative relationship outcomes of men and women in non-traditional relationship it is important to tackle gender stereotypes in the context that couples operate in rather than advising partners how they could individually cope with their non-traditional relationship.

Limitations

As I have mainly focused on women's experiences when they surpass their partner in status, a question that requires more attention is the extent to which men experience similar outcomes as compared to women. There is a grow-ing body of research showing that gendered norms for men are stricter than for women (Vandello et al., 2008; Croft, Schmader, & Block, 2015; Rudman & Mescher, 2013), because lower status groups (i.e., women) aspire to move to-wards higher status groups (i.e., men), whereas higher status groups devalue

lower status groups and are not willing to move towards these groups (Schmader, Major, Eccleston, & McCoy, 2001). People may thus understand why women are gaining higher status but find it difficult to understand why men accept to have relatively less status in their relationships. Furthermore, individuals have a motivational bias to see their relationship in a positive light (Murray, 1999; McNulty, Baker, Olson, 2014; Olson, Fazio & Hermann, 2007).

Another limitation of this work is that I have mainly used self-report measures of outcomes in this dissertation. It can be that especially men might have felt social desirability when filling out my questionnaire and have been less likely to explicitly report negative relationship outcomes than women (Vandello et al., 2008; Croft, Schmader, & Block, 2015; Rudman & Mescher, 2013; Amanatullah & Morris, 2010; Cherry & Deaux, 1978). Furthermore, as I have followed couples no longer than eight days, it is difficult to estimate the long-term consequences of my findings in relation to couples' long-term relationship experiences, but also in relation to the experiences of couples' children and the impact on society in general. More research is needed to delineate the long-term consequences of the findings of this dissertation. The salience of gender stereotypes in couples' lives may vary in different life phases. For instance, people's implicit gender stereotypes and behavior become more traditional when they transition into parenthood (Endedijk, Derks, & Mesman, 2018). This has implications for the experiences of couples' children, as parent's attitudes and child-rearing practices are a major influence on the values and ideals of their children (Zentner & Renaud, 2007; Croft, Schmader, Block, & Baron, 2014). Couples' experiences may influence next generations, thereby also having their impact on society in general.

Suggestions for future research

The outcomes of this dissertation also raise new questions that remain unanswered. As I mainly used self-report and short-term measures, future research can focus on the influence of other measures, (e.g., implicit partner evaluations and more objective relationship outcomes such as divorce rates). This way, research can examine to what extent breaking with traditional gender role expectations of romantic relationships affect men and women on a more unconscious level. In order to prevent potential social desirability among male respondents, research can examine whether implicit views of relative dominance, weakness, and agency differ from the explicit views as we measured in Chapter 2. This

can be done with an implicit association task that combines *me* and *my partner* words with *dominance* and *weakness* words (McNulty et al., 2013; Heilman & Wallen, 2010). Furthermore, this research can also examine to what extent men and women's implicit partner evaluations (i.e., having a positive versus negative implicit attitude toward one's partner; McNulty et al., 2013) are affected by the fact that women surpass their male partner in societal status and to what extent there are differences with explicit relationship outcomes (e.g., relationship satisfaction; sexual satisfaction etc.). Also, longitudinal research designs allow researchers to delineate the experiences of non-traditional couples in the long run. This research can also investigate how life events influence the saliences of gender stereotypes in couples' lives as well as their experiences and beliefs.

Furthermore, in this dissertation, I have focused on men and women in heterosexual relationships who break with traditional gender stereotypes. This raises the question to what extent the findings can be translated towards homosexual relationships. As these relationships do not have clear gender role prescriptions, it can be that men and women in homosexual relationships are less susceptible for gender stereotypes within our society. On the other hand, there are also some indications that homosexual men and women do not differ that much from heterosexual men and women in their extent to which they value status in their partners (Ha, Van den Berg, Engels, Lichtwarck-Aschoff, 2012; Lippa, 2007). Furthermore, homosexual men and women are also susceptible to the influences of gender stereotypes in how others view them (i.e., gay men and lesbians are stereotyped as 'feminine' and 'masculine' by virtue of their respective orientations towards male and female partners; Kite & Deaux, 1987; Hegarty & Pratto, 2001). By including homosexual men and women in future research on the influence of gender stereotypes for couples who break with traditional gender stereotypes, the understanding of when and how gender stereotypes negatively affect couples' relationship outcomes will improve and provide means what to do against it. Specifically, it will be interesting to investigate whether women who have surpassed their female partner in status have fewer negative evaluations of their partner compared to women who have surpassed a male partner. Furthermore, if this is the case, it can also be that women in homosexual relationships experience less guilt and work-family conflict as a consequence of having the higher status role within the relationship.

Conclusion

In this dissertation I show that achieving gender equality in the work domain is not only influenced by relations between men and women at work, but also by romantic relationships at home. I show three mechanisms by which prescriptive stereotypes within the relationship domain constrain men and women into traditional gender roles. Backlash mechanisms affect how other perceive couples in which the woman attains higher societal status than her male partner, but also how women and men perceive their own relationship. This reveals that non-traditional couples face social disapproval and are likely to experience lack of understanding or social support for their life choices. Furthermore, gender stereotypes explain how women who have surpassed their partner in status feel and cope with their non-traditional relationship. This explains why women in non-traditional relationships walk a tightrope for breaking with traditional gender norms, because it does not matter what these women do (or not do), either way they are worse off compared to women who have not surpassed their partner in status. Lastly, the extent to which gender stereotypes are endorsed within a country also influence relationship outcomes. This clarifies that the negative relationship outcomes experienced by non-traditional couples are influenced by sociocultural factors rather than fixed or evolved individual characteristics. In order to understand the negative outcomes that couples in non-traditional relationships experience, it is thus crucial to understand the intricate gender stereotypical system that dissuade men and women from non-traditional relationships. This way, status dynamics within romantic relationships are a domain that cannot be overlooked when aiming for gender equality.

Chapter 2

When women wear the pants in the relationship

Dominance and weakness penalties for heterosexual couples who challenge the gender hierarchy

Abstract

There is growing evidence that non-traditional relationships in which the woman has higher societal status than her partner experience negative relationship outcome, but the underlying mechanisms remain unclear. In this paper, we reveal how people evaluate heterosexual couples in which the woman has higher societal status than her partner (non-traditional relationships). We argue that these couples who challenge the gender hierarchy face backlash. Specifically, we expect that women with higher societal status than their partner are perceived to be the dominant and agentic one in their relationship, whereas men with relatively lower societal status are perceived to be the weak one. As consequences of these relative dominance and weakness perceptions, we expect that people perceive non-traditional relationships as less satisfying, find these women less likeable and have less respect for these men. Two studies conducted in the United States and the Netherlands support our hypotheses. Interestingly, we also found that women's relative agency can buffer against backlash for women as participants found women more likeable and had more respect for them because of their relative agency. Overall, this research shows that people's evaluations of non-traditional relationships may be another mechanism that protects the gender hierarchy.

Introduction

In Western countries, as more women attain higher educational degrees and participate in the labour market, the number of traditional relationships with a breadwinning man and a caregiving woman are on the decline (Pew Research Center, 2013; Portegijs & Van den Brakel, 2018). At the same time, there is growing evidence that couples who break with traditional gender role expectations experience more negative relationship outcomes (Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted; Bertrand, Kamenica, & Pan, 2015; Wilcox & Nock, 2006; Zhang, 2015). In the current study, we investigate how this status difference within romantic relationships can have unexpected consequences by investigating how people outside the relationship evaluate heterosexual couples who break with the traditional gender norms. Specifically, we examine whether people outside the relationship evaluate a woman who has acquired higher societal status than her male partner as the dominant one in the relationship and, as a result, like her less (the 'dominance' penalty; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Phelan, & Nauts, 2012). In addition, we examine whether people evaluate a man who has acquired lower societal status than his female partner to be the weak one in the relationship and, as a result, respect him less (the 'weakness' penalty; Heilman & Wallen, 2010, Rudman et al., 2012). We add to existing research on such penalties by showing that for women being the dominant one and for men being the weak one in the relationship not only elicit individual penalties, but also result in a penalty for the estimated relationship quality.

How do prescriptive gender stereotypes result in backlash?

Despite changing gender dynamics in society, gender stereotypes persist and are quite resistant to change (Haines, Deaux, & Lofaro, 2016). According to the social role theory (Eagly, 1987; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000), people expect a correspondence between the actions men and women engage in (i.e., the role they have) and their inner disposition (i.e., what they are like). Gender stereotypes follow from observations of men and women in gender typical social roles, such as men who are the breadwinner of their family and have higher status roles in society and women who are homemaker and have lower status roles (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). In turn, prescriptive stereotypes not only dictate that women should be caring and men should be ambitious, but also that

women should not be dominant and men should not be weak (Heilman, 2001; Prentice & Carranza, 2002). People who violate these prescriptive stereotypes have been shown to receive social penalties, such that women are disliked and men are disrespected (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Heilman & Wallen, 2010; Rudman et al., 2012). These social and economic penalties are also termed 'backlash' and have up until now mainly been shown in the work domain and for men and women individually (Rudman, 1998; Rudman et al., 2012).

Dominance and weakness penalties

Though both men and women risk backlash for violating gender norm pre-scriptions, some violations are judged to be more severe than others (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Prentice & Carranza, 2002). For instance, women who are compe-tent and strong receive favorable responses as long as they also show modesty and caring qualities (Rudman & Glick, 1999). The role congruity theory (RCT; Eagly & Karau, 2002) explains two processes by which incongruity perceptions between gender roles and other roles can result in prejudice. First, men and women are evaluated less favorably compared to the other gender when the role they aspire to is atypical for their gender (e.g., women's leadership poten-tial is evaluated less favorably than men's leadership potential; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Second, women's and men's actual behavior in a counter-stereotypical role is perceived as non-desirable (e.g., women's actual leadership behavior is evaluated less favorably than men's actual behavior as this behavior is not de-sired for women; Eagly & Karau, 2002).

The status incongruity hypothesis (SIH; Rudman et al., 2012) adds to the RCT that stereotype incongruent behavior results in backlash when the behavior is perceived to be threatening to the current gender hierarchy. The gender hierar-chy implies that women by virtue of their gender are automatically associated with low status (Rudman & Kilianski, 2000), whereas men are associated with high status (Ridgeway, 2001). People are motivated to justify the current gender hierarchy as they are motivated to believe that they live in a just society (Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004). SIH implies that stereotypical behaviors prescribed to men are behaviors that increase or protect their status (e.g., being career-ori-ented, being dominant), whereas stereotypical behaviors proscribed to men are behaviors that would reduce their status (e.g., being emotional, or weak; Rud-man et al., 2012). Similarly, stereotypical behaviors prescribed for women are

behaviors that are associated with low or neutral status (e.g., being warm, caring, modest), whereas stereotypical behaviors proscribed to women are behaviors that increase their status (e.g., being assertive or overly confident; Rudman et al., 2012).

Though the process of backlash is similar for men and women, the penalties they face when violating the gender hierarchy are different. More specifically, men who violate gender norm prescriptions (e.g., by succeeding in a traditionally feminine occupation or showing behaviors associated with low status) are perceived to be ineffectual (being a 'loser') and are therefore less respected than women who show similar behaviors (i.e., the *weakness penalty*; Heilman & Wallen, 2010; Rudman et al., 2012). Women who violate gender norm prescriptions (by succeeding in a traditional masculine occupation or showing behaviors that might increase their status) are perceived to be interpersonally hostile and are therefore less liked (i.e., the *dominance penalty*; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Rudman et al., 2012).

Do the mechanisms of status violations spill-over to partner dynamics?

Studies on backlash effects have mainly focused on behaviors and outcomes within the work domain. Moreover, in previous work, people evaluated individual women and men who violate gender norm prescriptions. However, when evaluating women and men who violate gender norm prescriptions of heterosexual relationships, we argue that the focus of people's evaluations shifts from the individual to the dyadic level. In the current study, we test the SIH on the dyadic level and examine whether couples in non-traditional relationships (i.e., the woman has higher societal status than her male partner) will also experience backlash (i.e., weakness and dominance penalty). When couples break the implicit societal rule that a man should be the breadwinner and a woman should be the main caregiver of the family, we expect them, as a couple, to experience backlash.

There is some evidence that couples in non-traditional relationships face negative evaluations. Cross-class couples in which women earn more, are more highly educated or have a higher status occupation than the man were viewed negatively by others (MacInnis & Baliga, 2019). Compared to people in traditional relationships, in couples where the man has a lower status occupation

than his female partner, people predict the male partner to be less satisfied with the relationship and report less sympathy with the female partner (Hettinger, Hutchinson, & Bosson, 2014)and can face negative outcomes in the workplace. Here we examine whether these negative perceptions extend to observers' evaluations of status violators' intimate relationships. We employed a fictional scenario depicting a heterosexual married couple, manipulating the professional status of each character while holding all other information constant. Participants (N = 396. Also, stay-at-home fathers are less respected than fathers who worked outside the home (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005). Finally, husbands without an income who did the majority of domestic chores are perceived to be weaker, less agentic and less dominant than stay-at-home husbands who work successfully from home or carry out only part of the total domestic chores (Chaney, Rudman, Fetterolf, & Young, 2017). These studies show the negative evaluations that people have when judging non-traditional couples, but it remains to be investigated how these negative evaluations are formed.

We argue that dominance and weakness penalties reveal a mechanism that predicts negative evaluations of non-traditional couples. By examining backlash at the level of the relationship rather than focusing on backlash for individual men and women, we build upon and extend earlier work on negative evaluations of non-traditional couples. Previous work has shown how divisions of work and care that threaten the gender hierarchy impact the way people perceive individual men and women. We test how such violations of gender roles affect 1) how people perceive relative dominance and weakness trait divisions at the dyadic level ('who wears the pants' in the relationship), and 2) how people evaluate men and women individually (i.e., likeability of women and respect for men) and their relationship (i.e., perceived relationship satisfaction) as a consequence of these dominance and weakness trait divisions (see Figure 1). We thus propose that the dominance and weakness penalty at the level of the relationship explains why people negatively evaluate non-traditional couples.

Hypotheses

We predict that heterosexual couples in a non-traditional relationship are at risk to face backlash, because these couples violate prescriptive stereotypes and threaten the gender hierarchy (see Figure 1). Overall, when the relationship is non-traditional, we expect that people will perceive the woman to be the agen-

tic and dominant one relative to her partner (*H1*) and the man to be the weak one relative to his partner (*H2*). In addition, we predict that when the woman is perceived to be the dominant one and the man to be the weak one in the relationship, people will perceive this relationship as less satisfying (*H3*). On an individual level and in line with the dominance penalty, we expect that when the woman is perceived to be the dominant one in the non-traditional relationship people will see her as less likeable (*H4*). In line with the weakness penalty, we expect that when the man is perceived to be the weak one in the non-traditional relationship people will have less respect for him (*H5*; see Figure 1). Prior research suggests that although women who violate gender norms are perceived to be more agentic, it is especially the dominance perceptions that result in backlash (Rudman et al., 2012). Therefore, we predict that when people indeed evaluate the woman to be the agentic one in the relationship, this does not affect their further judgment of this woman and her relationship. Also, we have no specific expectations about the perceptions of who is the communal one in the relationship, as communality is not associated with status (Rudman et al., 2012).
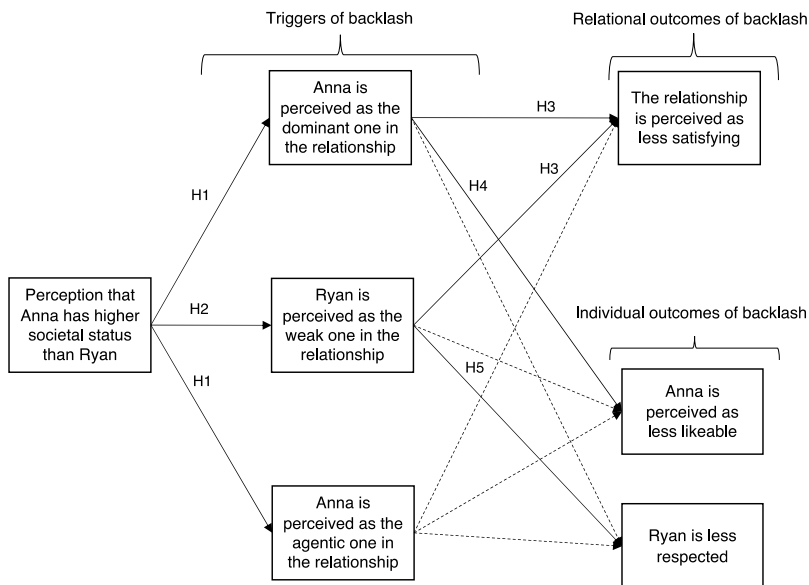
Figure 1. Theoretical model of backlash effects in non-traditional relationships.

Overview of the studies

We conducted two experiments to test our hypotheses. Participants read a scenario about a fictitious couple (Ryan and Anna) in which we manipulated their occupation as a proxy for their status. We conducted Study 1 ($N = 233$) in the United States and Study 2 ($N = 269$) in the Netherlands. Although both are Western countries, there are also some differences between the two. In the Netherlands 58.7% of women work part-time compared to 18.9% of men, whereas in the United States only 17.1% of women work part-time compared to 8.2% of men (OECD, 2018). In dual-earning couples, almost 12% of Dutch women had a higher income than their partner (Portegijs & Van den Brakel, 2018) compared to 40% of American women (Pew Research Center, 2013). By conducting studies in two Western countries that differ to quite some extent from each other, we could maximize variance between two cases in order to increase the scope of this research (Swanborn, 2010). We expect that backlash for Ryan and Anna will be similar in both countries, because backlash effects are shown to be quite persistent in many situations (Rudman & Fairchild, 2004).

Study 1

Method

Participants and design

We aimed to recruit 300 participants (based on a calculation in G*Power; Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007). Participants ($N = 266$) were individuals living in the United States who were recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). We included those participants who consented to participate and who passed our attention check ($N = 233$ of which 139 men and 84 women). Participants ($M_{age} = 35.19$, $SD_{age} = 9.21$) reported to be of white (51.57%) or Asian/Pacific Islander (42.15%) ethnic origin. Most participants were married or in a domestic partnership (61.88%) or single and never married (31.83%). Further, most participants had a bachelor's degree (41.26%) or were high school graduates (or equivalent; 21.08%). Most were employed for wage (72.65%) or self-employed (20.63%).

We conducted an online experiment with a 2 (within participants Partner Gender: male [Ryan]/female [Anna]) X 2 (between participants Absolute Status Ryan: Low/Medium) X 3 (between participants Relative Status Anna: Lower/ Equal/Higher than Ryan) mixed design. Besides manipulating Anna's status relative to Ryan, we also manipulated Ryan's absolute status in order to test whether backlash in the relationship domain is indeed predicted by the relative status of the woman compared to the man instead of the absolute status of the man.

Participants were randomly presented with one of the six conditions: a man with a low status occupation and a female partner with a lower (1), equal (2) or higher (3) status occupation than himself, and a man with a medium status occupation and a female partner with a lower (4), equal (5) or higher (6) status occupation than himself.

Procedure

After providing informed consent, we explained that we were interested in how the careers of dual-earning couples affected their relationships and that we rewarded $2.50 when they completed the study and passed the attention check. We emphasized that participation was voluntary and anonymous. After filling out demographic background information, participants were randomly assigned to one of the six conditions where they were asked to read the vignettes that included our two experimental manipulations. After completing questions related to our independent and dependent variables, we fully debriefed participants of our real research goals. Lastly, they were given an anonymous random code which they could enter in MTurk in order to receive their reward.

Manipulation

The manipulation consisted of a description of Ryan and Anna. We shortly explained that Anna and Ryan (both 31 years old) met each other through mutual friends and had been in a relationship for five years. Then, we provided information about both Ryan's and Anna's occupation. Status can be derived from one's educational degree, income and prestige of the job (Adler, Epel, Castellazzo, & Ickovics, 2000). As occupation signals all three of these status indicators, we chose to manipulate occupation as a proxy for status. Using Glick,

Wilk, and Perreault's occupations (1995), we conducted a pilot study to find occupations that differed in prestige but were comparable in perceived gender ratio of the job holders (see Appendix A).

Materials

Items were all measured on a 7-point scale with options ranging from 1 (*completely disagree*) to 7 (*completely agree*), unless otherwise mentioned. Measures are presented in the order they were completed by participants.

Manipulation check of perceived societal status. Perceived status of Ryan and Anna was measured with a subjective socioeconomic status ladder with 10 different rungs (Adler et al., 2000). It was described that people at the top of the ladder are best off in terms of income, education and respected jobs, whereas people at the bottom are worst off. Participants were asked to indicate the rung they thought best represented Ryan and Anna's individual situation.

Agency and communality. We used ten items from Bem's Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1981) to assess how participants rated Ryan's and Anna's level of agency (5 items; Ryan/Anna is independent, defends his/her own beliefs, is willing to take risks, has a strong personality, is ambitious", $\alpha_{Ryan} = .78$; $\alpha_{Anna} = .84$) and communality (5 items e.g., "Ryan/Anna is caring, tolerant, sensitive to the need of others, an understanding person, friendly", $\alpha_{Ryan} = .85$; $\alpha_{Anna} = .88$). We explained that participants might find it difficult to judge Ryan and Anna on all the statements, but we emphasized that there were no right or wrong answers and encouraged them to give their best guess without overthinking it too long.

Dominance and weakness. Based on Heilman and Wallen (2010), we asked participants whether they felt that Ryan/Anna was abrasive, manipulative, selfish, and cold (dominance traits, $\alpha_{Ryan} = .82$; $\alpha_{Anna} = .79$), and was wishy-washy, wimpy, insecure, spineless, and weak (weakness traits, $\alpha_{Ryan} = .84$; $\alpha_{Anna} = .89$).

Relationship satisfaction. Perceived satisfaction of Anna and Ryan's relationship was measured using five items of Rusbult, Martz, and Agnew's (1998) measure of relationship satisfaction level. Examples of items were "Ryan and Anna feel satisfied with their relationship," and "Ryan and Anna's relationship is close to ideal," ($\alpha = .90$).

Likeability. Based on Heilman and Wallen (2010), we assessed likeability with two questions; "How much do you think you would like Ryan/Anna?" and "How would you describe Anna/Ryan", 1 (*not at all likeable*) to 7 (*very much likeable*, r_{Anna} = .48, p < .001; r_{Ryan} = .59, p < .001).

Respect. Based on Heilman and Wallen (2010), we included two items to measure perceived respect for Ryan and Anna; "How much do you think Ryan/Anna is someone who commands respect from others?" and "How would you describe Ryan/Anna?", with reserve-coded answers ranging from 1 (*respectable*) to 7 (*unrespectable*, r_{Anna} = .33, p < .001; r_{Ryan} = .55, p < .001).

Results

Preliminary analyses

Correlations between background, independent and dependent variables showed that men and women did not differ in their responses to our dependent variables (see Table 1). However, participants' education level, ethnicity (Asian vs. white ethnic origin), marital status (married vs. single) and employment status (wages vs. self-employed) were associated with several dependent variables. For instance, participants' education level was associated with higher ratings of relationship quality. Moreover, Asian participants compared to white participants attributed higher ratings of weakness and dominance to both Ryan and Anna. We controlled for education level, ethnicity, marital status and employment status in all analyses. Moreover, we controlled for the average societal status of the couple (except in the analyses of the manipulation checks) to be sure that differences in the evaluations of Anna and Ryan and perceived relationship satisfaction were not due to the fact that as a couple Ryan and Anna had higher average status in some conditions than in others.

Table 1

Correlation analyses of relevant background variables, predictor variables (dummy-coded) and outcome variables of Study 1

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
1. Sex: Women/Men	-																									
2. Age	.06	-																								
3. Education	.12*	.41**	-																							
4. Ethnicity: Dutch/Other	.00	-.03	.04	-																						
5. Married/Single	-.09	-.68**	-.48**	.05	-																					
6. Married/Other	.03	-.49**	-.21**	-.02	.48**	-																				
7. Wages/Students	-.01	-.73**	-.58**	.06	.72**	.48**	-																			
8. Wages/Other	.00	-.08	-.25**	.04	.14	.06	.13	-																		
9. Prolific/Other	-.31**	-.16**	-.08	.04	.34**	.06	.06	.13	-																	
10. Status of Couple	.12*	.07	.04	.01	-.11	.01	-.03	.13	-.06	-																
11. Status Ryan: High/Low	-.01	.06	.02	.04	.02	-.02	-.02	.08	.00	.40**	-															
12. Relative Status Anna: Higher/Other	.05	.02	.07	.04	.04	.13*	-.01	.01	.03	.37**	.01	-														
13. Relative Status Anna: Lower/Other	-.01	.02	.02	-.11*	-.01	-.06	.01	-.04	-.05	-.41**	-.01	-.51**	-													
14. Agency Ryan	.11	.06	-.07	-.09	-.03	-.05	-.02	.11	-.02	.27**	.31**	-.01	.06	-												
15. Agency Anna	.09	-.04	.01	-.07	.03	.05	.04	.05	-.02	.47**	.17**	.42**	-.38**	.30**	-											
16. Dominance Ryan	-.06	-.01	-.03	.09	-.01	-.01	.10	.22**	.05	.14*	.24**	-.06	.04	.32**	-.02	-										
17. Dominance Anna	-.07	-.11	.00	.00	.06	.13	.19**	.21**	.02	.19**	.20**	.12	-.14*	-.02	.27**	.47**	-									
18. Weakness Ryan	-.06	-.06	.07	-.01	.09	.11	.12	.07	.10	-.12*	-.10	-.04	.03	-.35**	-.16**	.36**	.44**	-								
19. Weakness Anna	-.11	-.01	.11	.10	-.03	.06	.01	.05	.06	-.09	-.01	-.14*	.08	-.05	-.45**	.49**	.35**	.49**	-							
20. Communality Ryan	.08	-.04	-.04	-.16**	.01	-.01	-.07	-.05	.04	.01	-.19**	.05	-.05	.26**	.37**	-.34**	-.09	-.16**	-.26**	-						
21. Communality Anna	.07	-.07	-.11	-.06	-.04	-.03	-.03	.02	.06	.07	-.03	-.02	.03	.46**	.30**	.00	-.28**	-.35**	-.18**	.40**	-					
22. Likeability Ryan	.03	-.06	-.06	-.09	.06	.02	.01	-.08	.01	.09	-.04	.06	-.05	.16**	.33**	-.29**	-.10	-.16**	-.32**	.60**	.28**	-				
23. Likeability Anna	.03	.03	-.07	.04	.00	-.02	-.04	-.01	.00	.08	-.05	.07	-.04	.24**	.19**	-.07	-.42**	-.30**	-.22**	.17**	.56**	.42**	-			
24. Respect Ryan	.04	.21**	.07	-.01	-.13	-.08	-.27**	.00	-.02	.18**	.29**	.05	.06	.42**	.05	.19*	-.02	-.26**	.08	-.02	.12	.04	.16**	-		
25. Respect Anna	-.04	.03	.07	.01	.02	.16*	-.10	.02	.08	.35**	.13*	.44**	-.36**	-.02	.56**	-.06	.22**	.03	-.27**	.05	-.04	.16**	-.02	.19**	-	
26. Relationship Satisfaction	.05	.11	.00	-.04	-.07	-.09	-.11	-.06	.14*	.15*	-.06	.09	-.04	.24**	.24**	-.03	-.21**	-.18**	-.19**	.29**	.38**	.31**	.37**	.11	.05	-

Note. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

Overview of analyses

We conducted mixed repeated measures ANCOVA's in order to test whether the manipulation worked as intended and whether the conditions evoked our expected differences in agency, dominance and weakness trait divisions. Next, to test indirect effects of relative status perceptions on perceived relationship satisfaction, likeability and respect via relative agency, dominance, and weakness, we built structural equation models in Mplus.

Did the manipulation work?

Our analysis indicated that our manipulation worked as intended. There was an interaction of partner gender and Anna's relative status on the perceived societal status of Ryan and Anna, $F(2,146) = 33.14$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .31$. Participants estimated Anna to be lower in status than Ryan in the conditions where we manipulated that Anna had a lower status occupation than Ryan ($M = 4.53$, $SE = .24$, C.I. [4.05, 5.00] vs. $M = 5.92$, $SE = .21$, C.I. [5.50, 6.36]). They estimated Anna to have equal status to Ryan in the conditions where we manipulated that Anna and Ryan had equal status occupations ($M = 5.59$, $SE = .22$, C.I. [5.16, 6.02] vs. $M = 5.72$, $SE = .19$, C.I. [5.34, 6.10]). Finally, they estimated Anna to have higher status than Ryan in the conditions where we manipulated that Ryan had a lower status occupation than Anna ($M = 7.41$, $SE = .24$, C.I. [6.95, 7.88] vs. $M = 5.65$, $SE = .21$, C.I. [5.24, 6.07]).

Further, and in line with our manipulation, we found a between-conditions effect of Ryan's absolute status on the status of both partners, $F(1,146) = 14.07$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .09$. In the conditions where we manipulated that Ryan had a medium status occupation (with Anna having a higher, equal or lower status occupation than Ryan), participants estimated both Ryan and Anna to have higher status ($M = 5.43$, $SE = .14$, C.I. [5.15, 5.71]) than in the conditions where we manipulated that Ryan had a low status occupation ($M = 6.18$, $SE = .14$, C.I. [5.90, 6.45]).

Was Anna seen as the agentic and dominant one in a non-traditional relationship?

Agency. In line with Hypothesis 1, there was no interaction effect of partner

gender and Ryan's absolute status, $F(1,145) = 1.52$, $p = .220$, but there was an interaction effect of partner gender and Anna's relative status on relative agency (see Table 2). Only in the conditions where Anna had higher status than Ryan, participants rated her to be the agentic one in the relationship. When Ryan had higher status, participants rated him to be the agentic one, and when they had equal status, participants rated their agency to be equal.

Dominance. Similar to the agency results and in line with Hypothesis 1, there was no interaction effect of partner gender and Ryan's absolute status, $F(1,145) = .04$, $p = .835$, but there was an interaction effect of partner gender and Anna's relative status on relative dominance (see Table 2). Although participants never rated Anna to be the dominant one in the relationship, they rated her differently in the non-traditional condition compared to the more traditional conditions. Whereas Ryan was perceived to be the dominant one when Anna and Ryan had a traditional or equal status division, when Anna had higher societal status than Ryan, participants rated her to be equally dominant as Ryan.

Was Ryan seen as the weak one in a non-traditional relationship?

Weakness. In line with Hypothesis 2, there was no interaction effect of partner gender and Ryan's absolute status, $F(1,145) = 1.15$, $p = .286$, but there was an interaction effect of partner gender and Anna's relative status on relative weakness (see Table 2). Whereas neither Ryan or Anna were perceived to be the weak one when they had a traditional or equal status division, when Anna had higher societal status than Ryan, participants rated Ryan to be significantly weaker than Anna.

Communality. There was no interaction effect of partner gender and Ryan's absolute status and Anna's relative status on the partners' perceived communal traits (see Table 2).

= .12, CFI = .89, SRMR = .11. Based on the modification indices, we freed the paths of Anna's relative agency on how much Anna was liked and Anna's relative agency on how much Anna was respected, which significantly improved the fit of the previous model, $\Delta\chi^2$ (Δdf = 3) = 63.81, p < .001, RMSEA = .04, CFI = .99, SRMR = .04. We tested several alternative models (e.g., a model with all expected paths constrained to zero and a model in which mediator and dependent variables were switched) to show that the current model provided the best fit to our data (see Appendix B).

Did people think a non-traditional relationship is less satisfying because of Anna's relative dominance and Ryan's relative weakness?

In line with Hypothesis 3 and as shown in Figure 2, when participants rated Anna to have higher societal status than Ryan, they rated Anna to be the dominant one, b = .20, SE = .08, p = .009, and Ryan to be the weak one in the relationship, b = .41, SE = .07, p < .001. Participants rated the relationship to be less satisfying when they rated Anna to be the dominant one, b = -.20, SE = .07, p = .003, and Ryan to be the weak one, b = -.14, SE = .07, p = .035. We found a significant indirect effect of perceived non-traditionality of the relationship on perceived relationship satisfaction via Ryan's perceived weakness, but not via Anna's perceived dominance. However, the overall indirect effect was significant, indicating that participants perceived non-traditional relationships as less satisfying due to their combined evaluation that Anna was the dominant one and Ryan was the weak one in the relationship (see Figure 2). The direct effect of perceived non-traditionality on perceived relationship satisfaction was not significant, indicating full mediation.

Did people find Anna less likeable in a non-traditional relationship because of her relative dominance?

In line with Hypothesis 4 and as shown in Figure 2, when participant rated Anna to be the dominant one in the relationship, they liked her less, b = -.19, SE = .07, p = .006, but they did not like Ryan less. Also, the indirect effect of perceived non-traditionality of the relationship on how much Anna was liked via Anna's relative dominance was significant (see Figure 2). Unexpectedly, when participants rated Anna to be the agentic one in the relationship, they liked her more, b = .26, SE = .07, p < .001. The indirect effect of perceived non-tradi-

tionality of the relationship on how much Anna was liked via Anna's relative agency was also significant (see Figure 2). There was no overall indirect effect of perceived non-traditionality of the relationship on how much Anna was liked via Anna's relative dominance and agency, indicating that the negative effect via Anna's relative dominance and the positive effect via Anna's relative agency cancel each other out. The direct effect of perceived relative status of the couple on Anna's likeability was also not significant, indicating two full mediations (see Figure 2).

Did people respect Ryan less in a non-traditional relationship because of his weakness?

In line with Hypothesis 5 and as shown in Figure 2, when participants rated Ryan to be the weak one, they had less respect for him, $b = -.29$, $SE = .06$, $p < .001$, but not for Anna. There was an indirect effect of perceived non-traditionality of the relationship on how much Ryan was respected via Ryan's relative weakness. The direct effect of perceived non-traditionality of the relationship on respect for Ryan was not significant, indicating full mediation. Unexpectedly, when participant's rated Anna to be the agentic one in the relationship, they had more respect for her, $b = .33$, $SE = .07$, $p < .001$. There was also an indirect effect of perceived non-traditionality of the relationship on how much Anna was respected via Anna's relative agency. Also, the direct effect of perceived relative status on respect for Anna was significant, indicating partial mediation (see Figure 2).
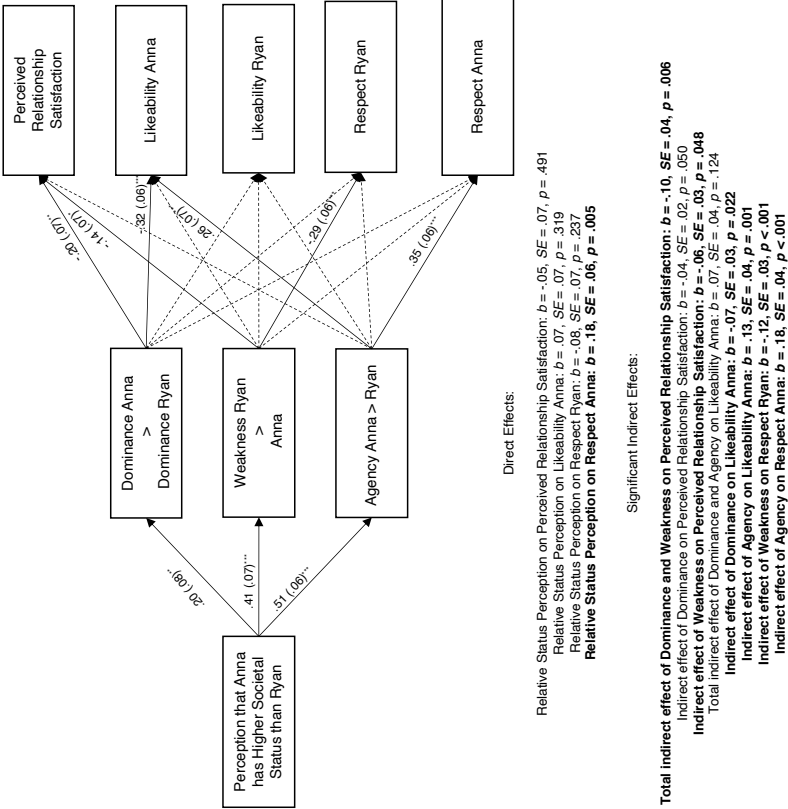
Figure 2. Results of theoretical model in Study 1 controlling for average status of the couple, education, ethnicity: Asian vs. White, marital status: married vs. single and employment status: employed for wage vs. self-employed.

Note: reported statistics are standardized coefficients and errors. Dotted lines are paths that were constrained to zero.

Conclusion

In Study 1, we provide initial evidence that backlash effects can occur in heterosexual relationships that violate the traditional status division. Regardless of their gender, people rated the partner with highest societal status in the relationship to be the agentic one of the two. However, people rated the woman to be as dominant as their partner in a non-traditional relationship, whereas they rated the man to be the dominant one in traditional and status-equal relationships. Also, people rated the man to be the weak one in a non-traditional relationship, whereas they rated neither partner to be weak in traditional nor status-equal relationships.

Moreover, we find that non-traditional couples face repercussions as people expected their relationship to be less satisfying compared to more traditional relationships. People also liked women less in non-traditional relationships because of their relative dominance and attributed less respect to men because of their relative weakness compared to more traditional couples. Unexpectedly, non-traditional relationship also had an unexpected positive outcome for women, as women in non-traditional relationships were more respected and liked because people rated these women to be the agentic one in their relationship. As we did not expect these two effects, another reason to conduct Study 2 was to replicate the final model.

<div align="center">

Study 2
Method

</div>

Participants and design

Participants ($N = 269$) of which 88 men, 179 women and 2 with unknown gender were living in the Netherlands and were recruited by convenience sampling and via Prolific Academic. Participants ($M_{age} = 32.96$, $SD_{age} = 13.33$) predominantly had a Dutch background (92.9%). They were in a domestic partnership (61.5%) or single and never married (34.6%). Most participants had a bachelor's degree (or equivalent; 31.2%), a master's degree (or equivalent; 23.8%) or a vocational degree (or equivalent; 29%). Most were student (34.6%) or employed for wage (43.9%). The design was identical to

Study 1.

Procedure

The procedure of Study 2 was similar to Study 1. Depending on where partic-
ipants were recruited, they were rewarded by being entered into a lottery, by
receiving a small monetary
amount, or in the case of students by receiving credits toward partial course
requirement.

Manipulation

We used similar vignettes as in Study 1, except that we changed the occupa-
tions of Ryan and Anna based on a pilot-test we ran in the Netherlands (see
Appendix A).

Materials

We used similar materials as in Study 1. Reliability analyses showed similar
and satisfactory alphas for all included measures. The following concepts
were measured in the same way as in Study 1: perceived societal status of
partners, agency ($\alpha_{Ryan} = .82; \alpha_{Anna} = .87$), communality ($\alpha_{Ryan} = .85; \alpha_{Anna} = .87$),
dominance ($\alpha_{Ryan} = .80; \alpha_{Anna} = .79$), weakness ($\alpha_{Ryan} = .90, \alpha_{Anna} = .90$), like-
ability ($r_{Ryan} = .47, p < .001; r_{Anna} = .48, p < .001$), relationship satisfaction ($\alpha = .82$). Regarding respect, instead of two items in Study 1, we asked one item
in Study 2 ("How much do you think Ryan/Anna is someone who commands
respect from others?") as the second item that we also included in Study 1
("How would you describe Ryan/Anna?") did not translate well into Dutch.

Results

Preliminary analyses

Correlations between background, independent and dependent variables
showed that men and women did not differ in their responses, but participants'
educational level, employment status (wages vs. students) and whether or not
they filled out the survey via Prolific Academic were all correlated with several

Table 3

Correlation analyses of relevant background variables, predictor variables (dummy-coded) and outcome variables of Study 2

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
1. Sex: Women/Men	-																									
2. Age	.06	-																								
3. Education	.12*	.41**	-																							
4. Ethnicity: Dutch/Other	.00	-.03	.04	-																						
5. Married/Single	-.09	-.68**	-.48**	.05	-																					
6. Married/Other	.03	-.49**	-.21**	-.02	.72**	-																				
7. Wages/Students	-.01	-.73**	-.58**	.06	.14	.48**	-																			
8. Wages/Other	.00	-.08	-.25**	.04	.34**	.06	.06	-																		
9. Prolific/Other	-.31**	-.16**	-.08	.04	-.11	.06	-.03	.13	-																	
10. Status of Couple	.12*	.07	.04	.01	.02	.01	-.02	.13	-.06	-																
11. Status Ryan: High/Low	-.01	.06	.02	.04	.04	-.02	-.02	.08	.00	.40**	-															
12. Relative Status Anna: Higher/Other	.05	.02	.07	.04	.04	.13*	-.01	.01	.03	.37**	.01	-														
13. Relative Status Anna: Lower/Other	-.01	.02	.02	-.11*	-.01	-.06	.01	-.04	-.05	-.41**	-.01	-.51**	-													
14. Agency Ryan	.11	.06	-.07	-.09	-.03	-.05	-.02	.11	-.02	.27**	.31**	-.01	.06	-												
15. Agency Anna	.09	-.04	.01	-.07	.03	.05	.04	.05	-.02	.47**	.17**	.42**	-.38**	.30**	-											
16. Dominance Ryan	-.06	-.01	-.03	.09	-.01	-.01	.10	.22**	.05	.14*	.24**	-.06	.04	.32**	-.02	-										
17. Dominance Anna	-.07	-.11	.00	.00	.06	.13	.19**	.21**	.02	.19**	.20**	.12	-.14*	-.02	.27**	.47**	-									
18. Weakness Ryan	-.06	-.06	.07	-.01	.09	.11	.12	.07	.10	-.12*	-.10	-.04	.03	-.35**	-.16**	.36**	.44**	-								
19. Weakness Anna	-.11	-.01	.11	.10	-.03	.06	.01	.05	.06	-.09	-.01	-.14*	.08	-.05	-.45**	.49**	.35**	.49**	-							
20. Communality Ryan	.08	-.04	-.04	-.16**	.01	-.01	-.07	-.05	.04	.01	-.19**	.05	-.05	.26**	.37**	-.34**	-.09	-.16**	-.26**	-						
21. Communality Anna	.07	.07	-.11	-.06	-.04	-.03	-.03	.02	.06	.07	-.03	-.02	.03	.46**	.30**	.00	-.28**	-.35**	-.18**	.40**	-					
22. Likeability Ryan	.03	-.06	-.06	-.09	.06	.02	.01	-.08	.01	.09	-.04	.06	-.05	.16**	.33**	-.29**	-.10	-.16**	-.32**	.60**	.28**	-				
23. Likeability Anna	.03	.03	-.07	.04	.00	-.02	-.04	-.01	.00	.08	-.05	.07	-.04	.24**	.19**	-.07	-.42**	-.30**	-.22**	.17**	.56**	.42**	-			
24. Respect Ryan	.04	.21**	.07	-.01	-.13	-.08	-.27**	.00	-.02	.18**	.29**	.05	.06	.42**	.05	.19**	-.02	-.26**	.08	-.02	.12	.04	.16**	-		
25. Respect Anna	-.04	.03	.07	.01	.02	.16*	-.10	.02	.08	.35**	.13*	.44**	-.36**	-.02	.56**	-.06	.22**	.03	-.27**	.05	-.04	.16**	-.02	.19**	-	
26. Relationship Satisfaction	.05	.11	.00	-.04	-.07	-.09	-.11	-.06	.14*	.15*	-.06	.09	-.04	.24**	.24**	-.03	-.21**	-.18**	-.19**	.29**	.38**	.31**	.37**	.11	.05	-

*Note. ** p< .01. * p< .05.*

dependent variables (see Table 3). Therefore, we controlled for these variables. Similar to Study 1, we also controlled for the average societal status of the couple in all analyses. Again, Ryan's absolute status did not affect how stereo-typically Ryan and Anna were perceived, neither how their relationship was per-ceived. We therefore decided not to report all these effects again in this study.

Did the manipulation work?

Our manipulation provoked satisfactory differences in perceived status across conditions and between the targets Ryan and Anna as a result of their occupa-tion. Apart from main effects of Ryan's absolute status and Anna's relative sta-tus, we found an interaction effect of partner gender and Ryan's absolute status on the perceived societal status of both
Ryan and Anna, $F(1,241) = 13.25$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .44$. Participants estimated Ryan to be lower in status in the conditions where we manipulated that Ryan had a low status occupation compared to a medium status occupation ($M = 5.51$, $SE = .12$, C.I. [5.27, 5.75] vs. $M = 6.93$, $SE = .12$, C.I. [6.69, 7.18]). Also, we found an interaction effect of partner gender and Anna's relative status on the perceived status of both Ryan and Anna, $F(2,241) = 94.75$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .05$. Participants estimated Anna to be lower in status than Ryan in conditions where we manipulated that Anna had a lower status occupation than Ryan ($M = 4.83$, $SE = .15$, C.I. [4.54, 5.12] vs. $M = 6.27$, $SE = .15$, C.I. [5.98, 6.56]). They estimated Anna to have equal status to Ryan in the conditions where we manip-ulated that Ryan and Anna had equal status occupations ($M = 6.55$, $SE = .15$, C.I. [6.25, 6.85] vs. $M = 6.26$, $SE = .15$, C.I. [5.97, 6.56]). Finally, participants estimated Anna to have higher status than Ryan in conditions where we manip-ulated Ryan to have a lower status occupation than Anna ($M = 7.83$, $SE = .15$, C.I. [7.54, 8.13] vs. $M = 6.13$, $SE = .15$, C.I. [5.84, 6.42]).

Was Anna seen as the agentic and dominant one in a non-traditional rela-tionship?

Agency. Similar to Study 1 and in line with Hypothesis 1, we found an interac-tion effect of partner gender and Anna's relative status on relative agency (see Table 4). Participants rated the partner with the highest status in the relationship also as the agentic one.

Dominance. In line with Hypothesis 1, we found an interaction of partner gender and Anna's relative status on relative dominance (see Table 4). Participants rated Anna and Ryan to be equally dominant when they had a traditional or equal status division, but when Anna had higher societal status than Ryan, participants rated her to be the dominant one. Though replicating the direction of the effect, in Study 2 participants rated Anna to be the dominant one when violating traditional status in the relationship, whereas in Study 1 they rated her to be equally dominant as Ryan.

Was Ryan seen as the weak one in a non-traditional relationship?

Weakness. Contrary to Study 1 and Hypothesis 2, we did not find that in the conditions where Anna had higher status than Ryan, participants rated Ryan to be the weak one. There were no significant main or interaction effects (see Table 4).

Communality. Similar to Study 1, we found no interaction effect of partner gender and Anna's relative status on perceived communality (see Table 4). However, we found a between subjects effect of Ryan's absolute status on how communal both partners were perceived, $F(1,201) = 7.45$, $p = .007$, $\eta^2 = .04$. Participants estimated both Ryan and Anna to be more communal when Ryan had low status compared to when he had medium status ($M = 4.93$, $SE = .07$ vs. $M = 4.63$, $SE = .07$).

Table 4

Descriptives and multi- and univariate effects of targets Ryan and Anna in Study 2

Variable	Anna Lower than Ryan *M (SE)* 95% C.I.	Anna Equal as Ryan *M (SE)* 95% C.I.	Anna Higher than Ryan *M (SE)* 95% C.I.	Multivariate interaction Effect of Partner Gender (Ryan/Anna) x Relative Status	Univariate Between-Conditions Effects per target
Agency				$F_{(2,201)} = 20.84$, $p <$ .001, $\eta^2 = .17$	
Ryan	4.97 (.13)a [4.71, 5.23]	4.55 (.12)b [4.32, 4.78]	4.47 (.12)b [4.24, 4.70]		$F_{(2,201)} = 4.07$, $p = .018$, $\eta^2 = .04$
Anna	4.26 (.13)b [4.00, 4.52]	4.59 (.12)b [4.35, 4.83]	5.17 (.12)a [4.93, 5.40]		$F_{(2,201)} = 11.99$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .11$
Dominance				$F_{(2,201)} = 4.91$, $p = .008$, $\eta^2 = .05$	
Ryan	3.05 (.14)ab [2.78, 3.32]	3.00 (.12)ab [2.75, 3.24]	2.77 (.12)a [2.53, 3.01]		$F_{(2,201)} = 1.22$, $p = .296$, $\eta^2 = .01$
Anna	2.79 (.13)ab [2.53, 3.06]	3.00 (.12)ab [2.76, 3.24]	3.13 (.20)b [2.90, 3.37]		$F_{(2,201)} = 2.02$, $p = .214$, $\eta^2 = .02$
Weakness				$F_{(2,201)} = 2.01$, $p = .137$, $\eta^2 = .02$	
Ryan	2.81 (.14)a [2.54, 3.08]	2.85 (.13)a [2.60, 3.10]	2.86 (.12)a [2.61, 3.10]		$F_{(2,201)} = .03$, $p = .970$, $\eta^2 = .00$
Anna	2.79 (.13)a [2.53, 3.06]	2.85 (.12)a [2.61, 3.09]	2.53 (.12)a [2.30, 2.77]		$F_{(2,201)} = 1.83$, $p = .163$, $\eta^2 = .02$
Communality				$F_{(2,201)} = .65$, $p = .523$, $\eta^2 = .01$	
Ryan	4.85 (.11)a [4.63, 5.07]	4.75 (.10)a [4.55, 4.95]	4.78 (.10)a [4.58, 4.97]		$F_{(2,201)} = .23$, $p = .791$, $\eta^2 = .00$
Anna	4.93 (.12)a [4.70, 5.16]	4.74 (.11)a [4.53, 4.95]	4.65 (.11)a [4.45, 4.86]		$F_{(2,201)} = 1.39$, $p = .252$, $\eta^2 = .01$

Note. For every variable, means with different superscripts in rows and/or columns differ significantly from each other, $p < .05$.

Did our theoretical model provide good fit?

We started our analysis with building a structural equation model in Mplus identical to the final one in Study 1 (see Figure 2). This model provided good fit with the data, χ^2 ($df = 22$) = 51.27, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .08, CFI = .95, SRMR = .05. Similar to Study 1, this model showed better fit than our initial theoretical model (see Figure 1), $\Delta\chi^2$ ($\Delta df = 3$) = 77.43, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .14, CFI = .81, SRMR = .10 (see Appendix C for alternative models).

Did people think that a non-traditional relationship is less satisfying because of Anna's relative dominance and Ryan's relative weakness?

Similar to Study 1 and in line with Hypothesis 3, when participants rated Anna to have higher status than Ryan, they rated Anna to be the dominant one, $b = .28$, $SE = .06$, $p < .001$, and Ryan to be the weak one in the relationship, $b = .23$, $SE = .07$, $p < .001$ (see Figure 3). This relative dominance perception predicted that participants perceived the relationship to be less satisfying, $b = -.21$, $SE = .06$, $p = .001$, but this was not the case for relative weakness perception, $b = -.01$, SE

= .06, *p* = .922. Thus, contrary to Study 1 and Hypothesis 3, when participants perceived Ryan to be the weak one, they did not perceive the relationship to be less satisfying. We found a significant indirect effect of perceived non-traditionality of the relationship on perceived relationship satisfaction via Anna's perceived dominance, but not via Ryan's perceived weakness. The overall indirect effect was significant, indicating that participants perceived non-traditional relationships as less satisfying due to the combined perception that Anna is the dominant one and Ryan is the weak one in the relationship. The direct effect of perceived non-traditionality on perceived relationship satisfaction was not significant, indicating full mediation.

Did people find Anna less likeable in a non-traditional relationship because of her relative dominance?

With regards to Hypothesis 4 and similar to Study 1, when participants rated Anna to be the dominant in the relationship, they liked her less, *b* = -.49, *SE* = .06, *p* < .001, but not Ryan (see Figure 3). We found an indirect effect of perceived non-traditionality of the relationship on how much Anna was liked via Anna's relative dominance. Similar to Study 1, when participants rated Anna to be the agentic one in the relationship, they liked her more, *b* = .20, *SE* = .08, *p* = .012. There was an indirect effect of perceived non-traditionality of the relationship on how much Anna was liked via Anna's relative agency (see Figure 3). The direct effect of perceived non-traditionality of the relationship on how much Anna was liked was also not significant, indicating two full mediations. Furthermore, we found no overall indirect effect, indicating that the negative indirect effect of Anna's relative dominance and the positive indirect effect of Anna's relative agency on how much she was liked cancel each other out.

Did people respect Ryan less in a non-traditional relationship because of his relative weakness?

In line with Hypothesis 5 and similar to Study 1, when participants rated Ryan to be the weak one in the relationship, they had less respect for him, *b* = -.25, *SE* = .06, *p* < .001, but not for Anna (see Figure 3). There was an indirect effect of perceived non-traditionality of the relationship on how much Ryan was respected via Ryan's relative weakness. The direct effect of perceived non-traditionality of the relationship on how much Ryan was respected was significant, indicating

partial mediation.

Similar to Study 1, when participant rated Anna to be the agentic one in the relationship, they had more respect for her, $b = .38$, $SE = .06$, $p < .001$. There was also an indirect effect of perceived non-traditionality of the relationship on how much Anna was respected via Anna's relative agency. Moreover, the direct effect of perceived relative status on how much Anna was respected was significant, indicating partial mediation (see Figure 3).

Conclusion

We again provide evidence that backlash effects occur in non-traditional relationships. Regardless of their gender, people rated the partner with highest societal status in the relationship to be the agentic one of the two. People rated only the woman to be the dominant one in the relationship when she had higher status than her partner. In Study 1, people rated the woman to be equally dominant as her partner when she had higher status than him and they rated the man to be the dominant one when he had higher status than or equal status as his partner. Contrary to Study 1, we did not replicate that people rated the man to be the weak one in the relationship when he had lower status than his partner. Finally, we again found that non-traditional couples face repercussions both on the level of the relationship (lower perceived relationship satisfaction) as well as on the level of individual partners (women's likeability and men's respect). We replicated the finding that women were more respected and perceived as likeable because of their relative agency in non-traditional relationships.

Perceived Relationship Satisfaction

Likeability Anna

Likeability Ryan

Respect Ryan

Respect Anna

Dominance Anna > Dominance Ryan

Weakness Ryan > Anna

Agency Anna > Ryan

Perception that Anna has Higher Societal Status than Ryan

-.21 (.06)***

-.01 (.06)

.49 (.06)***

.19 (.06)**

-.17 (.07)*

-.24 (.09)**

.32 (.07)***

.28 (.06)***

.23 (.07)***

.62 (.04)***

Direct Effects:

Relative Status Perception on Perceived Relationship Satisfaction: *b* = .01, *SE* = .04, *p* = .907
Relative Status Perception on Likeability Anna: *b* = -.03, *SE* = .07, *p* = .698
Relative Status Perception on Respect Ryan: *b* = -.03, *SE* = .08, *p* = .709
Relative Status Perception on Respect Anna: *b* = .22, *SE* = .07, *p* = .001

Significant Indirect Effects:

Total indirect effect of Dominance and Weakness on Perceived Relationship Satisfaction: *b* = -.06, *SE* = .03, *p* = .019
Indirect effect of Dominance on Perceived Relationship Satisfaction: *b* = -.06, *SE* = .02, *p* = .010
Indirect effect of Weakness on Perceived Relationship Satisfaction: *b* = -.00, *SE* = .02, *p* = .941
Total indirect effect of Dominance and Agency on Likeability Anna: *b* = -.02, *SE* = .05, *p* = .754
Indirect effect of Dominance on Likeability Anna: *b* = -.14, *SE* = .04, *p* < .001
Indirect effect of Agency on Likeability Anna: *b* = .12, *SE* = .05, *p* = .018
Total indirect effect of Weakness and Agency on Respect Ryan: *b* = -.19, *SE* = .05, *p* < .001
Indirect effect of Weakness on Respect Ryan: *b* = -.04, *SE* = .02, *p* = .041
Indirect effect of Agency on Respect Ryan: *b* = -.15, *SE* = .06, *p* = .006
Indirect effect of Agency on Respect Anna: *b* = .20, *SE* = .05, *p* < .001
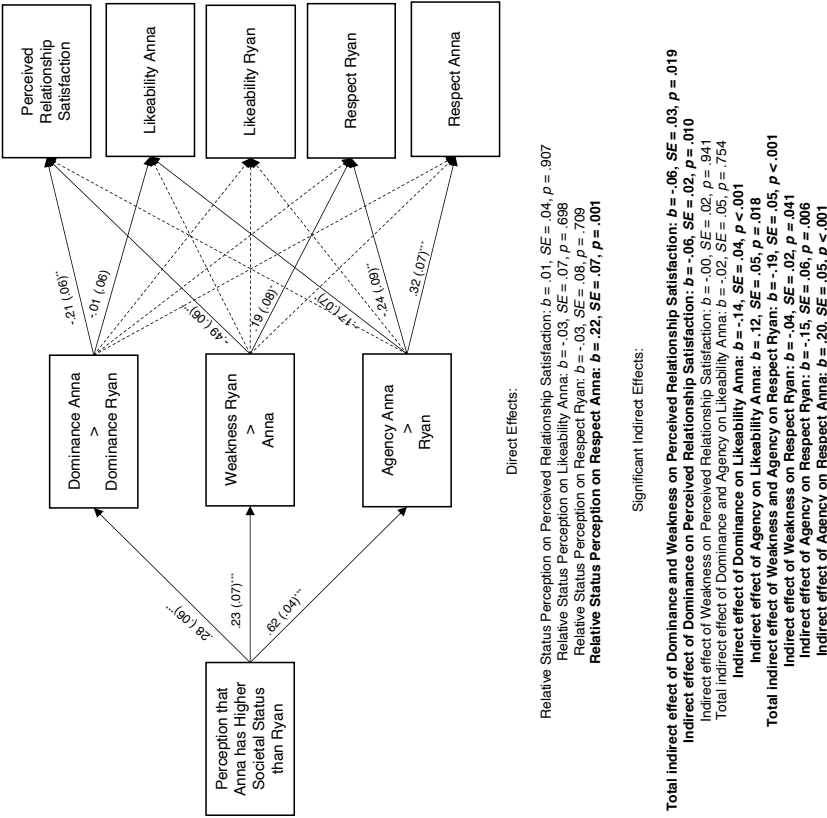
Figure 3. Results of theoretical model in Study 2 controlling for average status of the couple, education, source: prolific vs. other, employment status: employed for wage vs student. Note: reported statistics are standardized coefficients and errors. Dotted lines are paths that were constrained to zero.

General discussion

Previous research has examined when and why women and men experience backlash when they show behaviors that are incongruent with their gender role (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman & Wallen, 2010; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Rudman et al., 2012). However, this research mainly focused on the work domain and looked at backlash directed towards individual men and women. When it comes to heterosexual romantic relationships, people also have gendered expectations such that they expect men to have higher societal status than their female partner (Warren, 2007; Eagly, Wood, Diekman, 2000). Recent work shows that men and women violating gender norms in the relationship domain also face negative evaluations (MacInnis & Baliga, 2019; Hettinger, Hutchinson, & Bosson, 2014). In two studies we show that the backlash as has been found in the work domain also provide an explanation why people negatively evaluate men and women who break with gender norms in the relationship domain.

More specifically, we show a dominance penalty, so that people rate a woman with higher societal status than her partner to be the dominant one in the relationship and therefore also dislike her. For men, we show a weakness penalty, so that people rate a man with lower societal status than his partner to be the weak one in the relationship and therefore disrespect him. Importantly, beyond these effects on the individual level, we add to the backlash literature by showing that in the relationship domain the dominance and weakness penalty also result in the perception that a non-traditional relationship must be less satisfying than a more traditional relationship that fits the gender hierarchy.

Buffering effect of relative agency for women

Unexpectedly, it turned out that the perception that women were the agentic one in non-traditional relationships also led to positive individual impressions of these women, such that people liked her more and found her worthy of more respect when they perceived her to have higher status than her partner. This finding is in line with a growing body of literature showing that the role of agency has changed for women.

In the past half century agentic traits and behaviors have sharply increased among women as they have entered male-dominated roles in large numbers

(Croft, Schmader, & Block, 2015). Women themselves indicated to increasingly possess agentic traits to such an extent that studies no longer find differences between men and women in self-perceived agency (Twenge, 1997; Twenge, 2009). Thus, women's agency has become more accepted over time (Diekman & Eagly, 2000; Twenge, 2009) and the changing nature of its valence might have even led to situations where agency is desired for women (such as in relationships, which we find here). Also, whereas agency is usually seen as benefiting the self, in interpersonal relationships agency might also benefit the close other (Abele & Wojciszke, 2007). In non-traditional relationships, the perception that the woman is the agentic one might lead to the perception that her behavior and goal attainment is also beneficial for her partner and their relationship. In a similar vein, Bear and Glick (2017) showed that the caregiving penalty for working women can be reduced by providing information that the woman is the breadwinner of the family and thus provides for her family rather than pursuing a career for her own benefit. This might indicate that having higher status because of family-oriented, communal goals can reduce relational backlash for women.

The importance of country-level differences in backlash

We found that non-traditional relationships elicit backlash in the United States and in the Netherlands, indicating that despite cultural differences backlash processes work in comparable ways in both countries. Therefore, by maximizing the variance between two cases, we show the robustness of backlash processes among couples in non-traditional relationships (Swanborn, 2010).

The only difference we found was that, whereas in the US both dominance of the woman and weakness of the man were seen as threatening the quality of the relationship, in the Netherlands, only dominance of the woman but not weakness of the man was seen as a threat to relationship quality. However, this is not to say that men who are seen as weaker than their partner are not penalized in the Netherlands. On an individual level, we found that both in the United States and the Netherlands weakness of the man was penalized with lower respect for him. Future research could investigate on a larger scale to what extent cultural differences might play a role in perceptions towards non-traditional couples.

Limitations and directions for future research

A limitation of our studies is that, in order to examine the perceived trait divisions within the relationship, we created difference scores of relative status, dominance, weakness and agency. It is argued that use of differences scores is not optimal, because it causes absolute scores to be aggregated (Cronbach & Furby, 1970). However, in our case, we think this is less of an issue because the individual statuses of Anna and Ryan were experimentally manipulated and therefore rather fixed. Furthermore, although we used difference scores as predictors, we also controlled for the absolute average status of the couple to make sure that we investigated the relative effects of the woman in relation to her partner only, rather than effects caused by absolute status of the man.

Future research could investigate to what extent couples who violate traditional status distributions are aware of backlash effects and how these affect the dynamics in their own relationships. Research has shown that men and women fear deviating from gendered norms (Cherry & Deaux, 1978). People who fear backlash try to avoid this by hiding their atypicality and by engaging in gender conformity (Rudman & Fairchild, 2004). There are some indications that non-traditional couples also experience negative relational outcomes. For instance, female breadwinners reported feelings of pressure, worry and guilt when they thought of their role as provider (Meisenbach, 2009). Moreover, men were found to use more erectile dysfunction medication, whereas women tend to use more anxiety and sleep deprivation medication when they were in a relationship where the woman had the highest income (Pierce, Dahl, & Nielsen, 2013). It remains to be investigated whether these negative outcomes are (partly) caused by backlash mechanisms. Mental representations of distant individuals tend to be simpler, and more prototypical than mental representations of close individuals (Trope & Liberman, 2010). Therefore, couples in non-traditional relationships might have more detailed and less abstract mental representations about each other compared to distant individuals and might be less susceptible for stereotypical, backlash mechanisms.

Conclusion

Men and women who break with gendered expectations in the relationship domain may risk penalties from others. Backlash occurs for couples who break the

norm that men should have higher societal status than their female partner in the relationship. The idea that the woman must not be the dominant one relative to her partner and the man must not be the weak one relative to his partner lead people to like women less and respect men less when their relationship is non-traditional. Moreover, people evaluate non-traditional relationships as less satisfying for the partners. This is another way by which the gender hierarchy is protected and why gender roles are persistent and difficult to change.

Chapter 3

Do backlash mechanisms predict relationship dynamics of heterosexual couples who challenge the gender hierarchy?

Abstract

Couples who break with traditional gender role expectations -men should be breadwinners and women caregivers- experience negative relationship outcomes. Using research on backlash mechanisms, we reveal a potential underlying mechanism that explains the negative outcomes of couples in relationships in which the woman has surpassed their male partner in societal status. People outside the relationship penalize non-traditional couples, because they evaluate a woman with higher status than her partner to be the dominant one and men with lower status to be the weak one in the relationship. In this study ($N = 94$ heterosexual couples), we investigate whether men and women in non-traditional relationships themselves also evaluate their partner to be the dominant and weak one, resulting in negative relationship outcomes (i.e., relationship satisfaction, commitment, conflict, and sexual satisfaction). Both men and women who perceive the man to have lower status than the woman in their relationship evaluate the man to be the weak one in their relationship. This further predicts lower relationship quality, higher relationship conflict and lower sexual satisfaction for women, but not for men. We argue that these mechanisms are one reason why couples are directed towards traditional divisions of status and why this is undesirable.

Introduction

With the number of highly educated women surpassing the number of highly educated men and the still growing participation of women in paid jobs, the traditional heterosexual couple consisting of a working man and caring woman becomes less common (OECD, 2018; Statistics Netherlands, 2011; CBS, 2015). Women are becoming increasingly independent in both economic and social domains and this also has its influence on intimate partner relationships (Latten & Mulder, 2013; Cherlin, 2004). Partner relationships are nowadays formed on the basis of additive emotional value rather than more traditional motives such as (financial) dependency among partners (Latten & Mulder, 2013).

At the same time, gender stereotypes persist (Haines, Deaux, & Lofaro, 2016) and people still expect men to be the breadwinner and women to be the main caregiver of the family (Park, Smith, & Correll, 2010; Morgenroth & Heilman, 2017). Furthermore, couples who break with traditional gender role expectations experience negative relationship outcomes (Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted; Bertrand, Kamenica, & Pan, 2015; Wilcox & Nock, 2006; Zhang, 2015). By integrating research on backlash mechanisms and gender stereotypes, our aim of the current study is to reveal a potential underlying mechanism that explains the negative relationship outcomes of partners in relationships in which the woman has surpassed their male partner in societal status. In the current study, we define societal status as a combination of income, education level and prestige in society (Adler, Epel, Castellazzo, & Ickovics, 2000).

How prescriptive gender stereotypes constrain women to traditional gender roles

According to the social role theory (Eagly, 1987; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000), people expect a correspondence between men's and women's behavior (i.e., the role they have) and their inner disposition (i.e., what they are like). In turn, gender stereotypes are not only descriptive, resulting in the belief that men are 'agentic' (e.g., ambitious, independent) and women are 'communal' (e.g., warm, concerned about others; Heilman, 2001), but also prescriptive: they dictate what men and women *should* be like and proscriptive in what men and women *should not* be like (Heilman, 2001; Prentice & Carranza, 2002). To

illustrate, although weak feminine traits (e.g., being emotional, naïve) are tolerated for women, these traits are proscribed for men (Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Phelan, & Nauts, 2012). Also, although dominant masculine traits (e.g., dominance, arrogance) are tolerated for men, these traits are proscribed for women (Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman et al., 2012).

People who violate these prescriptive gender stereotypes risk social and economic penalties, also termed 'backlash' (Rudman, 1998; Rudman et al., 2012). The status-incongruity hypothesis (SIH) states that people are motivated to justify the current gender hierarchy in which men have high status and women lower status than men (Rudman et al., 2012). In turn, especially men and women violating gender norms that threaten the current gender hierarchy are at risk of receiving these social and economic penalties (Rudman et al., 2012). Specifically, women should show behaviors that are associated with low or neutral status (e.g., being warm, caring; Rudman et al., 2012), whereas they should not show behaviors that increase their status (e.g., being dominant, manipulative; Rudman et al., 2012). This concerns both agentic and dominant masculine traits, because both are associated with high status (Rudman et al., 2012). Women succeeding in masculine occupations have been found to be perceived as dominant and therefore less liked and not preferred as boss (the *dominance penalty*; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Rudman et al., 2012). Also, people report less interest in hiring, promoting, or educating working mothers compared to working fathers or employees without children (Heilman & Okimoto, 2008; Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2004).

Are backlash mechanisms similar for men?

Though backlash mechanisms are well-examined among women who break with traditional gender role expectations by pursuing higher status roles at work, much less is known about men who break with traditional gender role expectations by having lower status roles. According to the status-incongruity hypothesis, men should show behaviours that enhance their status (e.g., being career-oriented, having a business sense, competitive), but should not show behaviours that undermine their status (e.g., being emotional, weak, or naïve; Rudman et al., 2012). This concerns only weak feminine traits as these are associated with lower status, whereas communal feminine traits are associated with neutral status (Rudman et al., 2012).

There is growing evidence that men who show behaviors that are inconsistent with the gender hierarchy are also at risk of facing backlash at work. People evaluate men who succeed in feminine occupations to be weak and therefore have less respected for him and not prefer him as boss (the *weakness penalty*; Heilman & Wallen, 2010; Rudman et al., 2012). Also, a man who requests paternity leave to take care of his children is judged negatively for failing to be a good provider for the family (Rudman & Mescher, 2013). There is also some evidence that men who engage in feminine behaviors at home risk backlash. Stay-at-home fathers who take care of the children are devalued, perceived as less masculine and less liked by others compared to employed fathers (Riggs, 1997; Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005). Furthermore, among couples where the man has a lower status occupation than his female partner, people predict the male partner to be less satisfied with the relationship and have less sympathy for the female partner (Hettinger, Hutchinson, & Bosson, 2014)and can face negative outcomes in the workplace. Here we examine whether these negative perceptions extend to observers' evaluations of status violators' intimate relationships. We employed a fictional scenario depicting a heterosexual married couple, manipulating the professional status of each character while holding all other information constant. Participants (N = 396. People evaluate stay-at-home husbands without an income who do the majority of domestic chores in the home to be weaker, less agentic and less dominant than stay-at-home husbands who work successfully from home or carry out only part of the total domestic chores (Chaney, Rudman, Fetterolf, & Young, 2017).

Although both men and women face penalties when they show behaviors at work that are inconsistent with the gender hierarchy, there is growing evidence showing that gendered expectations are in some occasions stricter for men than for women (Croft, Schmader, & Block, 2015; Vandello, Bosson, Cohen, Burnaford, & Weaver, 2008; Vandello & Bosson, 2013; Rudman et al,. 2012). Because of the lower status associated with feminine roles, weak feminine traits and interests, people devalue the importance of traits and attributes associated with lower status groups (Schmader, Major, Eccleston, & McCoy, 2001; Rudman et al., 2012). As a consequence, people understand why it is important for women to aspire traits and attributes associated with higher status groups but fail to see why men might aspire lower status roles (Croft, Schmader, & Block, 2015). Furthermore, unlike femininity, masculinity is argued to be precarious; it is easily 'lost' and should be demonstrated constantly (Vandello et al., 2008;

Vandello & Bosson, 2013). Being the provider of the family is central to the masculine identity and, as a result, a man that has a female partner who has surpassed him in status might experience a threat to his manhood (Michniewicz, Vandello, & Bosson, 2011). As a consequence, men are even less inclined to engage in counter stereotypical behaviors and fulfill non-traditional gender roles (for a review, see Vandello & Bosson, 2013). It is important to investigate how these mechanisms affect men and women who violate gender role divisions in romantic relationships, because partners are interdependent and their attitudes, emotions and behaviors have mutual influence upon each other (Thompson & Walker, 1982).

Do backlash mechanisms influence couples violating traditional status divisions?

Recently, scholars have started to investigate how backlash mechanisms affect men and women in romantic relationships and they show that couples who violate traditional status divisions elicit similar backlash as has been found in the work domain (MacInnis & Buliga, 2019; Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted). People evaluate a woman with higher societal status than her partner to be the dominant one in the relationship and therefore also dislike her (dominance penalty). People evaluate a man with lower societal status than his partner to be the weak one in the relationship and therefore disrespect him (weakness penalty). Importantly, beyond these effects on the individual level, the dominance and weakness penalties for couples in non-traditional relationships also result in the perception that these relationships must be less satisfying.

Interestingly, women's relative agency could buffer against the backlash they risk when having a non-traditional relationship, as women with higher societal status than their partner were also evaluated to be the agentic one in the relationship and therefore perceived to be likeable and respected (Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted). The role of agency has changed for women due to societal developments that made it more common for women to take up agentic roles in western societies (Croft, Schmader, & Block, 2015; Twenge, 1997; 2009; Diekman & Eagly, 2000; Abele & Wojciszke, 2007). Especially within romantic relationships, research suggests that women's agency can be seen as a positive trait as it signals women's potential to take care of their family

(Abele & Wojciszke, 2007).

Although these perceptions of others who are not in the relationship are import-
ant to understand why gender stereotypes about heterosexual relationships
persist, it remains the question to what extent these people will have similar
negative perceptions of their *own* partner when they are in a relationship in
which the woman has the highest societal status. In the current study, we will
examine whether men and women in non-traditional relationships evaluate their
partner to be the dominant or weak one and whether these negative evaluations
are related to couples' relationship outcomes. Do non-traditional couples also
experience difficulties for breaking with traditional gender norms or are they less
susceptible for negative outcomes, because they chose this relationship them-
selves? There is little knowledge on the influence of backlash mechanisms in
the relationship domain, such that it remains unclear how women perceive their
male partner when they have surpassed them in status or how men perceive
their female partner when they have lower status than them. Furthermore, it re-
mains to be seen to what extent men and women in non-traditional relationships
share similar perceptions and relationship outcomes. For example, if the woman
evaluates her male partner to be the weak one in the relationship, will he also
evaluate her to be the dominant one? Also, if the woman reports negative rela-
tionship outcomes because she evaluates her partner to be the weak one in the
relationship will her partner also report more negative relationship outcomes?

Why backlash mechanisms may influence couples' relationship outcomes

There are at least some indications that couples in non-traditional relationships
experience negative relationship outcomes. However, these studies are correla-
tional (Pierce, Dahl, & Nielsen, 2013; Bertrand, Kamenica, & Pan, 2015; Wilcox
& Nock, 2006; Zhang, 2015) or qualitative (Meisenbach, 2009) and thus give
less insight into the underlying mechanisms driving the negative relationship
outcomes. These studies also often use one indicator of societal status (i.e.,
relative income difference) and thus provide less insight into both partner's sub-
jective perceptions of status and other indicators of status (i.e., education level
and prestige in society; Adler et al., 2000). Female breadwinners reported feel-
ings of pressure, worry and also guilt when they thought of their role as provider
(Meisenbach, 2009). Men were found to use more erectile dysfunction medica-
tion, whereas women tend to use more anxiety and sleep deprivation medica-

tion when they were in a relationship where the woman had the highest income (Pierce, Dahl, & Nielsen, 2013). Couples in relationships in which women earn the highest share of household income report lower levels of marital happiness (Bertrand, Kamenica, & Pan, 2015; Wilcox & Nock, 2006; Zhang, 2015) and male partners report more psychological distress (Syrda, 2019).

It is important to investigate the underlying mechanisms explaining the negative relationship outcomes that couples in non-traditional relationships face not only because these relationships become more common (OECD, 2018). Also, people's romantic relationships play a crucial role in their lives as they contribute to a great extent to people's mental and physical health, but also social well-being (Oishi, 2012; Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Proulx, Helms, & Buehler, 2007; Robles, Slatcher, Trombello, & McGinn, 2014; Umberson, Williams, Powers, Liu, & Needham, 2006; Warner & Kelley-Moore, 2012). Gaining a better understanding of the causes of difficulties couples in non-traditional relationships experience, aid in realizing what is needed to tackle these difficulties.

Backlash mechanisms might be one of the underlying mechanisms explaining difficulties within the non-traditional relationships. On the one hand, it is not self-evident that perceptions of the outside world are seen as such by men and women in non-traditional relationships themselves, because partners have a much more detailed and complete mental representation about one another compared to strangers (Trope & Liberman, 2010). Furthermore, people are motivated to see their relationship in a positive light (Murray, 1999). On the other hand, gender norms about what is (not) good have a strong influence on people and people often try to avoid gender role violations (Amanatullah & Morris, 2011; Wallen, Morris, Devine, & Lu, 2017; Cherry & Deaux, 1978). In reaction to perceived gender role violations, people adhere even more to prescriptive gender stereotypes (Bosson, Vandello, Burnaford, Weaver, & Wasti, 2009; Cheryan, Cameron, Katagiri, & Monin, 2015; Willer, Rogalin, Conlon, & Wojnowicz, 2013). Theories on self-categorization and self-stereotyping suggest that under certain conditions stereotypes about the self and close others can be internalized. For instance, people who highly identify with their ingroup (such as gender) are inclined to identify with the prototypical member of their group when the group's identity is threatened (Spears, Doosje, & Ellemers, 1997). Also, women adjust their behavior in line with a negative stereotype, when faced with one (i.e., stereotype threat; Steele & Aronson, 1995). This is especially the case when

women perceive negative stereotyping to be possible and probable (Wout, Shih, Jackson, & Sellers, 2009). Also, women describe themselves to be more communal in order to justify their lower status position, whereas men describe themselves to be more agentic in order to justify their higher status position (Laurin, Kay, & Shepherd, 2011). This evidence suggests that it might be difficult for couples who break with traditional gender norms to avoid the negative consequences of backlash mechanisms completely.

Current study

In the current study, we investigate whether women in non-traditional relationships perceive their male partner to be the weak one in the relationship and whether this affects their relationship outcomes. Because we conduct a partner study, we also investigate whether men perceive their female partner to be the dominant and agentic one in the relationship and whether this affects their relationship outcomes. Furthermore, the advantage of a partner study is that we can investigate the extent to which men and women agree about the status division in their relationship. Investing couples' perceptions allows us to analyze the effects of relative status perceptions on men and women's own outcomes (actor-effects) as well as on their partner's outcomes (partner-effects; Cook & Kenny, 2005). Investigating relative status perceptions of both the man and the woman in the relationship allows us to disentangle the different dyadic processes that might be going on.

Traditionalism of the relationship is usually indicated by using a single objective indictor of status, household-income as a proxy (e.g., Pierce, Dahl, & Nielsen, 2013; Bertrand, Kamenica, & Pan, 2015). Above objective indicators, we will also include a subjective indicator of societal status. Specifically, we will include the perception of educational level and prestige in society as well as the perception of income as variables that characterize relational features (Adler et al., 2000; Major & O'Brien, 2005). This allows us to have a more fine-grained analysis on the extent to which a man and woman within a relationship agree about their status division within their relationship.

Previous research investigated the effect of women's relative income on relationship quality, as this is an important relationship outcome in predicting persistence and positive affect for couples (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998).

However, the extent to which a partner fulfills a person most important needs, such as needs for intimacy, companionship, sexuality, security, and emotional involvement is another important predictor of satisfying relationships (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998). Based on this, we will also include relationship commitment, conflict and sexual satisfaction in order to investigate whether these relationship outcomes are also affected by backlash mechanisms.

Hypotheses

We expect that partners in a non-traditional relationship experience negative relationship outcomes and will investigate whether these negative effects are caused by internalized prescriptive stereotypes of their relationship (see Figure 1). Specifically, we will investigate whether the perception that the woman has the highest status in the relationship affects men and women's own relationship outcomes (actor effects), but also their partner's relationship outcomes (partner effects). Moreover, we will investigate whether perceiving the relationship to be non-traditional will also predict the perception that the woman is the dominant and agentic one in the relationship and the man is the weak one in the relationship. In turn, we will compare these dominance or weakness perceptions in the extent to which they mediate the negative effect of perceived relative status on relationship outcomes. Furthermore, we expect that these backlash mechanisms will influence participant's relationship quality as well as relationship commitment, conflict and sexual satisfaction. Based on previous work (Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted), we further check whether being the agentic one in the relationship might buffer negative relationship outcomes for women. We will conduct separate analyses to the differences in impact of objective status differences (i.e., relative income, educational, and working hours difference) as compared to subjective status differences. We conduct these analyses to test our expectation that perceived, subjective status differences have effects on relationship outcomes that are not identical to the effects of objective status differences.
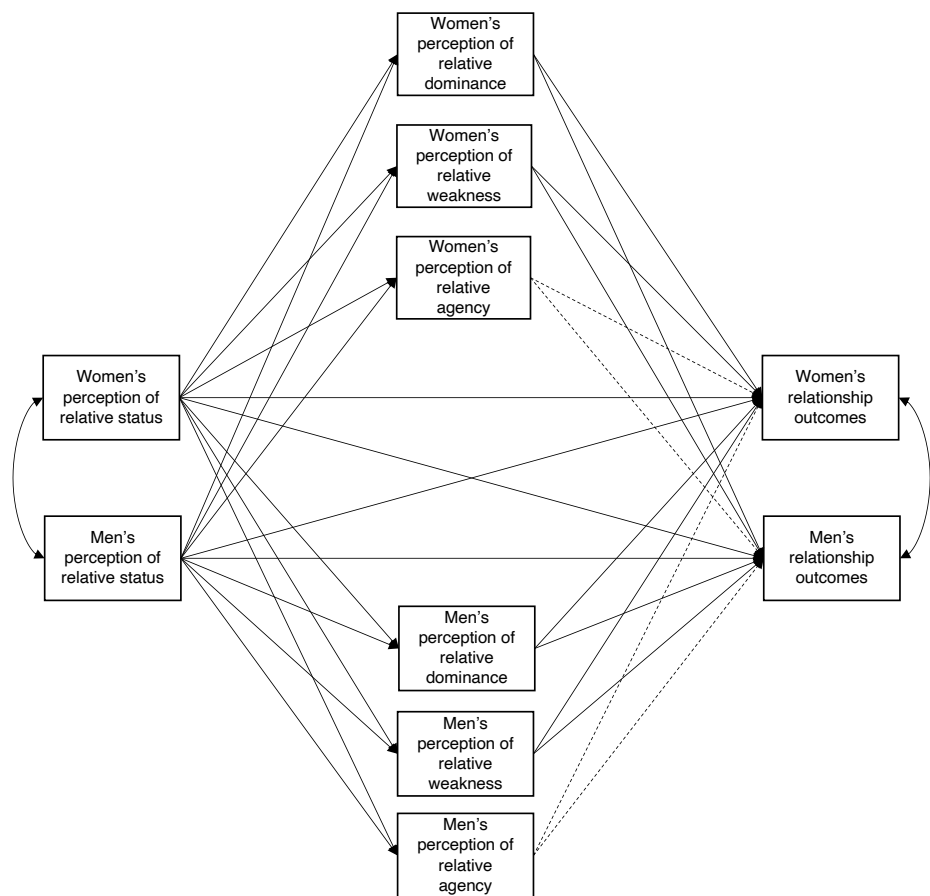
Figure 1. Theorized model.
Note. Dotted lines represent relations of which we have no specific expectations. We included covariances among all the mediator variables to control for couples' interdependence but did not include these in the model in order to keep the graph clear.

Method

Participants and design

Participants were heterosexual couples who had been in a relationship for at least one year and of which both partners were over 18 years of age and worked at least 12 hours a week. In total, 94 heterosexual couples ($N = 188$) met the requirements and completely filled out the questionnaire. Another 34 couples met the requirements but had only one partner filling out the complete questionnaire. These couples were excluded from analyses as we only ran models on the couple-level. In total, 117 women and 105 men completed the survey. Participant's demographics were similar for both men and women (see Table 1).

Table 1

Participant characteristics

Measure	%	M	SD	%	M	SD
		Men			Women	
Age		43.72	13.56		41.74	13.58
Highest degree of education: - High school/ vocational degree - College degree or bachelor's degree - University master's degree	2.9 43.8 34.3			3.4 39.3 44.4		
Duration of relationship in years		17.31	12.89		16.88	12.89
Cohabiting with partner	89.5			89.7		
Married with partner	46.7			46.2		
Number of children		2.36	1.20		2.29	1.21
Age youngest child		17.31	7.34		17.37	7.71
Age child (for parents with one child)		11.89	9.47		10.10	10.47
Organizational tenure in years		10.50	10.54		8.62	9.87
Hours working per week		39.82	9.04		34.95	9.31
Net income in euros		2941.99	1562.12		2195.59	1127.59
Own status		7.43	.90		7.18	1.15
Status assigned to partner		7.27	1.04		7.48	1.32

Procedure

Participants were recruited via convenience sampling. We first asked participants whether they would like to participate in a partner study. If they agreed, we asked for both their own and their partner's email address and gave each couple a partner code. We sent an email to all participants when we had enough participants recruited and deleted the file where participants' code and email address were linked to each other. This way we were able to ensure couples that we could not identify their responses to them individually, but still be able to link couples to each other.

The survey was distributed online and participants first read an informed consent where they were informed that their responses would be treated confidentially, that participation was voluntary and that participants had to be in a relationship for at least one year, both couples should both have a job for at least 12 hours a week and that participants were 18 years or older. Next, participants filled out a series of questions including questions regarding their background information, societal status, and relationship outcomes. At the end of the survey, participants read a debriefing in which they were thanked for their participation and were asked to fill out potential comments/complaints. We distributed three vouchers through a lottery in which couples could win €100 to be used for a dinner with each other. The survey took on average 15 minutes to complete.

Materials

All items were measured on 7-point Likert scales with response options ranging from 1 (*completely disagree*) to 7 (*completely agree*), unless otherwise indicated. Materials are described based on chronological order in the survey.

Demographic background information. Participants were asked to indicate their gender, age, highest completed education, marital status, employment status, organizational tenure in years, number of hours working per week according to their contract and in reality, net income per month, relationship duration with partner in years, how many children they had and the age of the youngest child.

Perceived relative status. We measured women and men's status based on a subjective socioeconomic status ladder measure with ten different rungs (Adler, Epel, Castellazzo, & Ickovics, 2000). We described that people at the top of the ladder are best off in terms of income, education and respected jobs, whereas people at the bottom are worst off. We asked women and men to think about their own situation and to indicate the rung where they would place themselves, ($M_{women} = 7.20$, $SD_{women} = 1.15$; $M_{men} = 7.44$, $SD_{men} = .90$) and their partners, ($M_{women} = 7.50$, $SD_{women} = 1.32$; $M_{men} = 7.27$, $SD_{men} = 1.04$). We then measured participants' perceived relative status by subtracting the perceived status of the man from the perceived status of the woman in the relationship.

Perceived relative dominance. We asked participants to rate both themselves and their partner on perceived dominance in the relationship. Again, we used an adjusted version of Heilman & Wallen's (2010) dominance traits by attenuating the tone of the traits. Rather than asking whether participants felt that they were abrasive, manipulative, selfish, and cold we asked participants the extent to which they felt themselves to be ruthless, dominant, and whether they hold the reins in the relationship ($\alpha_{women} = .69$ and $\alpha_{men} = .70$). We asked participants to indicate the extent to which they felt their partners possess these traits in the re-lationship ($\alpha_{women} = .67$ and $\alpha_{men} = .76$).[1] Relative dominance according to women was calculated by subtracting women's own perception of their dominance from women's perception of their partner's dominance in the relationship. Relative dominance according to men was calculated by subtracting men's perception of their partner's dominance from men's own perception of dominance in the rela-tionship.

Perceived relative weakness. We asked participants to rate both themselves and their partner on perceived weakness in the relationship. We used an ad-justed version of Heilman and Wallen's (2010) weakness traits by attenuating the tone of the traits. Rather than asking whether participants felt that they were wimpy, insecure, wishy-washy and spineless, we asked participants to indicate the extent to which they felt themselves to be passive, insecure, compliant and a push-over in the relationship ($\alpha_{women} = .38$ and $\alpha_{men} = .34$). Next, we asked participants the extent to which they felt their partners possess these traits in

1 In the original scale, we also included the extent to which participants felt themselves and their partner to be 'firm' in the relationship. Reliability analyses showed that the alphas for the 4-item scale were less satisfying than the alphas for the 3-item scale ($\alpha_{womenself} = .64$; $\alpha_{menself} = .73$; $\alpha_{womenpartner} = .65$; $\alpha_{menpartner} = .81$)

the relationship (α_{women} = .41 and α_{men} = .47). We decided to include items 'passive' and 'being a push-over' in the final scale as result of a reliability analyses ($r_{womenself}$ = .22, p = .016; $r_{womenpartner}$ = .36, p < .001; $r_{menself}$ = .28, p = .004; $r_{menpartner}$ = .28, p = .005). We measured relative weakness according to women by subtracting women's own perception of weakness in the relationship from women's perception of their partners' weakness. Relative weakness according to men was calculated by subtracting men's perception of weakness from men's own perception of weakness in the relationship.

Because of the reduced reliability of the four weakness items, we further examined whether dominance and weakness are two different constructs. We conducted four principal component analyses (PCA) with orthogonal rotation (varimax): 1) on the eight items of women's own evaluation of their dominance and weakness in the relationship, 2) on the eight items of how women evaluate their partner's dominance and weakness, 3) on the eight items of men's own evaluation of their dominance and weakness in the relationship and 4) on the eight items of how men evaluate their partner's dominance and weakness. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measures revealed that the sampling adequacy for each PCA was mediocre to good for the analysis, KMO >.63. Barlett's test of sphericity indicated that correlations between items were sufficiently large for all four PCA's, χ^2 (28) > 124.02, all p's <.001. All factor loadings after rotation showed that the items that we included in our final analyses represented two different components (see Appendix D for all rotated factor loadings).

Perceived relative agency. We asked participants to rate both themselves and their partner on perceived agency in the relationship. We used four items from *Bem's Sex Role Inventory* (Bem, 1981), assessing to what extent participants felt themselves to be competitive and independent in their relationship, but also whether they feel they defend their own beliefs and whether it is easy for them to make decisions in their relationship (α_{women} = .52 and α_{men} = .51). Next, we used the same four items to assess the extent to which participants felt their partner is agentic in the relationship (α_{women} = .53 and α_{men} = .39). Scale reliability remained insufficient and we therefore decided to exclude relative agency from our further analyses.

Relationship quality. We measured participant's relationship quality using one item of the time competition survey (Van der Lippe & Glebbeek, 2003). This item

was "In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship? Please, indicate this on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 = very unsatisfied, 10 = very satisfied)." Relationship quality is a construct that can reliably be measured with a single item (see e.g., Blom & Hewitt, 2019; Hardie Geist, & Lucas, 2014).

Relationship commitment. We measured participant's relationship commitment using six items of Rusbult, Martz and Agnew (1998). Examples of items were "I would like my relationship to last much longer," and "I feel emotionally very attached to my partner." (α_{women} = .71 and α_{men} = .74).

Relationship conflict. We measured participant's relationship conflict using three items of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976). These items were "How often do you and your partner disagree?," "How often do you and your partner get on each other's nerves?," and "How often do you and your partner quarrel?" (α_{women} = .75 and α_{men} = .78). Answers ranged from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*always*).

Sexual satisfaction. We measured participant's sexual satisfaction using six items of Hudson's (1998) Index of Sexual Satisfaction. Examples of items were "I feel a great deal of sexual desire for my partner," and "I am interested in having sex with my partner." (α_{women} = .92 and α_{men} = .90).

Data analysis strategy

In order to test our theoretical model (see Figure 1), we conducted a series of *Actor-Partner Interdependence Mediation Model* analyses (APIMeM; Ledermann, Macho & Kenny, 2011) using structural equation modelling in Mplus (Muthén & Muthén, 2008). We treated dyad members as distinguishable as they were in heterosexual relationships. This allowed us to differentiate between mechanisms influencing women's perceived relationship outcomes compared to the mechanisms influencing men's perceived relationship outcomes.

Following Ledermann and colleagues (2010), we first estimated saturated models and tested all effects. Then, we used the step-wise modeling procedure to find the parsimonious model. In our APIMeM models, *actor* effects refer to the effect of participants' own perceptions of their relative status and relative traits on their relationship outcomes. *Partner* effects refer to the direct effect of

participants' own perceptions of the relative status division on their partners' perception of relative weakness and dominance, and their partners' relationship outcomes, but also the direct effect of participants' own perceptions of relative weakness and dominance on their partners' relationship outcomes.

There was data interdependence, because participants were couples in hetero-sexual relationships. To account for the interdependence between dyad's per-ception of relative status divisions, traits, and relationship outcomes, we spec-ified covariances between the two independent variables (i.e., relative status according to man vs. woman), mediators (i.e., relative dominance according to man vs. woman, and relative weakness according to man vs. woman) and two dependent variables (i.e., man's vs. woman's relationship quality).

Results

Preliminary analyses

Correlations between background, predictor and outcome variables were ana-lyzed to identify potential covariates (see Table 2). Participants' age, their rela-tionship duration, but also whether they had children, were in a cohabiting rela-tionship or were married were associated with our most important predictor and outcome variables. For instance, participant's age was associated with women's perception that the man was more dominant in the relationship compared to the woman. Also, being married was associated with higher levels of relationship quality reported by women, whereas having children was associated with lower levels or relationship quality reported by women (see Table 2).

Interestingly, men and women strongly agreed on the status division within their own relationship ($r = .75$, $p < .001$). There was also convergence in their per-ception of who is the dominant one in the relationship ($r = .56$, $p < .001$), their perception of who is the weak one in the relationship ($r = .45$, $p < .001$) and their relationship quality ($r = .34$, $p = .001$).

Not surprisingly, correlations of relevant background variables between men and women are almost completely overlapping ($r > .94$, $p < .001$). To reduce multicollinearity we decided to include only the background variables for wom-en, that is their age, relationship duration, having children (yes/no), having a

cohabiting relationship (yes/no), and being married (yes/no). Moreover, we controlled for the absolute status of the couple by calculating the mean of women's and men's own perception of their status. We did this to make sure that differences in perceptions of dominance, weakness and experienced relationship quality were not due to the fact that some couples perceived higher absolute status compared to other couples.

Furthermore, we tested whether objective status indicators (i.e., relative income, education level and working hours difference) might provide a potential alternative explanation for the lower relationship outcomes experienced by non-traditional couples. In order to do so, we analyzed similar actor-partner interdependence models as for the models investigating subjective status indicators (see below for a more thorough explanation). The model with actor effects only provided good fit to our data, χ^2 ($df = 4$) = 2.62, p = .624, RMSEA = .00, CFI = 1.00, SRMR = .01, and showed no effects of objective status differences on relationship quality for men and women via perceived relative dominance and/or weakness.

Table 2

Correlation analyses of relevant background variables, independent variables, mediators and dependent variables

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.	25.	26.	27.	28.	29.	30.	31.
1. Age M	-																														
2. Age W	.97**	-																													
3. Education M	.17	.13	-																												
4. Education W	-.08	-.21*	.38**	-																											
5. Cohabiting M	-.15	-.15	-.11	-.01	-																										
6. Cohabiting W	-.22*	-.27**	-.13	.05	.94**	-																									
7. Married M	-.55**	-.62**	.01	.25*	.27**	.31**	-																								
8. Married W	-.61**	-.64**	.05	.28**	.29**	.30**	1.00**	-																							
9. Tenure M	.62**	.64**	.09	.01	-.09	-.13	-.31**	-.40**	-																						
10. Tenure W	.55**	.40**	.03	-.14	-.13	-.12	-.41**	-.38**	.47**	-																					
11. Relationship duration M	.77**	.81**	.06	-.21*	-.35**	-.35**	-.68**	-.70**	.47**	.50**	-																				
12. Relationship duration W	.78**	.82**	.04	-.29**	-.32**	-.35**	-.69**	-.70**	.48**	.38**	.99**	-																			
13. Children M	.78**	.79**	.04	-.11	-.18	-.19	-.61**	-.65**	.44**	.35**	.67**	.66**	-																		
14. Children W	.80**	.76**	.06	-.16	-.17	-.27**	-.69**	-.67**	.48**	.32**	.70**	.68**	.96**	-																	
15. Income difference	-.02	-.08	.03	.19	-.17	-.08	-.05	-.05	-.14	.06	-.08	-.09	-.10	-.13	-																
16. Education difference	-.21*	-.23*	-.57**	.54**	.08	.16	.18	.18	-.09	-.27**	-.24*	-.24*	-.13	-.16	.13	-															
17. Work hours difference	-.09	-.16	.20	.29**	.17	.20	.24*	.24*	-.13	-.15	-.29**	-.28**	-.20	-.26*	.48**	.07	-														
18. Relative status M	-.06	-.11	-.16	.42**	.07	.12	.05	.06	-.09	-.04	-.14	-.14	-.10	-.14	.64**	.48**	.54**	-													
19. Relative status W	.00	-.07	.00	.36**	.06	.11	.03	.03	-.07	.09	-.10	-.08	-.06	-.04	.67**	.38**	.46**	.75**	-												
20. Relative dominance M	-.03	-.01	.05	.03	.00	-.05	-.14	-.05	-.04	.13	.02	.05	.02	.04	.15	-.06	.15	.19	.19	-											
21. Relative dominance W	-.22*	-.22*	.00	.01	-.17	-.06	.04	.02	-.11	-.05	-.06	-.05	-.12	-.17	.29**	.03	.11	.15	.22*	.56**	-										
22. Relative weakness M	-.12	-.08	-.09	.11	-.08	-.09	-.14	-.15	-.08	-.03	.03	.07	-.09	-.01	.14	.13	.09	.19	.12	.52**	.37*	-									
23. Relative weakness W	-.12	-.10	-.04	.10	-.05	-.15	.03	.02	-.13	-.02	-.11	-.05	-.08	-.03	.27*	.12	.22*	.23*	.50**	.45**	.45**	-									
24. Relationship quality M	-.12	-.11	-.04	.01	.12	.12	.15	.09	-.01	-.07	-.17	-.16	-.14	-.13	-.08	.04	-.07	-.08	.05	-.17	-.01	-.11	-.12	-							
25. Relationship quality W	-.29**	-.31**	.06	.12	-.08	.00	.25*	.22*	-.11	-.13	-.28**	-.31**	-.28**	-.31**	.00	.04	.08	-.01	.08	.10	-.06	-.19*	.34**	-							
26. Commitment M	.04	.05	-.16	.04	.18	.00	.01	.01	.02	.05	.03	.04	.08	.08	.18	.05	.12	.14	.01	.07	-.03	.33**	.07	-							
27. Commitment W	-.05	-.13	.04	.12	-.17	-.17	.01	.01	.02	-.10	-.06	-.10	-.08	-.10	.21*	.01	.17	.21*	.12	.00	.11	.00	-.04	.06	.55**	-					
28. Conflict M	.11	.10	.16	.15	-.09	-.11	.01	-.01	.02	.05	.05	.07	.02	.04	.03	.01	.10	.09	.28**	.06	.18	.20	-.36**	-.15	-.22*	.04	-				
29. Conflict W	.03	.07	.04	.05	-.10	-.02	.00	-.05	-.01	.02	.07	.07	.05	.08	-.03	.21*	.01	.01	.03	.08	.08	.15	.14	-.16	-.41**	.04	-.23*	.31**	-		
30. Sexual satisfaction M	-.35**	-.32**	-.16	.00	.20*	.22*	.22*	.25*	-.29**	-.23*	-.28**	-.25*	-.27**	-.28**	-.21*	.14	-.10	.07	.11	.13	.09	.04	.42**	.22*	.24*	.09	-.23*	.31**	-		
31. Sexual satisfaction W	-.40**	-.46**	.11	.19*	.21*	.30**	.40**	.40**	-.19*	-.27*	-.43**	-.44**	-.41**	-.45**	-.09	.05	-.01	.14	-.10	-.21*	-.04	-.14	-.20*	.35**	.59**	.03	.27**	-.16	-.27**	.28**	-

Note. ** *p* < .01, * *p* < .05, M = men, W = women, Cohabiting and Married are dummy variables with 1 = yes, 0 = no.

Actor-partner interdependence mediation models

In order to find out whether there were differences in effects for women and men, we first estimated the saturated model including all actor and partner effects, and direct and indirect paths for men and women. We repeated this procedure four times, as we investigated the actor-partner mediation for four different outcome variables: relationship quality, relationship commitment, relationship conflict and sexual satisfaction. The saturated model with relationship quality as outcome variable showed no significant direct effects of perceived relative status and relationship quality for both men and women. However, this model showed significant indirect paths for women, but not for men. As a consequence, we kept the effects for men and women separately. We estimated alternative models including 1) a model with only actor effects, 2) a model with only partner effects, and 3) a model in which we included actor and partner effects for the direct paths (i.e., relative status to relationship quality), but only actor effects for the indirect paths. The model with partner effects only provided bad fit to our data, χ^2 ($df = 10$) = 29.45, $p = .001$, RMSEA = .12, CFI = .88, SRMR = .02. Both the models with actor effects only, χ^2 ($df = 10$) = 6.78, $p = .746$, RMSEA = .00, CFI = 1.00, SRMR = .02 and actor and partner effects for the direct effects, χ^2 ($df = 8$) = 4.05, $p = .853$, RMSEA = .00, CFI = 1.00, SRMR = .02 provided excellent fit to our data. A chi-square difference test between these models provided no significant increase of fit for the more complex model with actor and partner effects for the direct effects, $\Delta\chi^2$ ($\Delta df = 2$) = 2.73, $p = .255$. For this reason, we decided to report the most parsimonious model including actor effects only.

The models for the other three outcome variables (i.e., relationship commitment, conflict and sexual satisfaction) again showed some significant actor effects, but no partner effects. We thus interpreted the models with actor effects only which provided good fit to our data with regards to relationship commitment, χ^2 ($df = 10$) = 5.02, $p = .890$, RMSEA = .00, CFI = 1.00, SRMR = .02, relationship conflict, χ^2 ($df = 10$) = 5.18, $p = .879$, RMSEA = .00, CFI = 1.00, SRMR = .02, and sexual satisfaction, χ^2 ($df = 10$) = 5.88, $p = .825$, RMSEA = .00, CFI = 1.00, SRMR = .02.

**Do perceived status differences predict lower relationship quality via per-
ceived relative weakness?**

We found no direct effects of perceived relative status on relationship quality for
women, b = -.13, SE = .10, p = .210, C.I. [-.30; .10] or men, b = -.11, SE = .12,
p = .349, C.I. [-.33; .12]. Thus, we did not find that women's or men's perception
that the woman has higher status in the relationship predicted lower relationship
quality for themselves (see Figure 2).

However, we found an effect of women's perceived relative status on women's
perceived relative weakness, b = .22, SE = .09, p = .010, C.I. [.07; .42] and of
men's perceived relative status on men's perceived relative weakness, b = .18,
SE = .09, p = .048, C.I. [.00; .35]. This means that when men and women per-
ceived the woman to have higher status than the man in the relationship, the
more men and women also believed that the man was the weak one in the rela-
tionship (see Figure 2).

Further, if women perceived the man to be the weak one in the relationship,
they also reported lower relationship quality, b = -.30, SE = .10, p = .004, C.I.
[-.52; -.11]. We did not find this effect for men, b = -.03, SE = .10, p = .758,
C.I. [-.21; .17]. In line with these findings, we found an indirect effect of women's
perceived relative status on women's relationship quality via women's perceived
relative weakness, C.I. [-.17; -.02]. We found no indirect effects of men's per-
ceived relative status on men's relationship quality via men's perceived relative
weakness, C.I. [-.05; .03; see Figure 2].

**Do perceived status differences predict lower relationship quality via per-
ceived relative dominance?**

We found no effects of women's perceived relative status on women's perceived
relative dominance, b = .19, SE = .11, p = .086, C.I. [-.05; .39] and of men's
perceived relative status on men's perceived relative dominance, b = .18, SE
= .10, p = .090, C.I. [-.02; .39]. Also, we found no effects of women's perceived
relative dominance on women's relationship quality, b = .21, SE = .12, p = .084,
C.I. [-.02; .46] and of men's perceived relative status on men's perceived rela-
tive dominance, b = -.13, SE = .10, p = .220, C.I. [-.33; .07]. In line with these
findings, there was also no indirect effect of women's perceived relative status

on women's relationship quality via women's perceived relative dominance, C.I. [-.01; .15]. There were also no indirect effects of men's perceived relative status on men's relationship quality via men's perceived relative dominance, C.I. [-.10; .01; see Figure 2].

Do backlash mechanisms predict relationship commitment, conflict, and sexual satisfaction?

Regarding relationship commitment, the perception that the man was the weak one in non-traditional relationships was not related to changes in relationship commitment among women nor men.

Regarding relationship conflict, we found a marginal significant effect of women's perceived relative weakness on their relationship conflict, $b = .11$, $SE = .06$, $p = .076$, C.I. [-.01; .23; see Figure 3]. The indirect effect of women's perceived relative status on their relationship conflict via their perceived weakness was significant, C.I. [.00; .07], indicating that women who perceived themselves to have higher status than their partner reported more relationship conflict due to their perception that the partner is the weak one in the relationship. Also, we found an effect of men's perceived dominance on their relationship conflict, indicating that the more men perceived their partner to be the dominant one the more relationship conflict they reported, $b = .14$, $SE = .07$, $p = .039$, C.I. [.02; .30]. However, the indirect effect of men's perceived relative status on their experienced relationship conflict via their perceived relative dominance was not significant, C.I. [-.00; .09].

Regarding sexual satisfaction, the final model showed a significant effect of women's perceived relative weakness on their sexual satisfaction, indicating that the more women perceived their partner to be the weak one in the relationship the lower sexual satisfaction they reported, $b = -.23$, $SE = .11$, $p = .040$, C.I. [-.45; -.01; see Figure 4]. Also, the indirect effect of women's perceived societal status on their sexual satisfaction via their perceived weakness was significant, C.I. [-.14; -.01], indicating that women who perceived themselves to have higher status than their partner reported lower sexual satisfaction due to their perception that the partner is the weak one in the relationship.
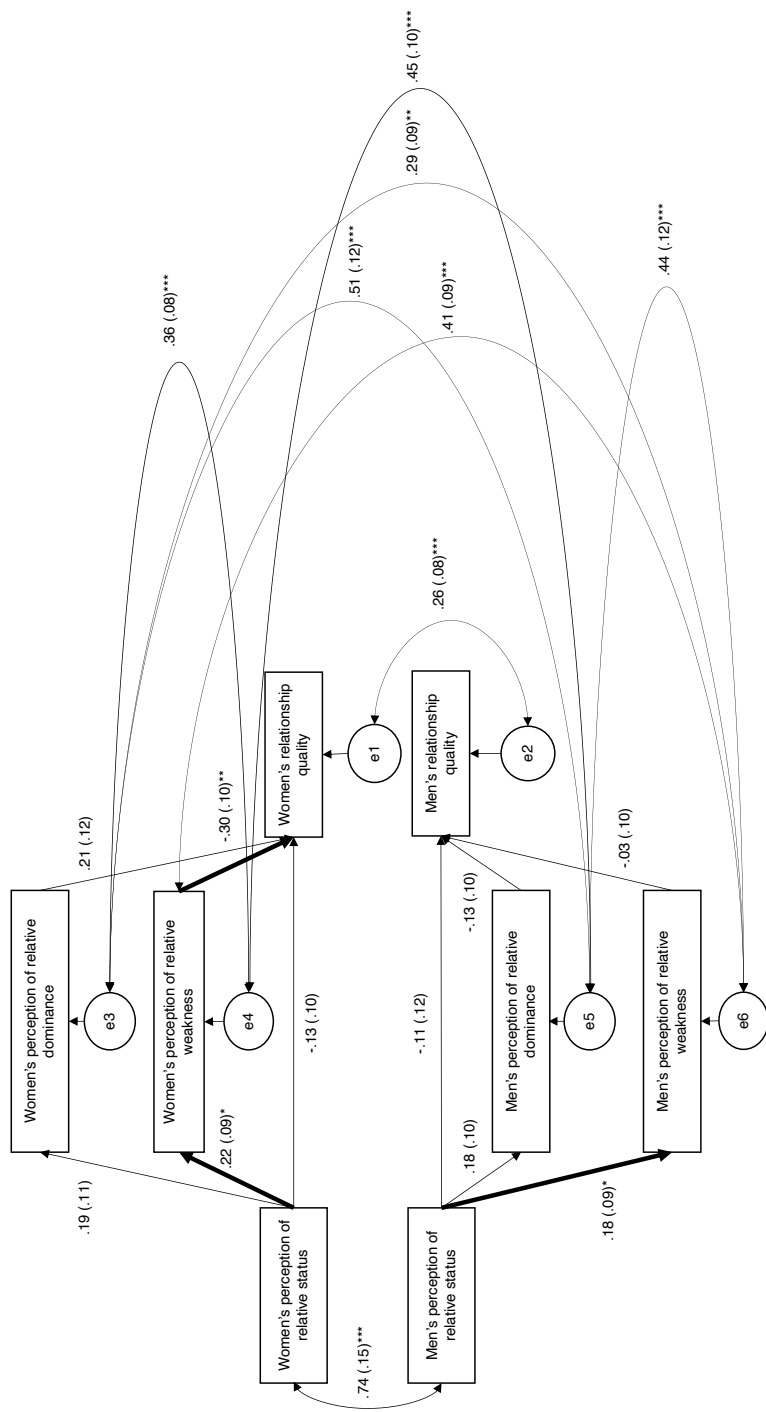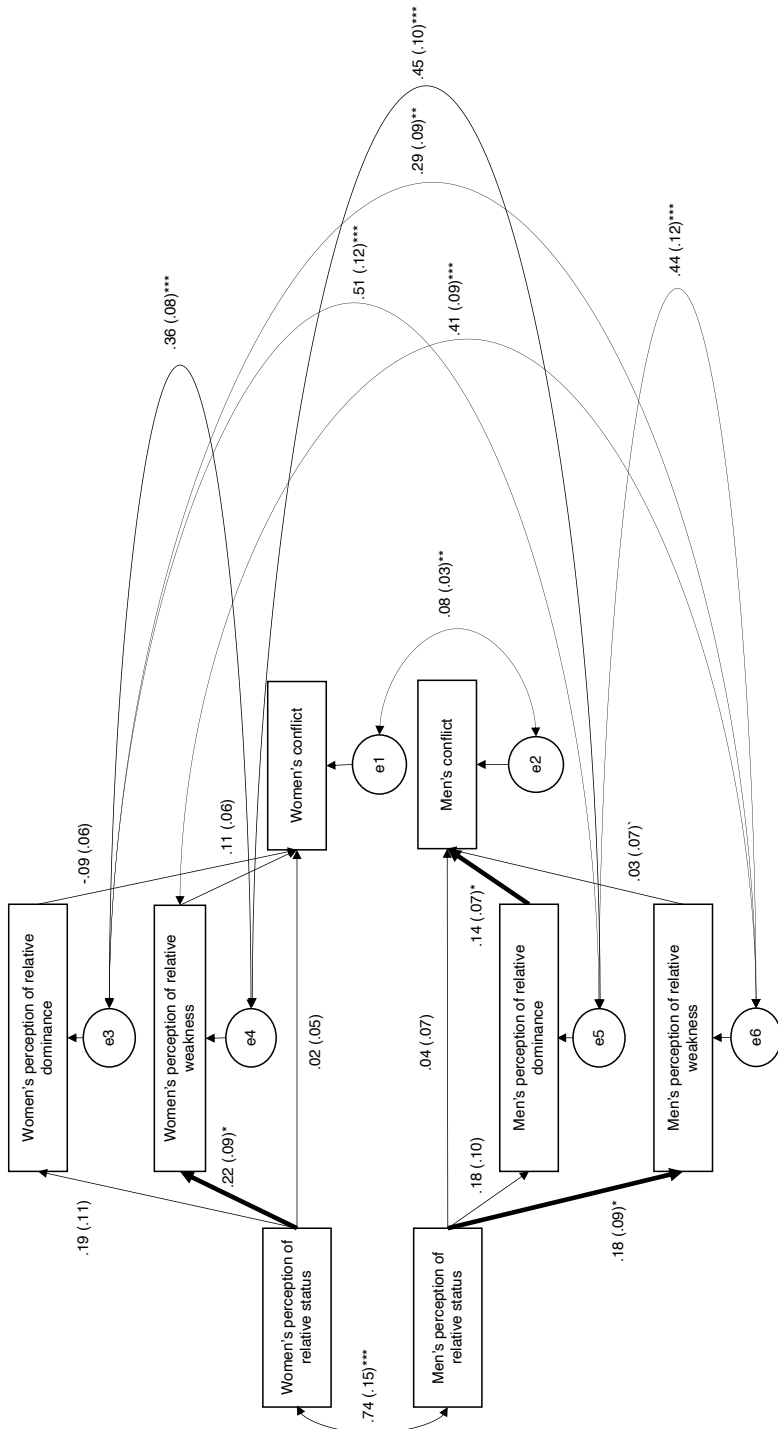
Figure 2. Actor-partner interdependence mediation model for relationship quality with actor effects only.

Figure 3. Actor-partner interdependence mediation model for relationship conflict with actor effects only.
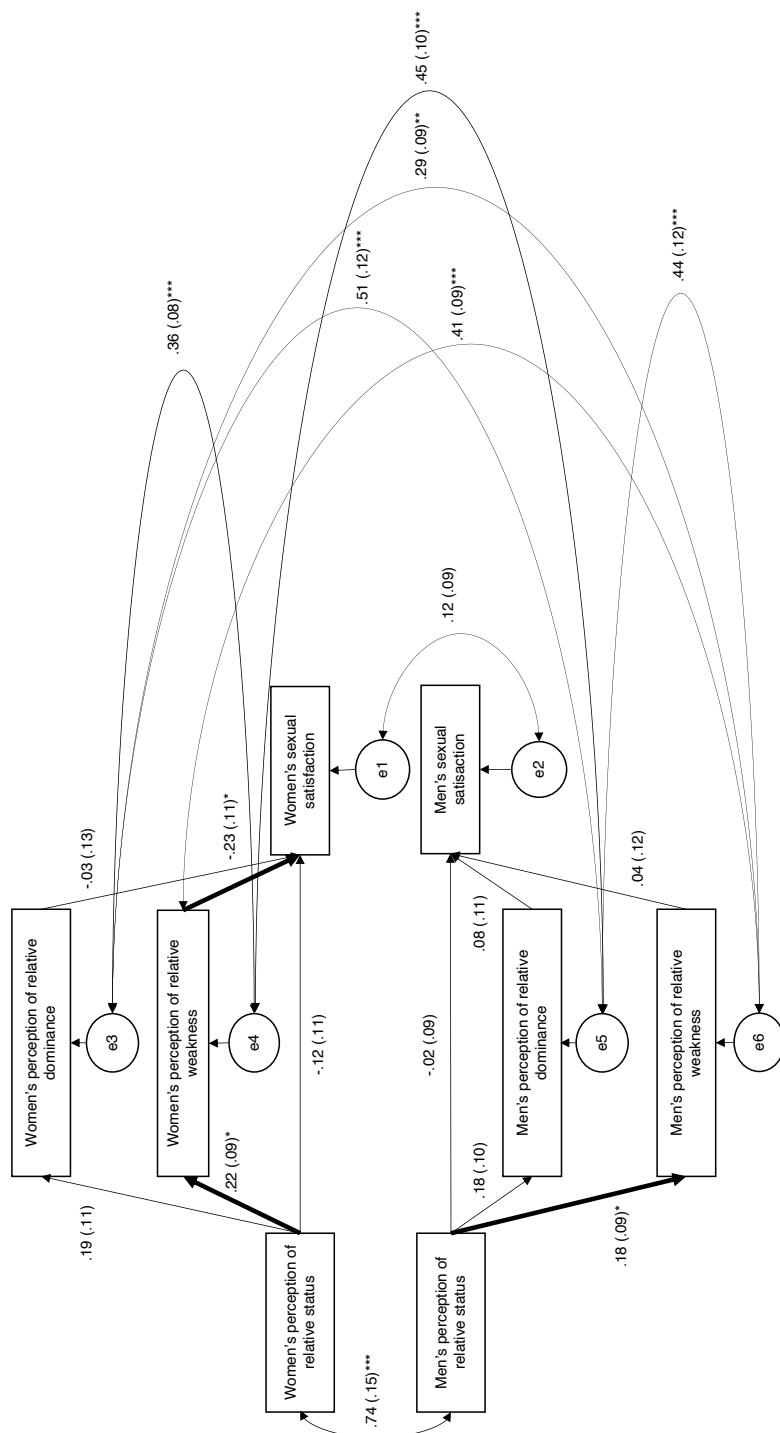
Figure 4. Actor-partner interdependence mediation model for sexual satisfaction with actor effects only.

Discussion

Previous research has shown that couples who violate the gender hierarchy elicit backlash (Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, under review; MacInnis & Buliga, 2019; Hettinger, Hutchinson, & Bosson, 2014). Specifically, women with higher status her partner are perceived as the dominant one in the relationship, whereas men are perceived as the weak one. As a consequence, women are perceived to be less likeable, men are less respected and the relationship is perceived to be less satisfying (Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, under review). We extend this work by showing how these perceptions translate to partners who perceive that the woman has higher status than the man in the relationship. Although couples might have a more detailed evaluation of each other making them less susceptible for stereotypical judgments compared to strangers (Trope & Libermann, 2010), our results suggest that couples are also sensitive to the gender norms in their environment and experience the negative consequences of breaking with these norms themselves too. Specifically, women in non-traditional relationships perceive the man to be the weak one in the relationship resulting in that they report lower relationship satisfaction, lower sexual satisfaction and higher relationship conflict. Men in non-traditional relationships also perceive that they are the weak one in the relationship, but this has no repercussions for their relationship outcomes (i.e., their relationship quality, sexual satisfaction and relationship conflict). These findings are a first indication that at least some backlash mechanisms spill over to couples themselves and that especially women experience negative consequences of these internalized stereotypical perceptions.

It seems that especially men's lower status in the relationship has repercussions for women's relationship outcomes. Women's higher status in the relationship seems less problematic as women nor men perceived the woman to be the dominant one in the relationship when they perceived the woman to have higher status than the man. This is in line with a growing body of research showing that gendered norms for men are stricter than for women (Vandello et al., 2008; Croft, Schmader, & Block, 2015; Rudman & Mescher, 2013). An explanation that is often given for this discrepancy is that lower status groups (i.e., women) aspire to move towards higher status groups (i.e., men), but higher status groups devalue lower status groups and are not willing to move towards these groups (Schmader, Major, Eccleston, & McCoy, 2001). Partners might thus

understand why women are gaining higher status, but might not understand why men accept to have relatively less status in their relationships, resulting in that especially women in their relationship perceive these men to be the weak one in the relationship.

Although gender norms might be stricter for men in non-traditional relationships compared to women, women still risk a dominance penalty from others outside the relationship when they have surpassed their partner in status (Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted; MacInnis & Baluga, 2019). This discrepancy between what others outside the relationship think versus what couples themselves think might be explained by the construal-level theory that states that partners have a more detailed, less heuristic view of each other (Trope & Libermann, 2010). Couples -as compared to others outside the relationship- might perceive dominance in the relationship in less stereotypical ways. There is some evidence that having more information can alter backlash mechanisms for women. For instance, Bear and Glick (2017) showed that if people believe a woman is the breadwinner of the family because she needs to provide for the family rather than prefers to pursue a career can reduce her caregiving penalty. Also, Abele and Wojciszke (2007) argue that women's agency in relationships can be seen as benefitting both the self and the partner rather than only the self. Although women with higher status than their partner are penalized by strangers as they view her as the dominant one in the relationship (Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted), women might be protected for these backlash mechanisms within the relationship as couples have found ways to justify women's higher status role.

Although both men and women recognize that the man is the weak one in the relationship when they perceive the woman to have higher status than the man, this only results in negative relationship outcomes for women and not for men. Research of self-construal might be relevant here, as researchers have pointed out that men and women can differ in their self-construal as a consequence of gender stereotypes. Specifically, men are more likely to have an independent self-construal, whereas women are more like to have an interdependent self-construal (Guimond, Chatard, Martinot, Crisp, & Redershoff, 2006; Maddux & Brewer, 2005). It could be that women are more likely to internalize their relative weakness perceptions as they identify more on the dyadic level ('we' as a couple) than man who identify more on the individual level ('I' and 'my partner').

Furthermore, it could also be that men are less likely to report negative rela-
tionship outcomes, given that gendered norms are stricter for men nowadays
and both men and women fear deviating from gendered norms (Vandello et al.,
2008; Croft, Schmader, & Block, 2015; Rudman & Mescher, 2013; Amanatullah
& Morris, 2010; Cherry & Deaux, 1978).

Implications

The findings of this study are in line with the growing evidence of the difficulties
that men and women face when their relationship is not meeting gendered ex-
pectations of status divisions (e.g., Meisenbach, 2009; Pierce, Dahl, & Nielsen,
2013; Bertrand, Kamenica, & Pan, 2015; Wilcox & Nock, 2006; Zhang, 2015).
We would like to stress that these findings do not implicate that traditional rela-
tionships are the most desirable and optimal relationship which couples should
strive for. Both in terms of status divisions in the relationships and masculine
and feminine traits couples possess, there is strong evidence suggesting that
traditional relationships are not satisfying for couples either (Marshall, 2010).
Couples who adhere to stereotypical gender roles were found to be less happy
with their relationship (Helms, Prouls, Klute, McHale & Clouter, 2006). Also,
both men and women desire warmth, affection and understanding when they
devote themselves to intimate relationships (Reis et al., 2003) and individuals
low in feminine traits do not provide these traits (Miller et al., 2003). It has been
argued that the most adjusted and happiest individuals in life are those who
possess both agentic and communal traits (Stake & Eisele, 2010). This also
spills over to relationships as individuals who possess both traits are likely to be
seen as desirable spouses and have satisfied partners (Marshall, 2010). Our re-
search suggests that prescriptive gender stereotypes of romantic relationships
direct individuals towards traditional relationships, whereas the most desirable
relationship for individuals is a relationship where partners moved away from
traditional gender roles.

Limitations and directions of future research

As we only investigated conscious reports of relationship quality, more research
is needed to investigate the effects of self and partner evaluations on a more
unconscious level. There is a growing body of research showing that explicit
partner evaluations show no correlations with implicit partner evaluations and

that especially these implicit partner evaluations are predictive of marital satisfaction over time (McNulty, Olson, Meltzer & Schaffer, 2013). An often-given explanation for the discrepancy between explicit and implicit relational evaluations is that individuals have a motivational bias to see their relationship in a positive light (Murray, 1999; McNulty, Baker, Olson, 2014; Olson, Fazio & Hermann, 2007). Although these implicit evaluations of self and relationship only include valence (i.e., having a positive versus negative implicit association of one's partner), these findings might be indicative of a potential drawback of our study. It could be that the explicit evaluations of relative dominance and weakness and experienced relationship satisfaction might not have accurately captured individuals' implicit attitudes of relative dominance, weakness and relationships satisfaction (e.g., Joel, Eastwick, & Finkel, 2017).

Also, participants were still aware that their partner also filled out the same questions, although we explicitly said that participants should fill out this questionnaire individually. It could be that participants evaluated their relationship to be more positive, in order to justify their answers when discussing them with their partner. Together, these circumstances might have evoked social desirability. Future research could examine whether implicit evaluations of dominance and weakness in the relationship have a difference influence on relationship outcomes compared to explicit evaluations.

Conclusion

Not only do men and women risk penalties from others when they violate traditional gender norms of romantic relationships, women who perceive themselves to have higher status than their partner also internalize at least part of these backlash mechanisms. Women's subjective experience to break with traditional status divisions impaired their relationship quality, sexual satisfaction and increased their experienced relationship conflict, because these women perceived their male partner to be the weak one in the relationship. These internalized stereotypical evaluations of relative weakness might be one reason why non-traditional couples experience less positive relationship outcomes and help explain how prescriptive gender stereotypes of romantic relationships constrain individuals to traditional relationships.

Chapter 4

All is nice and well until she outshines him

Higher societal status benefits women's well-being and relationship quality, unless they surpass their male partner

Abstract

In two studies, we find that climbing the societal ladder has positive effects for women up until the point that they surpass their male partner. In Study 1 ($N =$ 314), we found that women who have higher personal status report higher relationship quality, report themselves and their partner to be more satisfied with the income distribution and to worry less that this distribution might negatively affect their relationship. However, these effects reversed for women who exceeded their partner in societal status. In Study 2, a diary study ($N = 112$), we show how women's implicit endorsement of gender stereotypes qualify the negative effects of surpassing one's partner in status. Among women with higher status than their partner, traditional women adjusted their behavior to fit the gender norm, whereas egalitarian women did not, but felt guilty towards their partner. Combined, the studies show how relationship dynamics of women who have exceeded their partner in societal status provide another reason why the gender hierarchy remains intact.

Introduction

Despite the fact that many women in western countries have entered the work-force and gained higher educational degrees compared to women in earlier generations (OECD, 2018), heterosexual relationships in which the woman has higher societal status than her partner remain scarce (Pew Research Center, 2013; Portegijs & Van den Brakel, 2018). Moreover, couples who break with the traditional gender role expectation that the man should be the one with higher status in the relationship experience a range of negative relationship outcomes compared to more traditional couples (Syrda, 2019; Bertrand, Kamenica, & Pan, 2015; Wilcox & Nock, 2006; Zhang, 2015). It remains unclear how profound these negative relationship outcomes are and what underlying mechanisms are driving them.

In the current research, we examine how women's personal status as well as their status relative to their partner impact women's general well-being and experienced relationship outcomes. Furthermore, we examine to what extent women's daily well-being and experienced relationship outcomes depend upon the societal status of themselves relative to their partner. Especially such daily experiences may expose the impact that status divisions have on women's lives and further allows us to investigate women's intentions to adjust their behavior to fit the gender norm. We argue that persisting gender stereotypes are an im-portant reason why women who have surpassed their partner in status experi-ence negative relationship outcomes. For this reason, we argue that -among the women who perceive to have higher status than their partner- especially women who strongly internalized gender stereotypes of 'breadwinning men' and 'caring women' experience negative outcomes, while these negative outcomes are less strong for women with weaker internalized gender stereotypes.

How gender stereotypes direct people towards traditional relationships

People perceive a correspondence between the actions men and women en-gage in (i.e., the role they have) and their inner disposition (i.e., what they are like; Eagly, 1987). Gender stereotypes follow from observations of men and women in gender typical social roles (Eagly, 1987; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). Prescriptive stereotypes dictate that men should be the breadwinner of

their family and have higher status roles in society and that women should be the homemaker and take on lower status roles (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000; Heilman, 2001; Prentice & Carranza, 2002). For this reason, men are often associated with success and competence, whereas women are assumed to be less competent and less achievement-oriented (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001; Prenctice & Carranza, 2002). These gender stereotypes have shown to be highly persistent and are quite reluctant to change (Haines, Deaux, Lofaro, 2016).

Men and women who threaten the current gender hierarchy – in which men are associated with high status and women with low status- face prejudice and social penalties (Rudman et al., 2012; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Heilman & Wallen, 2010). This process is called 'backlash' and also operates when people evaluate romantic relationships where the woman has surpassed her male partner in societal status (MacInnis & Buliga, 2019; Hettinger, Hutchinson, & Bosson, 2014; Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted). Specifically, people expect a woman with a higher status profession than her male partner to be the dominant one in their relationship and therefore dislike her (i.e., dominance penalty), whereas they expect a man with lower status than his partner to be the weak one in their relationship and therefore disrespect him (i.e., weakness penalty; Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted). Also, people expect such non-traditional relationships to be less satisfying for the couple compared to more traditional relationships (MacInnis & Buliga, 2019; Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted).

Prescriptive gender stereotypes have their impact on romantic relationships by influencing men and women's beliefs and interactions. Women tend to believe that men are attracted to women who behave in a humble, compliant and agreeable way (Hornsey et al., 2015). Additionally, although men claim to be attracted to women who are as intelligent or more intelligent than they are, when they actually have to interact with a potential romantic partner, they tend to prefer women who are less intelligent than they are (Park, Young, & Eastwick, 2015). Men's implicit self-esteem suffers when their female partner experiences a success, especially the more relevant the success is to them (academic success vs. social success; Ratliff & Oishi, 2013). This seems to accommodate the preferences of women, as success and ambition are qualities in men that women find important when selecting a partner (Wilbur & Campbell, 2010; Buss, 2004).

Women gaining higher status: Positive effects until they exceed their partner

The effects of prescriptive stereotypes on romantic relationships guide how women's societal status relative to their partner is related to their own relationship outcomes, such that higher personal status has positive effects until women surpass their partner in societal status. Compared to couples with only one source of income, couples who have two sources of income experience higher quality of life (Belle, 1990). Two incomes relieve men from being the sole breadwinner and give women the opportunity to experience the satisfaction of work outside the house (Bartley, Blanton, & Gilliard, 2005; Belle, 1990). Most dual-career couples agree that equality in relationships is beneficial for both husbands and wives (Rosenbluth, Steil, & Whicomb, 1998). Indeed, couples with higher socioeconomic status reported to be happier with their marriages and were less likely to divorce compared to couples with lower socioeconomic status (Wilcox & Marquardt, 2010).

However, women who surpass their partner in status and thus violate prescriptive stereotypes face negative outcomes. When thinking about their role as provider, female breadwinners reported feelings of worry, guilt and pressure (Meisenbach, 2009). Couples in relationships where women earn more than 50% of the total household income indicate being less satisfied with their marriage (Syrda, 2019; Bertrand, Kamenica, & Pan, 2015; Wilcox & Nock, 2006; Zhang, 2015). Moreover, within these relationships, men tend to use more erectile dysfunction medication and women tend to use more anxiety and sleep deprivation medication (Pierce, Dahl & Nielsen, 2013).

The above-mentioned studies investigated effects of women who earn more than their partner, but additional indicators of status are also relevant. People's subjective perceptions of their relative position in society, including perceptions of educational level and prestige in society as well as perceptions of income, also influence life outcomes (Adler et al., 2000). By investigating subjective perceptions of societal status differences within relationships, we complement previous work that focused on objective income differences only.

Women's intentions to adjust their behavior to fit the gender norm

People are not just passive victims of others' negative judgments and social penalties, they rather try to avoid atypicality and engage in gender conformity when they fear backlash (Rudman & Fairchild, 2004). According to the *gender deviance neutralization*-idea, men and women who violate gender norms will try to reduce their deviance by showing more traditional behaviors (Bittman et al., 2003; Greenstein, 2000; Brines, 1994). When dividing paid and unpaid work within a relationship, women reduce their share of household tasks when their income increases, but once they earn more than their partner they remain doing the same amount of household tasks (Greenstein, 2000, Brines, 1994) or even increase their share of household tasks (Bittman et al., 2003). By engaging in these feminine behaviors, women can reduce their 'masculine' role in the relationship that is caused by their role as breadwinner.

The role of women's own implicit gender stereotypes on relationship outcomes

Women's explicit beliefs about gender roles also have an influence on their relationship outcomes. A woman's income positively predicts the childcare her male partner provides, but only when the woman believes that mothers can work (Nitsche & Grunow, 2018). Women with a more traditional gender ideology were more likely to prefer older men with high breadwinning potential as partner (Eastwick et al., 2006), whereas college women with high work ambitions were found to prefer communal and family-oriented male partners (Meeussen, Van Laar, & Verbruggen, 2019). These studies suggest that women with a more egalitarian gender ideology might be less inclined to adjust to traditional gender roles within their relationship.

It remains to be investigated to what extent these effects are overruled by women's implicit gender attitudes. Another reason why gender stereotypes are persistent is that they affect us without us realizing it (Ellemers, 2018; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). People might be reluctant to explicitly claim that men should be breadwinners and women should be caregivers, but at the same time are likely to automatically associate caring with women and breadwinning with men (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). These implicit beliefs have actual affective and behavioral consequences. Couples who implicitly believed that women need to

be protected by men were found to prioritize the man's need for intimacy over the work ambitions of the woman (Hammond & Overall, 2015). Also, mothers with stronger implicit gender stereotypes evaluated boys and girls playing with gender incongruent toys less positively and made more stereotypical comments to their children in response to such play (Endendijk et al., 2014).

Overview of the studies

In the current research, we predict that women will generally experience positive relationship and work-life outcomes as they perceive to have higher personal status, because these women enjoy the financial benefits and the satisfaction of working outside the house. Specifically, we predict that women who perceive to have higher personal status report overall higher relationship quality, report themselves and their partner to be more satisfied with the income distribution and to be less worried that the income distribution negatively affects their relationship (*H1*). However, we predict that women who perceive to have higher status relative to their partner generally report lower relationship quality, report themselves and their partner to be less satisfied with the income distribution and to be more worried that the income distribution negatively affects their relationship compared to women who have lower or equal relationship status (*H2*).

These effects should furthermore be visible when monitoring women's day-to-day experiences. We predict that women who perceive to have personal status report higher daily relationship quality, less daily relationship conflict, higher overall daily well-being, less daily work-family conflict, less daily feelings of guilt towards their partner, and higher daily satisfaction with how work and family are combined (*H3*). Notwithstanding these positive effects of higher personal status, we additionally argue that women who perceive to have surpassed their partner in status experience negative daily relationship outcomes (i.e., lower daily relationship quality, more daily relationship conflict, lower overall daily well-being, more daily work-family conflict, more daily feelings of guilt towards their partner, lower daily work-life satisfaction; *H4*).

Furthermore, we reason that women who perceive to have higher status *relative* to their partner (intend to) adjust to fit the gender norm, such that women who perceive to have surpassed their partner in status report less intention to focus on their career and take up extra tasks at work (*H5a*), and adjust their behavior

to fit the gender norm by sacrificing leisure time, and spending more time on domestic tasks and childcare (*H5b*).

Finally, we expect that implicit gender attitudes moderate the negative outcomes of women's higher relative status. We predict that especially women with traditional implicit gender associations experience negative outcomes specified in hypothesis 3 and (intend to) adjust their behavior to fit the gender norm as indicated in hypothesis 5 when they perceive to have surpassed their partner in status (*H6*).

First, we conduct a large cross-sectional study to show the discrepancy between the effects of personal versus relative perceived status on relationship outcomes (hypotheses 1 and 2). Next, we conduct a diary study to further substantiate the observed patterns and to more specifically examine women's daily outcomes specified in hypotheses 3 and 4. Also, in this study, we examine whether women who perceive to have higher status than their partner experience have more intentions to adjust their behavior as specified in hypothesis 5 compared to women who perceive to have lower status than their partner. Further, in this second study, we include an implicit gender ideology measure in order to investigate how implicit gender attitudes moderate daily outcomes, as anticipated in hypothesis 6.

Study 1
Method

Participants and design

We recruited 545 women, through a Dutch network that brings together working women, to participate in our survey. The network's goal is to help women combine their ambitions in three different domains: work, family and society. For the current analysis, we selected those respondents who were older than 18 and had a male partner, resulting in a total of 341 women (see Table 1).

This study had a correlational design as we measured rather than manipulated our predictor variables (i.e., participants' societal status compared to their partner's societal status).

Table 1

Participant characteristics Study 1

Measure	%	M	SD
Age		44.30	7.63
Age partner		46.98	8.28
Highest degree of education:			
- High school/ vocational degree	5.8		
- College degree	28.9		
- University degree	62.4		
Highest degree of education partner:			
- High school/ vocational degree	11.2		
- College degree	19.7		
- University degree	48.4		
Percentage with a job	85.3		
Partner with a job	92.0		
Organizational tenure in years		10.17	7.55
Actual hours working per week		38.07	9.36
Actual hours partner works per week		42.80	10.97
Area of labor market:			
- business services	25.6		
- health care/ well-being	11.4		
- education	9.0		
- governmental organizations	9.2		
Percentage with children	81.9		
Age oldest child		13.91	6.90
Duration relationship with partner in years		17.77	8.26
Total *n*	341		

Procedure

The current investigation was part of a larger online survey about women's work and personal life[2]. The survey was distributed online among a community of women with professional ambitions. Participants first read an informed consent where they were informed that their responses would be treated confidentially, that participation was voluntary and that participants had to be female and 18 years or older in order to participate. Next, participants completed a series of questions including questions regarding their background information, societal status, and relationship outcomes. At the end of the survey, participants read a debriefing in which they were thanked for their participation and were asked to

fill out potential comments/complaints. We awarded six vouchers of €50 for an online store by lottery among all participants in order to show our gratitude for their participations. The survey took on average 15 minutes to complete.

Materials

All items were measured on 7-point Likert scales with response options ranging from 1 (*completely disagree*) to 7 (*completely agree*), unless otherwise indicated. Materials are described based on chronological order in the survey.

Demographic background information. Participants were asked to indicate their highest completed education, marital status, employment status, number of working hours per week according to their contract and in reality. Further, participants were asked to indicate their partner's gender, age, highest completed education, employment status, and hours their partner worked. Participants were also asked to indicate the duration of their relationship in years and how many children they had.

Perceived relative status. We measured women's perceived relative status in the relationship based on a subjective socioeconomic status ladder measure with ten different rungs (Adler et al., 2000). The instructions explained that the ladder reflects society with people at the top of the ladder being best off in terms of income, education and respected jobs, whereas people at the bottom being worst off. We asked women to think about their own situation and to indicate the rung where they would place themselves, ($M = 7.19$, $SD = 1.35$) and their partners ($M = 7.04$, $SD = 1.70$). We counterbalanced the order of these questions in order to control for possible anchoring effects (having initial ratings of the self or the partner as 'anchor')[3]. Relative status was then assessed by subtracting the perceived status of the male partner from the perceived status of women themselves. Out of 341 women, 36.3% placed themselves higher on the ladder than their partner, 35.7% placed themselves on the same level, and 28% indicated their partner to have higher societal status than themselves. This distribution is not representative of the Dutch population (e.g., only 12% of Dutch women had a higher income than their male partner in 2018; Portegijs & Van den Brakel, 2018). Because we distributed our survey among a community of women with

---

3 T-tests showed no differences for women who first reported about their own status versus women who first reported about their partner's status.

professional ambitions, we were able to find the high percentage of women with higher status than their partner.

Income distribution. We asked participants to estimate the percentage of their combined income that was earned by them and what percentage their partner earned. Response options ranged from 1 (*0% by myself; 100% by my partner*) to 11 (*100% by myself; 0% by my partner*).

Satisfaction with the income distribution. We included two items regarding own and partner's satisfaction with the current income distribution. These items were: "I am happy with this distribution of our incomes," and "My partner is happy with this distribution of our incomes."

Worry that the income distribution negatively affect relationship. We included two items regarding own and partner's worry that their income distribution negatively affects their relationship. These items were: "I am sometimes worried that our income distribution might negatively affect our relationship," and "My partner is sometimes worried that our income distribution might negatively affect our relationship."

Relationship quality. We measured participant's relationship quality using one item of the Couples Satisfaction Index (Funk & Rogge, 2007). This item was "In general, I am satisfied with my relationship."

Results

Preliminary analyses

First, we conducted a correlational analysis to investigate whether background variables (i.e., age, having children, duration of relationship) were correlated with our variables relevant to our predictions (see Table 2). Some background variables showed moderate to strong associations with our predictor and outcome variables. Older women reported lower quality of their relationship. Also, women with higher status were more likely to have children and have a longer relationship with their partner.

Table 2

Correlation analyses of background, independent, and dependent variables for

women in Study 1

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1. Age	44.30	7.63	-																
2. Age partner	46.98	8.28	.85**	-															
3. Education			-.13**	-.16**	-														
4. Education partner			-.05	-.09	.50**	-													
5. Children	1.87	.34	.09	.08	.02	.10	-												
6. Real workhours	38.07	9.36	.01	.04	.27**	.19**	-.10*	-											
7. Real workhours partner	42.80	10.97	.17**	.14*	.04	.14*	.01	.11	-										
8. Duration relation	17.77	8.26	.61**	.52**	-.15**	.02	.20**	-.03	.13*	-									
9. Own status	7.19	1.35	.07	.09	.43**	.27**	.23**	.37**	.05	.05	-								
10. Relative status	.27	1.62	.07	.06	-.02	-.24**	.00	.32**	-.38**	-.04	.33**	-							
11. Question order			-.01	-.01	-.02	-.05	-.04	-.01	-.05	.00	-.02	.03	-						
12. Relationship quality	6.06	1.16	-.13*	-.12	.05	.17**	-.10	.09	.00	-.06	.10	-.12*	.01	-					
13. Income distribution	6.16	1.81	.09	.09	.08	-.21**	-.07	.40**	-.32**	-.10	.14*	.64**	.05	-.04	-				
14. Own satisfaction with income distribution	5.33	1.79	.02	.02	-.01	-.01	-.04	.07	.02	.05	.18**	-.03	.01	.31**	.07	-			
15. Partner's satisfaction with income distribution	5.54	1.61	.02	.02	.02	.09	-.09	-.05	.10	.02	.10	-.16**	.07	.28**	-.07	.75**	-		
16. Worry that income distribution affect relationship	1.89	1.41	.07	.05	-.09	-.21**	-.01	-.01	-.02	-.11	-.24**	.19**	.00	-.31**	.19**	-.42**	-.37**	-	
17. Partner's worry that income distribution affect relationship	1.83	1.33	.04	.05	-.11*	-.21**	.00	.02	-.05	-.07	-.21**	.19**	-.06	-.22**	.21**	-.26**	-.36**	.81**	-

Note. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$, the following variable was dummy-coded: Children (0 = no children, 1 = one or more children)

As women's age and the duration of their relation ship were very highly correlated ($r = .61$, $p < .001$), we included age and

having children (yes/no) as covariates in our regression analyses.

Overview of regression analyses

We conducted hierarchical multiple regression analyses. First, we entered the background variables (i.e., age and having children) in step 1, and the main effects of women's personal status and relative status (status woman minus status man), in step 2.

Does having higher personal status predict more positive relationship outcomes?

In line with hypothesis 1, we indeed found that women with a higher personal position on the social ladder reported several positive outcomes (see Table 3). That is, women who reported to have higher absolute societal status reported higher relationship quality, higher satisfaction with the income distribution and less worries that the income distribution would affect their relationship negatively. Furthermore, these women also thought that their partner was more satisfied with their income distribution and that they worried less that the income distribution might affect their relationship.

Do women with higher status *relative* to their partner report more negative relationship outcomes?

Apart from the positive effects of having higher societal status, we indeed found that surpassing one's partner in terms of societal status carried some negative consequences (see Table 3). In line with hypothesis 2, we found that women who had indicated they had relatively higher status compared to their partner were more worried that their income distribution would affect their relationship. They also expected their partner to be less satisfied and more worried about the income distribution. Contrary to our expectations, women with higher status relative to their partner did not report lower satisfaction with the income distribution themselves. Finally, women who indicated having relatively higher status than their partner reported lower relationship quality.

Table 3
Regression coefficients of women's status, relative status, question order in

Study 1

Measure	Status	Relative Status
Satisfaction with income distribution		
β	.33***	-.20
95% C.I.	[.17, .49]	[-.39, .00]
SE	.08	.10
t	4.08	-1.97
Semi-part r²	.05	.01
Partner's satisfaction with income distribution		
β	.26***	-.37***
95% C.I.	[.12 .40]	[-.54, -.19]
SE	.07	.09
t	3.58	-4.10
Semi-part r²	.04	.05
Worry that income distribution affect relationship		
β	-.39***	.42***
95% C.I.	[-.51, -.27]	[.27, .57]
SE	.06	.08
t	-6.50	4.47
Semi-part r²	.11	.08
Partner's worry that income distribution affect relationship		
β	-.33***	.39***
95% C.I.	[-.45, -.22]	[.25, .53]
SE	.06	.07
t	-3.83	4.51
Semi-part r²	.09	.08
Relationship quality		
β	.18**	-.20**
95% C.I.	[.17, .49]	[.17, .49]
SE	.05	.12
t	3.40	-3.09
Semi-part r²	.03	.03

Note. *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

Conclusion

In line with hypothesis 1, we found evidence that in an absolute sense gaining higher societal status was predictive of positive relationship outcomes for women. However, and in line with hypothesis 2, the reverse is true for women who indicated that they have higher status *relative* to their partner. These data offer first evidence of these different personal vs. comparative effects of women's increasing status in society. We reveal that women who break with prescriptive gender stereotypes by perceiving to have gained higher societal status than their partner experience difficulties in their relationship in general, despite the positive effects of having high societal status per se.

Our next step was to investigate how these overall judgments are anchored in more daily relationship dynamics. In our follow up study we additionally included measures of intentions and behaviors to fit the gender norm in order to investigate whether women who perceived to have surpassed their partner in status (intend to) adjust their behavior to fit the gender norm, as indicated in hypothesis 5. Furthermore, we included an implicit gender associations measure in order to investigate whether the different patters observed in Study 1 might be qualified by women's implicit gender attitudes, as indicated in hypothesis 6. This study design will not only allow us to examine additional evidence for the observations made in Study 1 with a different sample, but also gives us an opportunity to delve deeper into the processes through which implicit gender attitudes relate to the relationship experiences of women with higher status relative to their partner.

Study 2

Method

Participants and design

In total, 112 women participated in the daily diary study (see Table 4). We intended to recruit at least 100 women based on sample criteria for diary studies (Ohly et al., 2010). Women were around the same age as the participants in Study 1 (M_{age} = 39.20, SD_{age} = 5.50) and were also highly educated (38.9% with college or bachelor degree and 33.2% with university master's degree). On average, women had been in a relationship with their partner for 16.42 years (SD = 6.64) and had 2 children on average (SD = 0.75). On average, women worked 28.69 hours per week (SD = 8.99), whereas their partners worked 39.06 hours (SD = 9.69). Notice that the average working hours of participants in this study were lower than in Study 1, but closer to the average for working women in the Netherlands (i.e., 28 hours per week; Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau, 2018).

Table 4
Participant characteristics of women in Study 2

Measure	%	M	SD
Age		39.20	5.50
Age partner		41.85	5.90
Highest degree of education:			
- High school degree	2.8		
- Vocational degree	22.9		
- College or bachelor's degree	38.9		
- University master's degree	33.2		
- PhD	2.3		
Highest degree of education partner:			
- Primary school	3.9		
- High school degree	5.1		
- Vocational degree	22.6		
- College or bachelor's degree	37.7		
- University master's degree	28.6		
- PhD	2.2		
Employment Status			
- Wages	80.1		
- Self-Employed no personnel	12.1		
- Self-Employed with personnel	3.0		
- Other	1.9		
Employment Status Partner			
- Wages	75.8		
- Self-Employed no personnel	9.3		
- Self-Employed with personnel	7.6		
- No Job	1.0		
Duration of relationship in years		16.42	6.64
Cohabiting with partner	98.5		
Married with partner	70.8		
Number of children		2.03	.75
Number of children living at home		1.98	.73
Father is parent of children	98.3		
Organizational tenure in years		10.28	7.55
Organizational tenure partner in yrs		10.25	7.34
Actual hours working per week		28.69	8.99
Actual hours partner works per week		39.06	9.69
Net income in euros		1908.48	897.35
Income distribution (100 = 100% partner)		40.13	17.29
Household tasks division (100 = 100% self)		64.48	16.08
Ideal household task division		57.25	13.48
Own status		7.20	1.00
Status assigned to partner		7.45	1.21
Total *n*	112		

Procedure

Women were recruited via the authors' and their students' personal network. We specifically aimed to recruit higher educated women in order to find enough women that would indicate to have higher status than their partner. Women were asked to participate in a diary study which consisted of one longer background questionnaire and eight brief daily questionnaires. We explained that we were interested in the experiences of working women in combining work and

family life and emphasized that participation was voluntary and anonymous. Women who consented to participate filled out a starting questionnaire which took them around 15 minutes to complete. After this questionnaire, women were immediately asked to fill out the first daily measure, which took them around five minutes to complete. Women filled out these eight daily measures on eight consecutive days, always starting on a Saturday. We received ethical approval for this study from the ethics committee of Utrecht University before data collection started.

In the starting questionnaire, we asked women to indicate their and their partners' demographic background information, their perception of the status division in their relationship and we asked them to complete an implicit association task to assess their implicit associations between male/female names and words related to family and career.

In the daily questionnaires, we asked women to indicate their satisfaction with their relationship, the extent to which they experienced relationship conflict that day, the amount of time they spent on work, household and child care tasks that day, their experience of work-family conflict, feelings of guilt towards family and partner with regard to how they combined work and family on that day and the extent to which they had thought about restructuring their time in the future. As reward for participation, we randomly selected two women to win a voucher of 50 euros.[4]

Materials

We first describe materials that were included in the starting questionnaire and then specify materials that were included in the daily questionnaires.

Perceived relative status. We again measured perceived relative status with the same subjective societal status ladder as in Study 1 (Adler et al., 2000). On average, women placed themselves a bit lower on the societal status ladder ($M = 7.19$, $SD = 1.03$) than they placed their partner ($M = 7.43$, $SD = 1.19$). Out of 112 women, 14.3% placed themselves higher on the ladder than their partner, 50% placed themselves on the same level, and 35.7% indicated their partner to

---

4 This study was conducted in collaboration with Lianne Aarntzen who used part of the data to investigate the influence of work-family guilt on compensatory behaviors (Aarntzen, Derks, Van Steenbergen, & Van der Lippe, 2019).

have higher societal status than them. Relative status was again calculated by subtracting women's perception of their partner's status from their perception of their own status.

Implicit associations of traditional gender roles. We measured women's implicit associations of men and women with career and family with an Implicit Association Task (IAT; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). In this family-career IAT, examples of career words were *management* and *professional (in Dutch)*. Examples of family words were *children* and *parents*. We used Dutch names that were common for each gender to represent the male (e.g., *Luuk* & *Thomas*) and female category (e.g., *Anna* & *Sanne*). The test started with three practice trials to make sure participants understood the test instructions. The actual trials comprising the IAT consisted of two congruent blocks, where respondents were to link the career-words to the male category and family-words to the female category, and two incongruent blocks, where women were to link the career-words to the female category and the family-words to the male category. The two congruent and two incongruent blocks were counterbalanced. D-scores were calculated by subtracting response latencies of incompatible blocks from compatible blocks and dividing the mean differences in latencies by participants' standard deviation on all trials except for the three practice trials. This way, higher scores reflect more traditional implicit associations and scores close to zero reflect more egalitarian implicit associations (Greenwald, Nosek, & Banaji, 2003).

Daily measures. The following materials were measured in the daily questionnaires. Answers for all items were captured with 5-point scales unless mentioned otherwise.

Relationship satisfaction. We assessed daily relationship satisfaction using one item from the time competition survey (developed by Van der Lippe & Glebbeek, 2003). This item was "How satisfied are you with your relationship today? Please, indicate this on a scale from 1 to 10 (*1* = very unsatisfied, *10* = very satisfied)."

Relationship conflict. We assessed daily relationship conflict using one bipolar item we developed for this purpose: "Could you indicate how conflictual or harmonious your relationship with your partner was today? (*-2* = conflictual, *2* =

harmonious, reverse-coded)."

Well-being. We assessed daily well-being with one item: "How happy do you feel today?" (*1* = very unhappy, *5* = very happy).

Work-family conflict. We asked women whether on that day their work had caused them to focus less on activities at home than they would have liked (*1* = not at all, *5* = very much). We included an explanation asking women, in the case that they did not work that day, whether they could still estimate whether their work had an impact on their activities at home that day.

Work-family guilt towards partner. Women were asked whether they experienced work-family guilt towards their partner. The item was "When you think about how you combined work and family today, to what extent do you feel guilty towards your partner. Today, I feel …" (*1* = not at all guilty, *5* = very guilty).

Satisfaction with work-family combination. We assessed whether women were satisfied with how they combined work and family with one item, "Today I am satisfied with how I combined work and family."

Time allocation. We asked women to give their best guess of how many minutes they had spent and how many minutes they still planned to spend that day on various tasks. For each task, we created a sum score of these two answers. The tasks were *leisure (hobbies, sport etc.)*, *care for children (think of washing, dressing, putting to bed, but also playing, helping with homework, reading to etc.)*, and *time spent on (paid) work*. We also asked women to give their best guess of how many minutes they had spent and how many minutes they still planned to spend on household chores. These household chores were *doing laundry (washing, ironing, repairing clothes)*, *cleaning*, *running errands*, *cooking food (including preparing food, cooking, doing dishes and cleaning after eating)*.

Intention to adjust in terms of career. To assess whether women thought about reducing their work hours, we asked them two items, "Today I thought about reducing the hours I spend on paid work" and "Today I thought about how to deal with things differently at work in order to have more time available at home", r_{range} over eight days = .63 - .73, $p < .001$.

Taking up extra tasks at work. We asked women whether they thought about taking up extra tasks at work with two items, "If I would be asked today to take up extra tasks at work that <u>would enhance my career</u>, I would say yes," and "If I would be asked today to take up extra tasks at work that would take a lot of time, I would say yes", r_{range} = .71 - .79, p < .001.

Results

Preliminary analyses

First, we checked correlations between background variables measured in the starting questionnaire and between participants' daily experiences (i.e., averaged per variable for each individual over eight days; see Table 5). Women's age, relationship duration, number of children, and their organizational tenure were all associated with several background and daily variables. For instance, older women reported less relationship conflict with their partner and less thoughts of compensating in terms of their career. Also, women reported to experience more work-family conflict and guilt towards their partner when they had been together with their partner for a longer time. Women with more children reported to be happier and had less intentions to lower their working hours in favor of their family. Lastly, women who already worked longer for their organization reported greater overall well-being and a decreased intention to take up extra tasks at work. We decided to correct for these background variables (i.e., women's age, relationship duration, number of children, and organizational tenure by including) by including them as covariates in our analyses.

Table 5
Correlation analyses of background, independent, and dependent variables be-

tween persons in Study 2

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	23	24
1. Age	39.20	5.50	-																					
2. Age partner	41.85	5.90	.81**	-																					
3. Education			-.11**	-.05	-																				
4. Education partner			-.02	.09*	.39**	-																			
5. Duration relationship	16.42	6.64	.69**	.58**	-.22**	-.06	-																		
6. Number of children	2.03	.75	.28**	.16**	-.01	.10*	.34**	-																	
7. Organizaitonal tenure in years	10.28	7.55	.52**	.39**	-.29**	-.21**	.53**	.12**	-																
8. Tenure partner in years	10.25	7.34	.44**	.30**	-.37**	-.25**	.44**	.07	.53**	-															
9. Work hours	28.69	8.99	-.05	-.10**	.43**	.26**	-.15**	-.15**	-.21**	-.28**	-														
10. Work hours partner	39.06	9.69	-.07	.04	-.12**	.12**	.07	-.03	.11**	.09**	-.20**	-													
11. Income distribution	40.13	17.29	.08*	-.06	.24**	-.19**	-.03	-.05	.03	-.16**	.58**	-.57**	-												
12. Personal status	7.20	1.00	.13**	.13**	.36**	.34**	.07	.02	.01	-.22**	.31**	-.07	.20**	-											
13. Relative status to partner	-.26	1.35	.00	-.05	.26**	-.14**	-.02	-.09*	-.03	-.17**	.39**	-.42**	.63**	.50**	-										
14. IAT-score	.50	.28	.09*	.20**	.09*	-.07	.13**	.22**	-.05	.04	-.20**	.04	-.06	-.10**	-.16**	-									
15. Relationship quality	8.20	1.28	.12**	.09*	.12**	-.02	.11**	-.02	.18**	.07	.00	.03	.03	.24**	.04	-.05	-								
16. Relationship conflict	1.54	.82	-.14**	-.13**	-.07	.09*	-.16**	-.06	-.14**	.06	.04	-.02	-.01	-.13**	-.03	-.04	-.63**	-							
17. Well-being	3.86	.79	.12**	.06	-.04	.00	.04	-.09*	.17**	.04	-.03	.07	-.05	.07	-.05	-.11**	.45**	.35**	-						
18. Work-family conflict	2.22	1.36	-.03	-.07	.00	-.06	-.06	.01	-.01	-.04	.15**	-.13**	.20**	-.03	.10*	-.01	-.05	-.03	-.29**	-					
19. Guilt towards partner	1.53	.89	-.07*	-.10**	.11**	-.04	-.10**	.01	-.11**	-.09**	.15**	-.19**	.20**	-.02	.12**	-.04	-.07	-.08*	.44**	-.27**	-				
20. Satisfaction with work-family combination	3.67	1.26	.08*	.08*	-.08*	.05	.11**	-.04	.06	.03	-.11**	.11**	-.16**	.01	-.13**	.01	.20**	.15**	-.44**	-.36**	.41**	-			
21. Compensation towards career|	1.72	1.00	-.20**	-.17**	.10**	-.02	-.14**	.00	-.14**	-.15**	.15**	-.15**	.21**	-.01	.06	.00	-.09*	-.08*	.38**	.37**	-.30**	-.35**	-		
22. Taking up extra tasks at work	2.25	1.20	.06	.06	.01	.12**	.09*	-.06	-.18**	-.01	.12**	.10**	-.02	-.09**	-.05	-.04	-.09*	-.04	.02	.01	-.04	.05	-.02	-

Note. ** *p* < .01, * *p* < .05.

Intraclass correlations

Next, we analyzed null models with the mixed model procedure in SPSS in order to calculate intraclass correlations (ICC). We did this in order to check whether multilevel analyses in which daily experiences are nested within individuals are justified. This is the case when sufficient amount of variances cannot be explained by between-person differences (see Table 6). In this case, ICC ranged between .02 and .73, indicating that 2% to 73% of the total variance was explained by between-person differences. Especially the more subjective variables had higher variance explained by between-person differences (e.g., thinking about taking up extra tasks at work), whereas the more objective variables had less variance explained by within-person differences (e.g., doing groceries). This makes sense, as it is most likely that people differ more on subjective variables. However, there was thus also a sufficient amount of the total variance that was explained by within-person differences. This underlined the importance of analyzing the data with multilevel modeling.

Table 6

Intraclass correlations for all dependent variables

Measure	ICC	Between-person variance	Within-person variance
Relationship quality	.69	1.15	.54
Relationship conflict	.41	.25	.43
Time allocation:			
- Leisure	.14	1901.87	11427.86
- Laundry	.12	157.78	907.05
- Cleaning	.08	188.56	2157.78
- Groceries	.02	3.31	770.81
- Eating	.21	220.37	762.64
- Childcare	.39	8604.66	15659.72
- Working	.04	11.35	48.29
Work-Family Conflict	.17	.36	1.50
Work-Family Guilt Towards Partner	.28	.21	.59
Well-being	.26	.17	.45
Satisfaction with work-family combination	.21	.32	1.25
Compensation towards children:			
- Sacrificing leisure time	.23	.35	1.14
- Thinking about restructuring time in fav of children	.46	.56	.67
Compensation towards career	.53	.54	.48
Taking up extra tasks at work	.73	1.03	.39
Division of time and energy	.35	.55	.87

Person-level differences: Between-participants effects

We conducted multilevel models to examine person-level differences in order to understand average differences in women with higher personal status compared to women with lower personal status and differences in women with higher relative status than their partner compared to women with lower relative status. This way, we could examine whether higher personal status was on average related to more positive outcomes during the eight days, and whether higher status relative to one's partner was on average related to more negative outcomes during the eight days. This would allow us to draw conclusions that can be compared to those of Study 1.

Furthermore, in order to investigate whether negative outcomes for women with higher status relative to their partner were moderated by women's implicit gender attitudes, we included implicit gender associations and the interaction of women's status relative to their partner and their implicit gender associations in these models. In the case of a significant interaction effect, we used simple slope analyses (Aiken & West, 1991) to compare the relationships between women's relative status (i.e., high relative status for women scoring 1 SD above the mean and low relative status for women scoring 1 SD below the mean) and the specific outcome for traditional women (i.e., scoring .70 on the IAT) versus egalitarian women (i.e., scoring .00 on the IAT).

Do women with higher personal status experience more positive outcomes during the eight days?

As hypothesized and extending our findings of Study 1, we again found that a higher absolute position on the societal ladder was associated with several positive outcomes for women (see Table 7). Specifically, and in line with hypothesis 3, we additionally found that the daily experiences of women who reported higher societal status also indicated higher relationship satisfaction, lower relationship conflict, higher well-being, less work-family conflict, and less feelings of guilt about combining work and family towards their partner.

Do women with higher status relative to their partner experience negative

outcomes during the eight days and are these effects moderated by implicit gender attitudes?

Further, in line with our predictions, we found that women who reported to have higher societal status *relative* to their partner also experienced several negative relationship outcomes (see Table 7). In line with hypothesis 4, we found that women with higher status relative to their partner reported daily experiences indicating lower relationship satisfaction, lower well-being, more work-family conflict, more feelings of guilt about combining work and family towards their partner and less satisfaction of how they combined work and family life that week. However, we did not find that these women reported more relationship conflict.

Other than anticipated in hypothesis 6, we did not find that the effects of relative status were moderated by women's implicit gender associations. We did find a main effect of women's implicit gender associations on well-being that we had not predicted, indicating that women with more traditional implicit gender expectations generally reported lower well-being during the eight days.

We also found an interaction effect of women's relative status and their IAT-score on the average guilt they experienced towards their partner, that we had not anticipated (see Table 7). Simple slopes analyses revealed that reporting higher relative status was associated with more guilt towards the partner among egalitarian women, $B = .11$, $SE = .03$, $p < .001$, C.I. [.06, .17], but with *less* guilt among traditional women, $B = -.17$, $SE = .08$, $p = .044$, C.I. [-.34, -.00] (see Figure 1).

Do women with higher status relative to their partner (intend to) adjust their behavior during the eight days and are these effects moderated by implicit gender attitudes?

Our data offered no support for hypothesis 5, as we did not find evidence that women with higher status relative to their partner (intended to) adjust their behavior to fit the gender norm. However, and in line with hypothesis 6, we did find interaction effects of relative status and implicit gender associations on intentions to adjust behavior (i.e., thinking about spending less time on work and intending to take up extra tasks at work) and actual behavior (i.e., leisure time). We found an interaction effect of women's relative status and their IAT-score on

the average amount of leisure time women reported during the eight days (see Table 7). Simple slopes analyses showed that reporting higher relative status predicted having less leisure time among traditional women, $B = -19.63$, $SE = 9.07$, $p = .031$, C.I. [-37.44, -1.82], but this relationship was not found among egalitarian women, $B = .36$, $SE = 3.07$, $p = .908$, C.I. [-5.67, 6.38] (see Figure 2).

Additional support for this prediction emerged from an interaction effect of women's relative status and their IAT-score on the extent to which they intended to adjust their behavior in terms of their career (i.e., thinking about spending less time on work; see Table 7). This interaction emerged because the pattern was different for traditional vs. egalitarian women (see Figure 3). A final result in support of hypothesis 6 was an interaction we observed of women's relative status and their IAT-score on the extent to which they intended to take up extra tasks at work. Simple slopes analyses revealed that reporting higher relative status was associated with a lower intention to take up extra tasks at work among traditional women, $B = -.71$, $SE = .11$, $p < .001$, C.I. [-.91, -.50], but not for egalitarian women, $B = .02$, $SE = .04$, $p = .530$, C.I. [-.05, .09] (see Figure 4).

The amount of time women had spent on childcare, paid work, and household chores during the eight days revealed no support for our reasoning in hypothesis 6. We did observe that women's IAT-score was related to how much time they had spent on cleaning and childcare (see Table 7). We had not anticipated this effect, which indicates that traditional women spent less time on cleaning and more time on childcare compared to egalitarian women.

Table 7

Between-participants effects of women's personal status and relative status

| Measure	Women's Personal status		Women's Relative Status		Implicit Gender Associations		Relative Status X Implicit Gender Associations	
	B (SE)	[95% C.I.]	B (SE)	[95% C.I.]	B (SE)	[95% C.I.]	B (SE)	[95% C.I.]
Relational outcomes								
Relationship quality	**.38 (.06)*****	[.27, .49]	**-.11 (.04)****	[-.19, -.03]	-.08 (.18)	[-.44, .28]	.02 (.17)	[-.33, .36]
Relationship conflict	**-.14 (.03)*****	[.07, .21]	.01 (.03)	[-.06, .04]	-.09 (.12)	[-.15, .33]	-.18 (.11)	[-.04, .41]
Well-being	**.08 (.03)***	[-.01, .15]	**-.10 (.02)******	[-.15, -.05]	**-.23 (.11)***	[-.46, -.01]	.14 (.10)	[-.07, .35]
Work-family conflict	**-.15 (.06)***	[-.27, -.03]	**.13 (.04)****	[.04, .21]	.10 (.20)	[-.29, .49]	.04 (.19)	[-.33, .41]
Work-family guilt towards partner	**-.09 (.04)***	[-.17, -.01]	**.12 (.03)******	[.06, .17]	.01 (.13)	[-.24, .27]	**-.41 (.12)****	[-.65, -.17]
Satisfaction with work-family combination	.09 (.06)	[-.02, .20]	**-.15 (.04)******	[-.22, -.07]	-.11 (.18)	[-.47, .24]	.18 (.17)	[-.16, .51]
Compensatory outcomes								
Time allocation:								
- Leisure	3.97 (4.24)	[-4.35, 12.29]	.36 (3.07)	[-5.67, 6.38]	8.67 (13.79)	[-18.42, 35.77]	**-28.55 (13.07)***	[-10.09, 1.45]
- Childcare	-10.35 (6.79)	[-23.68, 12.28]	2.78 (4.84)	[-6.73, 12.28]	**51.52 (22.01)***	[8.29, 94.75]	-3.89 (20.67)	[-44.48, 36.70]
- Working	-.05 (.18)	[-.42, .31]	.20 (.13)	[-.06, .46]	-1.04 (.60)	[-2.23, .14]	-.25 (.56)	[-1.35, .85]
- Household chores:								
1) Laundry	.83 (1.46)	[-2.04, 3.70]	-1.16 (1.05)	[-3.21, .89]	9.06 (4.75)	[-.24, 18.36]	-2.34 (4.48)	[-11.13, 6.49]
2) Cleaning	-2.47 (2.01)	[-6.43, 1.48]	-.28 (1.42)	[-3.07, 2.52]	**-19.39 (1.40)****	[-32.13, -6.64]	5.83 (6.13)	[-6.21, 17.87]
3) Groceries	.32 (1.23)	[-2.11, 2.75]	-.34 (.89)	[-2.08, 1.40]	2.19 (4.02)	[-5.71, 10.09]	.77 (3.78)	[-6.67, 8.20]
4) Eating	.87 (1.42)	[-1.92, 3.64]	.43 (1.02)	[-1.57, 2.43]	4.16 (4.95)	[-4.86, 13.17]	2.66 (4.34)	[-5.86, 11.19]
Compensation towards career	.05 (.04)	[-.03, .14]	.04 (.03)	[-.02, .10]	.09 (.14)	[-.19, .38]	**-.28 (.14)***	[-.55, -.02]
Taking up extra tasks at work	-.09 (.05)	[-.19, .01]	.02 (.04)	[-.05, .09]	-.15 (.16)	[-.47, .18]	**-1.04 (.15)*******	[-1.34, -.74]
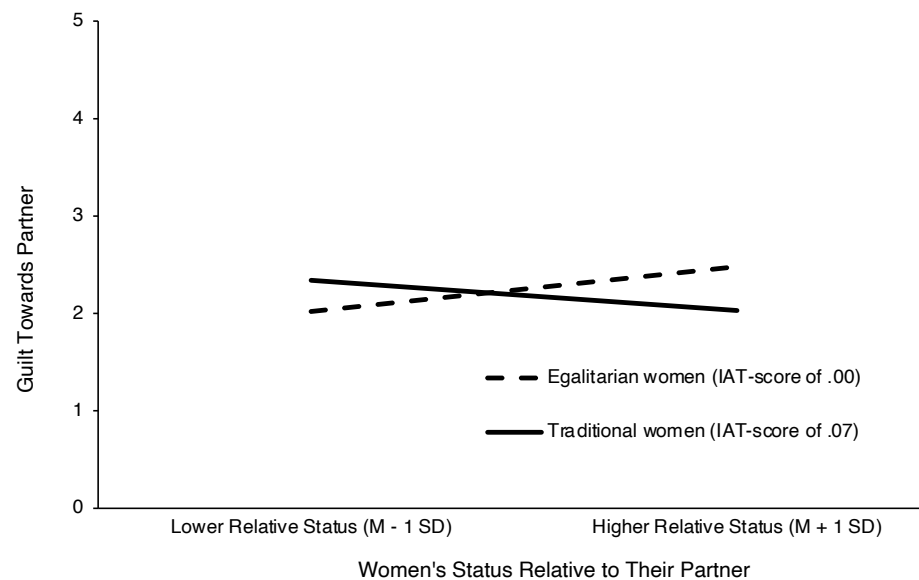
Figure 1. Guilt towards partner for egalitarian and traditional women as a function of their status relative to their partner.
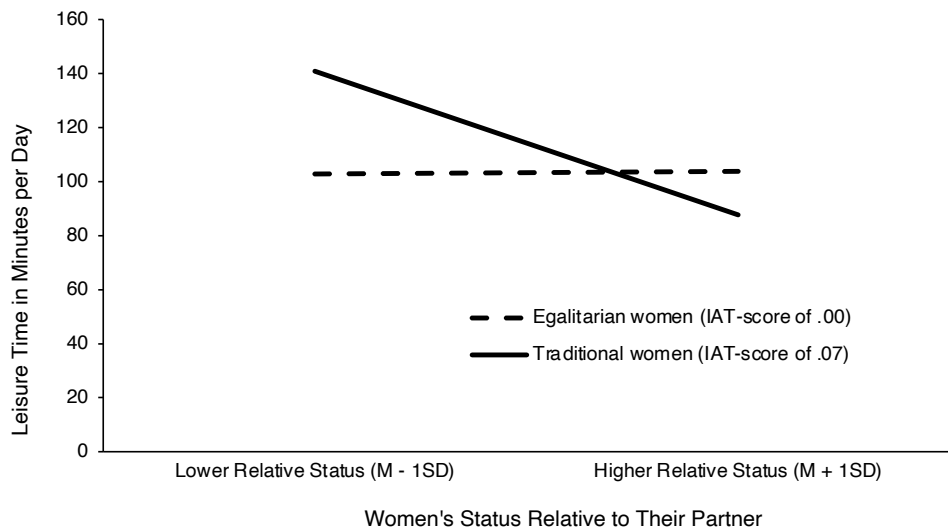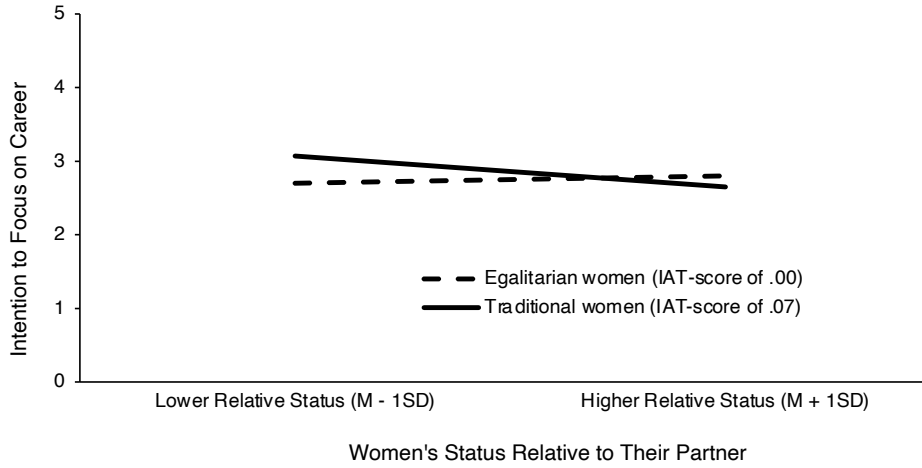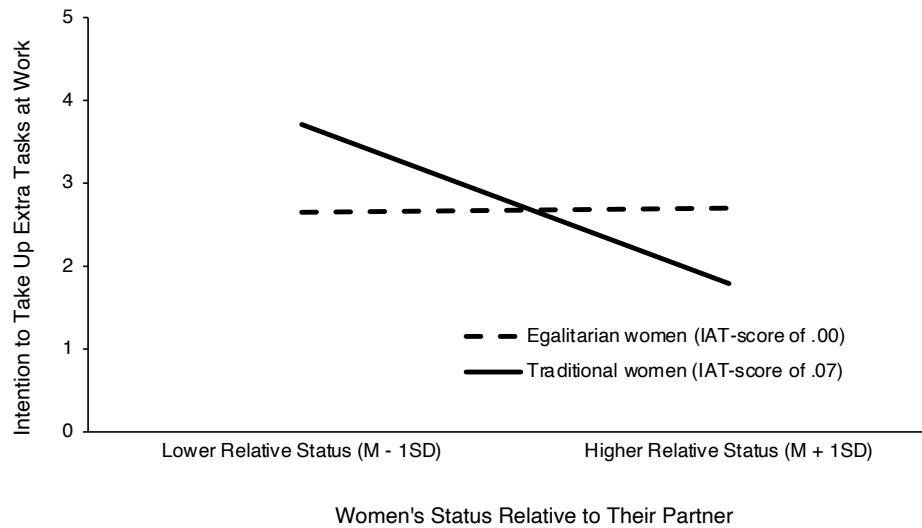

Figure 2. Leisure time in minutes per day for egalitarian and traditional women as a function of their status relative to their partner.

Figure 3. Intention to focus on career for egalitarian and traditional women as a function of their status relative to their partner.

Figure 4. Intention to take up extra tasks at work for egalitarian and traditional women as a function of their status relative to their partner.

Conclusion

Consistent with our findings of Study 1, we show that even though women who indicated to have higher personal status reported higher relationship satisfaction over eight executive days, women who indicated to have surpassed their partner in terms of status reported overall lower relationship satisfaction. Supporting hypothesis 3, we additionally observe that women who indicated to have high personal status indeed experienced higher well-being, less relationship conflict, less work-family conflict, and less guilt towards their partner during the eight days. In line with hypothesis 4, daily experiences of women who indicated to have exceeded their partner in status evidence less well-being, more work-family conflict, more feelings of guilt towards their partner, and lower satisfaction with how they combined work and family.

Contrary to hypothesis 5, we find no direct indications that women who perceive to have surpassed their partner in status intended to or adjusted their behavior to fit the gender norm. However, and in line with hypothesis 6, we find that especially women with traditional implicit gender beliefs tend to adjust their behavior to fit the gender norm when they perceive to have surpassed their partner in status. Specifically, these women reported more intentions to reduce working hours in favor of their family and fewer intentions to take up extra tasks at work. Also, they reported to have less leisure time during the eight days. However, this is not to say that egalitarian women are protected against the negative effects of having higher status than their partner; although these women do not (intend to) adjust their behavior, they do report feeling guilty towards their partner.

Unexpectedly, we find that women with traditional gender beliefs experience less well-being in general compared to egalitarian women. Also, traditional women spend more time on childcare and less time on cleaning than egalitarian women. Although this was not the scope of the current study, these findings again nuance the idea that women with traditional associations might be better off.

In sum, we show that women with high personal status experience positive outcomes, but that these effects reverse once women surpass their partner in status. These findings suggest that gender stereotypes prescribing men to be

the breadwinner and women to be the caregiver of their families have their influence on women who break with these gendered expectations and that women's own implicit endorsement of these stereotypes have an influence on their feelings of guilt towards their partner and their intentions to adjust their behavior to fit the gender norm.

General Discussion

In two studies we reveal the contradictory effects women contend with when they reverse traditional status divisions in their relationships. Our data reveals that climbing the societal ladder has several positive effects for women, but this only is the case insofar as their societal status does not surpass that of their male partner. Furthermore, the way women respond to their higher status depends on the extent to which they implicitly endorse stereotypic gender beliefs. This research suggests that gender stereotypes prescribing that men should be the breadwinner and women should be the caregiver of their families have their impact on the relationship of women who break with these gendered expectations (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000; Heilman, 2001; Prentice & Carranza, 2002).

Replicating earlier findings that higher societal status is related to more happy marriages (Wilcox & Marquardt, 2010; Bartley, Blanton, & Gilliard, 2005; Belle, 1990), we show in both these studies that women who perceive to have high societal status also experience more positive outcomes in romantic relationships than women who perceive to have lower societal status (e.g., higher general and daily relationship satisfaction, higher daily well-being). The main point of the cross-sectional study, however, is that relationship outcomes are not only predicted by women's personal status. Crucially, women's relationship outcomes were also predicted by how their societal status compared to their partners' status, and here the results are generally more negative as their relative status is higher. This pattern was replicated and extended in the diary study in which we showed that women who reported higher status relative to their partner, also reported more negative relationship and work-life outcomes during the eight days of the study.

By providing insight in the underlying dynamics that partly explain negative relationship outcomes for women in a non-traditional relationship, we complement

previous work showing that relationships in which the woman earns more than the man are less satisfying than more traditional relationship (Bertrand, Kamenica, & Pan, 2015; Wilcox & Nock, 2006; Zhang, 2015; Meisenbach, 2009; Pierce, Dahl & Nielsen, 2013). Specifically, we show that -in addition to objective income differences- women's perception of the societal status division of their own relationship also predicts relationship outcomes. We reveal how these perceptions influence daily experiences and decisions about time allocations and activities in relationships in which the woman has higher status relative to her partner. Furthermore, we show how implicit gender beliefs predict how women with higher status than their partner feel and behave.

Both women with traditional and egalitarian gender associations face difficulties

Women's implicit gender associations (i.e., the degree to which they associated career-related words with men and family-related words with women) related to how women feel and cope when they surpass their partner in societal status. Other than anticipated, we did not find that women's implicit gender associations qualify their relationship outcomes. However, we did find that among women who had higher status relative to their partner, those with more traditional implicit gender associations were more likely to consider on a daily basis how they might adjust their behavior to accommodate this (e.g., by sacrificing leisure time and reducing working hours in favor of their family). It is possible that especially women with traditional gender associations feel that they deviate from the traditional norm when they have surpassed their partner in status. This would be in line with the notion of *gender deviance neutralization*, which maintains that men and women who violate gender norms try to reduce their deviance by showing more traditional behaviors (Bittman et al., 2003; Greenstein, 2000; Brines, 1994). In this case this might be achieved by these women sacrificing leisure time and time at work to spend more time with their family.

We observed a different pattern for women with more egalitarian associations. When they had higher status relative to their partner, these women did not think about adjusting their behavior. They did, however, report feeling guilty towards their partner on a daily basis. Women with egalitarian gender associations might realize that surpassing their partner in status is not in line with current gender norms in society. People feel guilt when they evaluate their moral transgression

as a violation of an important norm and having hurt another person (Ortony, Clore, & Collins, 1988; Tangney & Dearing, 2002; Haidt, 2003). Feeling guilt towards their partner might motivate women to change their behavior and recognize that their partner's relationship expectations and standards differ from their own's (Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton, 1995). Repeated and uncontrollable feelings of guilt are associated with lower well-being (Ferguson, 2000) and psychological distress (e.g., anxiety; Jonas & Kugler, 1993). As a consequence, women's feelings of guilt towards their partner might eventually cause them to somehow adjust their behavior to bring it more in line with current gender norms. However, this might also imply that if gender norms are more egalitarian (e.g., because friends have similar non-traditional status divisions within their relationships), these women feel less or no guilt (Haidt, 2003). Future research might investigate how norms relate to long term consequences of guilt experienced by women with egalitarian gender associations and who have surpassed their male partner in status.

Limitations

We chose to use the Implicit Association Task to measure a person's endorsement of gender stereotypes, because explicit measures of gender stereotypes are susceptible for social desirability and the IAT has been found to outperform these explicit gender stereotype measures in predicting actual behavior (Greenwald et al., 2009). It is important to be mindful of the recent critiques on using the IAT to measure a person's implicit gender stereotypes (Hahn & Gawronski, 2019; Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2006; Gawronski et al., 2017). These critiques are related to women's potential awareness of their scores, susceptibility to situational factors and stability over time. Irrespective of these critiques, our results indicate that the extent to which women associate work with men and family with women predict how women themselves feel and cope when they surpass their partner in societal status eight days after filling out the IAT.

A second limitation is that both of our samples included women with mostly higher educational degrees. As such it remains to be seen whether our results are generalizable to women with lower educational degrees. Because lower educated individuals are more likely to endorse social conservative ideologies that are in favor of maintaining the current status quo (e.g., the current gender hierarchy; Jost et al., 2003), it could be that lower educated individuals are more likely to have traditional attitudes and that lower educated women who have sur-

passed their partner in status report even more negative relationship outcomes compared to higher educated women. On the other hand, lower educated women are more often the breadwinner of the family because of temporary economic reasons (e.g., the man being unemployed) compared to higher educated women (Drago, Black, & Wooden, 2005). When women work out of economic necessity, both men and women may find it easier to justify women's breadwinning role (Heckert, Nowak, & Snyder, 1998; Orbuch & Custer, 1995). Future research could examine whether lower educated individuals indeed report more negative relationship outcomes when they are in a non-traditional relationship. Furthermore, it could examine whether their relationship outcomes are qualified by the fact that the woman works out of economic necessity or not.

Implications and suggestions for future research

This research adds another layer to our understanding of why gender inequality persists (see e.g., Ellemers, 2018). Not only do women experience backlash when they are successful in the workplace (Rudman et al., 2012; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007), we show that successful women also experience negative relationship outcomes when they surpass their partner in status. The relationship domain is thus an extra domain that constrains women towards traditional gender roles and offers an additional perspective on the different considerations that may prevent women from pursuing professional and societal success. This research adds another building block to the intricate system of implicit and complex psychological concerns and social outcomes, that constrains women towards traditional roles at work, but also at home.

Women with higher status than their partner walk a tightrope for breaking with traditional gender norms. Women with traditional gender beliefs and who thus feel that their relative status in the relationship is conflicting with their gender role try to adjust their behavior, but still report lower relationship quality and well-being. On the other hand, women with egalitarian gender beliefs and who thus feel that their role is in line with their own attitudes feel guilty towards their partner. Though the process of women with traditional and egalitarian gender associations is different, either way these women are worse off compared to women who have not surpassed their partner in status.

In order to understand what happens when women surpass their partner in

status and what factors determine which couples stay together, it is important to investigate the development of status division in romantic relationships in a longitudinal design. This research design can take into account different phases of couples' life (e.g., having a first job, transition into parenthood), which all can have a different influence on status divisions and associated relationship outcomes. Gender stereotypes might change in their salience based on these life events. To illustrate, people's implicit gender stereotypes and behavior become more traditional when they transition into parenthood (Endendijk, Derks, & Mesman, 2018). Future longitudinal research could examine how gender expectations influence the experiences and decisions of couples throughout their lives, but also how life events influence the implicit gender beliefs of men and women in relationships. This way, we could gain a better understanding how societal gender expectations influence personal experiences and vice versa.

Conclusion

Gender stereotypes of heterosexual relationships help explain how prescriptive gender norms encourage individuals towards building traditional relationships in which men are the one with the highest status of both partners. This research shows that gender stereotypes prescribing men to be the breadwinner and women to be the caregiver of their families have their influence on women who break with these gendered expectations, depending on their own implicit endorsement of these stereotypes.

Chapter 5

Does national context matter when women surpass their partner in status?

Abstract

There is growing evidence that couples in non-traditional relationships in which the woman attains higher status than her male partner experience more negative relationship outcomes than traditional relationships. A possible reason is that couples in non-traditional relationships violate persisting stereotypes that prescribe men to be breadwinners and women to be caregivers of the family. In the current study (N = 2748), we investigated whether a country's gender stereotypical culture predicts relationship and life outcomes of men and women in non-traditional relationships. We used the European Sustainable Workforce Survey which is conducted in nine European countries. Two indicators of countries' gender stereotypical culture are used: Gender Empowerment Measure and implicit gender stereotypes. We found that women's income and -to a lesser extent- education degree relative to their male partner negatively affected outcomes such as relationship quality, negative emotions and the experience of time pressure. Furthermore, men and women living in countries with a traditional gender stereotypical culture (e.g., The Netherlands, Hungary) reported lower relationship quality when women earned more than their partner, whereas this was not the case for participants living in egalitarian countries (e.g., Sweden, Finland). Also, couples in which the woman is higher educated than the man reported higher relationship quality in egalitarian countries, but not in traditional countries. Our findings suggest that dominant beliefs/ideologies in society can hinder or facilitate couples in non-traditional relationships.

Introduction

The number of women who attain higher educational degrees and participate in the labour market is increasing (OECD, 2018). This also results in more non-traditional relationships in which the woman attains higher societal status than her male partner in the western world (Pew Research Center, 2013; Portegijs & Van den Brakel, 2018). In almost all western countries it is nowadays more likely for women to be more highly educated than their male partners (De Hauw, Grow, & Van Bavel, 2017). Furthermore, relationships in which the woman earns more than the man have become more common in recent years (e.g., almost 12% of Dutch women with young children had a higher income than their male partner in 2018 compared to 7% of Dutch women in 2007; Portegijs & Van den Brakel, 2018).

However, couples in these non-traditional relationships face social and economic penalties as they are perceived more negatively by others (Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted; MacInnis & Bulliga, 2019; Hettinger, Hutchinson, & Bosson, 2014). Non-traditional couples themselves experience more negative relationship outcomes than couples in traditional relationships (Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted). When the woman earns more than her husband, both partners tend to be less satisfied with their marriage (Syrda, 2019; Bertrand, Kamenica, & Pan, 2015; Wilcox & Nock, 2006; Zhang, 2015). Moreover, women who work more hours than their male partner report lower relationship quality compared to women in more traditional relationships (Gong, 2007). Some studies even show that marriages in which the woman is more highly educated than the man are at greater risk of divorce than marriages in which the man is more highly educated (Goldstein & Harknett, 2006; Kalmijn, 2003, Müller, 2003).

It remains unclear why non-traditional couples experience more negative relationship outcomes than traditional couples. Some scholars seek explanations in evolved and universal differences between men and women, such that women in general desire partners with good providing skills (e.g., men with high earning potential), whereas men desire partners with good nurturing skills (Buss, 2011). Others argue that it is economically rational and more efficient if the man is the one in the relationship who brings home the bacon due to persisting gender inequality in the labor market (Molm & Cook, 1995). However, the differences

between men and women are not so stable and are dependent upon the context that they operate in (Ellemers, 2018). For example, partner preferences are less traditional in countries with a more gender egalitarian culture (Zentner & Eagly, 2015). Also, couples often fail to make economical rational choices (e.g., women still do the brunt of household tasks, even if they earn more than their male partner; Bittman et al., 2013).

Following this reasoning, we propose that it is more difficult for couples to thrive in a non-traditional relationship in countries that are characterized by a more traditional gender stereotypical culture: the extent to which social policies and societal norms endorse gender stereotypes prescribing men to be the breadwinner and women to be the main caregiver of the family. In the current study, we investigate how a country's gender stereotypical culture is related to relationship outcomes of men and women in relationships in which the woman has higher societal status than her male partner. We add to the existing literature by showing that sociocultural factors at the country level have been underestimated and have an important influence on the relationship outcomes and experiences of men and women in non-traditional relationships.

How gender stereotypes predict social penalties for non-traditional couples

In order to understand how social policies and societal norms affect countries' gender stereotypical culture, it is first important to describe how gender stereotypes operate. Cultural norms and expectations dictate suitable characteristics and behaviors for both men and women (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000; Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Heilman, 2001). Gender stereotypes follow from observing men and women in typical social roles, such as breadwinning men and caregiving women (Social Role Theory; Eagly, 1987; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). Gender stereotypes dictate that men *should* be 'agentic' (e.g., independent and ambitious) and *should not* be 'communal' (e.g., warm and concerned about the wellbeing of others), whereas women *should* be 'communal' and *should not* be 'agentic' (Heilman, 2001; Prentice & Carranza, 2002). Furthermore, men are expected to take on higher status roles, whereas women are expected to take on lower status roles (Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Phelan, & Nauts, 2012). Men and women who violate these prescriptive gender stereotypes receive social penalties, such that women who take on an higher status roles

are disliked and men who take on lower status roles are disrespected (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Heilman & Wallen, 2010; Rudman et al., 2012). These social and economic penalties are also termed 'backlash' (Rudman, 1998; Rudman et al., 2012).

Recent work has shown that backlash also occurs when men and women violate gender stereotypes prescribing that the man should have the higher status role within the relationship (Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted; MacInnis & Buliga, 2019; Hettinger, Hutchinson, & Bosson, 2014; Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005; Chaney, Rudman, Fetterolf, & Young, 2017). Others outside the relationships expect a woman with a higher status profession than her male partner to be the dominant one in their relationship and therefore dislike her (i.e., dominance penalty), whereas they expect a man with lower status than his partner to be the weak one in their relationship and therefore disrespect him (i.e., weakness penalty; Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted). People expect such non-traditional relationships to be less satisfying for the couple compared to more traditional relationships (Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted; Hettinger, Hutchinson, & Bosson, 2014). Also, stay-at-home fathers receive less respect compared to fathers who worked outside the home (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005). Finally, stay-at-home husbands without an income who do the majority of domestic chores in the home are evaluated to be weaker, less agentic and less dominant than stay-at-home husbands who work successfully from home or carry out only part of the total domestic chores (Chaney, Rudman, Fetterolf, & Young, 2017).

The impact of gender stereotypes on the partner in romantic relationships

Gender stereotypes do not only predict how other people evaluate men and women in romantic relationships who violate gendered status expectations, they also have their impact on partners in romantic relationships. Women who perceive to have higher societal status than their male partner perceive him to be the weak one in the relationship and, as a result, report lower relationship satisfaction (Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted). Also, men's feelings of masculinity were reduced when they interacted with a potential romantic, female partner who outsmarted them, because gender stereotypes describe men to be intelligent (Park, Young, & Eastwick, 2015; Prentice & Carranza, 2002). In similar vein, men's implicit self-esteem suffers, and men are less optimistic

about the future of their relationship when their female partner experiences a success that is more relevant to them (academic success vs. social success; Ratliff & Oishi, 2013). This evidence suggests that non-traditional couples are susceptible for stereotypical expectations in their environment and experience negative relationship outcomes as a consequence of these expectations.

Following from these difficulties, it comes as no surprise that people prefer to avoid gender role violations (Amanatullah & Morris, 2011; Wallen, Morris, Devine, & Lu, 2017). Moreover, in reaction to perceived gender role violations, people adhere even more to prescriptive gender stereotypes (Bosson, Vandello, Burnaford, Weaver, & Wasti, 2009; Cheryan, Cameron, Katagiri, & Monin, 2015; Willer, Rogalin, Conlon, & Wojnowicz, 2013). Men and women who try to break gender stereotypes thus face a vicious cycle and in order to deal with the difficulties that non-traditional couples experience, it seems more effective to understand and tackle gender stereotypes. This line of reasoning is in line with recent calls of researchers and practitioners to consider the larger system in dealing with gender stereotypes rather than focusing on the individual (Barker, Cohoon, & Thomson, 2010). One way to investigate the larger system in which non-traditional couples operate is to investigate the national context, as the country forms the background of people to live their lives and impacts couples' decisions, behaviors and feelings through its social policies and through the norms that are endorsed (e.g., Gerson, 1993; Hook, 2006; Ridgeway & Correll, 2000; Payne, Vuletich, & Lundberg, 2017).

The role of national context

The gender stereotypical culture of a country determines the extent to which a male breadwinner model is endorsed (Hook, 2006) and plays a crucial role in determining whether attitudes about status divisions within relationships will change and affect behavior (Gerson, 2003). In other words, the gender stereotypical culture can make it easier or harder for men and women in non-traditional couples to thrive in their relationship. When social policies of a country strongly endorse the male breadwinner model, it is economically less beneficial for couples to break with this model compared to countries that have moved away from the male breadwinner model (Hook, 2006). However, the decisions and behaviors of couples cannot be fully understood by economic and practical considerations. Also, in countries that dissuade the male breadwinner norm,

women still do the majority of household and childcare related tasks even if they earn more than their partner (Bittman et al., 2003; Brines, 1993; Greenstein, 2000). The gender stereotypical culture influences the decisions and behaviors of non-traditional couples both via practical and economic considerations as well as via considerations of societal expectations (Hook, 2006; Gerson, 1993; West & Zimmerman, 1987).

Following this line of reasoning, we argue that the culture in gender egalitarian countries makes it easier for couples to maintain an egalitarian or non-traditional relationship compared to the culture in more traditional countries. The gender stereotypical culture affects what status divisions in relationships are economically most beneficial for couples, but also to what extent relationships in which the woman has attained higher status than the man are socially accepted. For this reason, we will distinguish two proxies for the gender stereotypical culture in a country: the representation of women in non-stereotypical positions (characterized by the Gender Empowerment Measure, GEM index, United Nations, 2013) and the endorsement of implicit gender stereotypes (characterized by the Implicit Association Task, IAT; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998).

In the current study, egalitarian countries are characterized by high percentage of women represented in various professional positions (e.g., parliament, legislation, senior management; United Nations, 2013). Countries' social policies and societal norms can hinder or facilitate a gender egalitarian culture (e.g., Hook, 2006). An example of how social policies facilitate counter stereotypical decisions and behaviors is that universal childcare provided by the state is associated with women's full-time labor participation (Gornick, Meyers, & Ross, 1997). An example of how social policies hinder counter stereotypical decisions and behaviors are Germany's social policies that long reinforce the male breadwinner model (Cooke, 2006). As a consequence of Germany's social policies, married men who do a larger share of the household work are more likely to divorce there compared to married men in the United States (i.e., in which social policies less strongly endorse the male breadwinner model; Cooke, 2006).

Furthermore, in the current study, egalitarian countries are characterized by less traditional average scores on the Implicit Association Task. This means that inhabitants of egalitarian countries less strongly associate men with career and women with family compared to inhabitants of traditional countries (Nosek et

al., 2009; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). Country-level implicit gender stereotypes have been found to affect different outcomes of people living in such countries (Greenwald et al., 2009; Nosek et al., 2009; Payne, Vuletich, & Lundberg, 2017). For instance, in countries where people held stronger traditional gender associations there also were larger gender differences in math scores and achievement gaps between men and women in science (Nosek et al., 2009). These effects are not unique for implicit gender stereotypes and extend to other country-level implicit biases (Greenwald et al., 2009; Payne, Vuletich, & Lundberg, 2017). To illustrate, in French cities, the average scores of its inhabitants on French/Arab IAT (i.e., the extent to which one has negative associations with Arabic names as compared to positive associations with French names) negatively predicted participation in rallies of national unity after the terrorist attack at Charlie Hebdo (Zerhouni, Rougier, & Muller, 2016). Furthermore, average scores of countries' inhabitants on implicit weight bias (i.e., the extent to which one has negative associations with overweight individuals as compared to thin individuals) positively predicted obesity in these countries (Marini et al., 2010).

In sum, a country's representation of women in counter stereotypical positions and its average implicit gender stereotypes define the lives of its inhabitants, because they impact the rational and practical decision that couples make (e.g., what status division within the relationship is economically most beneficial?) Furthermore, representation and salience of implicit gender stereotypes also impact the extent to which couples (unconsciously) anticipate negative social evaluations when they violate traditional gender norms. By including women's representation in senior positions as well as average country scores on the gender-career implicit association task, we are able to investigate how these two important proxies for the gender stereotypical culture of a country influence relationship dynamics of men and women in non-traditional relationships. Following Hook (2006), we expect that both women's representation and average implicit gender associations will affect non-traditional couples in a similar (but not identical) way. By combining these two proxies for a country's gender stereotypical culture, our aim is to explain a significant amount of variance in the experiences of non-traditional couples in different countries.

Overview of study

In the current study, we will investigate how a country's gender stereotypical culture affects the relationship outcomes of couples in non-traditional relationships. Rather than including one objective indicator of the non-traditionality of a relationship, we will include three objective indicators. We are able to investigate how relationship outcomes are affected by women's relative income, educational degree and working hours in relation to her male partner. Previous work has established that status asymmetry can have negative consequences, now we can establish which indicator is leading.

We will operationalize a country's gender stereotypical culture by including an indicator of the endorsement of traditional norms by inhabitants of a country (i.e., average score on Implicit Association Task per country; IAT-score) as well as an indicator of factual gender equality outcomes (i.e., women's representation in senior positions; GEM index). The IAT is a measure that is most often used in psychological research, whereas the GEM is more often used in sociological research. Using both measures as indicators of a country's gender stereotypical culture provides a unique way to combine psychological and sociological measures.

In the current study, we will investigate how countries' gender stereotypical culture will affect men and women's relationship quality, satisfaction with their combination of work and family duties, as well as experienced time pressure and negative emotions. Relationship quality is an important predictor of couples' commitment in their relationship, which is related to the persistence of their relationship (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998). However, not only relationship outcomes are affected by the status division of couples' relationship, as previous work has shown that life outcomes of women in non-traditional relationships (e.g., women's work-life satisfaction, work-life conflict and emotions such as guilt) are also negatively affected compared to women in traditional relationships (Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted). By including work-life satisfaction, experienced time pressure and negative emotions, we are able to investigate how having a non-traditional relationship is related to these more individual life outcomes of both men and women.

Hypotheses

In the present research, we will examine whether and when men and women in non-traditional relationships experience lower relationship and life outcomes compared to men and women in more traditional relationships. Furthermore, we will study whether the negative outcomes of being in a non-traditional relationship are qualified by both the gender empowerment and the endorsement of implicit gender stereotypes in the country that men and women live in. Specifically, we will test two pre-registered hypotheses:

> *H1*: The higher women's status relative to their male partner (i.e., the higher women's relative income, educational degree and working hours relative to their partner), the more negative relationship- and life-outcomes men and women report.

> *H2*: Men and women in a relationship in which the woman has higher status relative to her male partner who live in a country with less gender empowerment and more traditional implicit gender stereotypes will experience worse outcomes compared to men and women in a relationship in which the woman has higher status relative to her male partner who live in a gender egalitarian country.

Method

Participants and design

In order to test our hypotheses, we used the European Sustainable Workforce Survey (ESWS; Van der Lippe, Lippényi, Lössbroek, Van Breeschoten, Van Gerwen, & Martens, 2016). The ESWS is a multiactor organizational survey and is conducted among employees in nine different countries; Bulgaria, Finland, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. We excluded participants who were not in heterosexual relationships or whose own gender or their partner's gender was unknown. We excluded participants of who we were unable to measure their relative income in relation to their total household income from our analyses. These were participants who did not fill out their income or participants of who we were unable to measure their relative income (e.g., because their own income was higher than the end of the

scale of the relative income measure).

Participants ($N = 2748$; $M_{age} = 45.03$, $SD_{age} = 10.78$) were working in 113 different organizations and had completed a second stage of tertiary education (MA or MSC; 22.2%), upper secondary education (18%) or first stage of tertiary education (BA or BSC; 13.3%). Most participants were married to their partner (71%) and had children living at home (58.7%). Lastly, 12.9% of participants reported to be divorced or separated before.

Procedure

With regard to the ESWS, participants (employees, managers and the HR manager) were asked to fill out an online or paper-and- pencil questionnaire at their work after the organizations (often HR directors) agreed to participate. The survey took about 20 minutes to complete. For the current research, we mainly used the employee data. The response rate of employees was on average 61% (Van der Lippe et al., 2016).

Materials

Demographic background information. Participants were asked to indicate their gender, age, marital status (i.e., married versus cohabiting), whether they were divorced or separated before, and if they had children living at home.

Relative income. In order to calculate women's income relative to their male partners, we used participants' net income in relation to their estimation of their total household income. Net income was asked with the following question: "What are your net monthly earnings from your main job at this organization? Please refer to your average earnings in recent months". It was explained that net income refers to "what you have left every month after deducting national and local taxes and compulsory national insurance contributions". If participants did not fill out their net income in absolute numbers, they were asked to give an approximation of their net income in 21 categories, which were based on a distribution of average income in participants' own country. Furthermore, participants were asked to indicate their total household income with the following question: "If you combine income from all sources and all household members, which category best describes your household's total net monthly income?" with

ten categories based on the average household net income per country. We combined participants' net income with the calculated categories and divided their total household income from participants' net income per country. In order to calculate participants' relative income for each country, we calculated the means of each category and recoded every answer accordingly. We repeated this procedure for each country and then combined the nine different variables. Lastly, we detracted men's relative income in relation to their total household income from 1. Our final relative income variable thus indicated the percentage of women's net income of the total household income.

Relative education. In order to calculate women's educational degree relative to their male partner's educational degree, we detracted the man's highest completed education from the woman's highest completed education. Participant's own and their partner's educational level were asked with one question: "What is the highest level of education that you/your partner have/has completed?". Answers ranged from 0 (Not completed primary education) to 7 (Doctoral degree, PhD). Higher scores on the relative education variable thus indicate that the woman is higher educated than the man in the relationship.

Relative working hours. In order to calculate women's working hours relative to their male's partner's working hours, we detracted the man's working hours from the woman's working hours. We used participants' and their partners' contracted working hours, which was asked with one question: "How many hours a week are you/ is your partner contracted to work? Exclude any paid or unpaid overtime". We excluded answers above 80 hours a week from our analyses due to plausibility concerns. Higher scores on the relative working hours variable thus indicate that the woman is working more hours than her male partner.

Countries' gender stereotypical culture: Implicit gender stereotypes. In order to assess countries' implicit gender stereotypes, we used data made available by Project Implicit (https://implicit.harvard.edu) (Nosek et al., 2010; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). Data were collected among visitors of the Project Implicit website who received educational feedback on social attitudes and stereotypes after participating in an Implicit Association Task. We used data of the Gender-Career IAT between 2014 and 2018 and selected scores of participants living in one of the nine countries that were included in the ESWS (data available on https://osf.io/y9hiq/). The Gender-Career IAT mea-

sures respondents' association strength of the groups *men* and *women* with the concepts *career* and *family*. The career words were *career*, *corporation*, *salary*, *office*, *professional*, *management*, and *business*. The family words were *wedding*, *marriage*, *parents*, *relatives*, *family*, *home*, and *children*. Male names were *Ben*, *Paul*, *Daniel*, *John*, and *Jeffrey* and female names were *Rebecca*, *Michelle*, *Emily*, *Julia*, and *Anna*. The IAT consists of two compatible blocks, where respondents were to link the career-words to the male names and family-words to the female names, and two incompatible blocks, where respondents were to link the career-words to the female names and the family-words to the male names. The two compatible and two incompatible blocks were counterbalanced. Also, there were three practice trials. D-scores were calculated by subtracting response latencies of incompatible blocks from compatible blocks and dividing the mean differences in latencies by respondents' standard deviation on all trials except for the three practice trials. This way, higher scores reflect more traditional implicit associations and scores close to zero reflect more egalitarian implicit associations (Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). Average D-Scores per country are shown in Table 1.

Countries' gender stereotypical culture: gender empowerment. In order to assess countries' gender empowerment, we used United Nation's Gender Empowerment Measurement (GEM) index, which is based on four measures: (1) women's share of legislators in the national parliament, (2) the percentage of female managers, legislators and senior officials, (3) amount of female employees in professions and (4) the female-to-male wage ratio among full-time employees. The GEM index is argued to be a measure of women's agency in society and control over political and economic resources (Maume, Hewitt, & Ruppanner, 2018). The GEM ranges from 0 to 1, with higher scores indicating more gender egalitarianism. We used GEM scores as reported by Maume, Hewitt, and Ruppanner (2018; see Table 1).

Table 1

Average d-scores of Gender-Career IAT from 2014-2018, GEM Index and combined z-scores of IAT and GEM (gender stereotypical culture) for countries included in ESWS.

	Gender Stereotypical Culture	IAT D-Score	GEM Index
Sweden	1.62	.322	.883
Finland	1.29	.334	.853
Spain	1.01	.332	.776
United Kingdom	.49	.357	.755
Portugal	.39	.346	.681
Germany	.27	.384	.816
The Netherlands	.15	.397	.844
Bulgaria	-.27	.364	.595
Hungary	-1.29	.414	.560

Note. Countries below the dotted line were considered traditional countries and countries above the dotted line were considered egalitarian countries based on the combined z-scores.

Relationship quality. Relationship quality was measured with one question of the time competition survey (Van der Lippe & Glebbeek, 2003). This question was "In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?". Answers ranged from 1 (very unsatisfied) to 10 (very satisfied). Relationship quality is a construct that is often measured with a single item (see e.g., Blom & Hewitt, 2019; Hardie, Geist, & Lucas, 2014).

Work-life satisfaction. Work-life satisfaction was measured with one question: "How satisfied are you with the time you spend on paid work versus the time you spend on other parts of your life?" (Van der Lippe et al., 2016). Answers ranged from 1 (extremely dissatisfied) to 10 (extremely satisfied).

Time pressure. In order to measure time pressure, participants were asked to indicate how often the following happened to them: "I am under time pressure," "I wish I had more time for myself," "I feel I am under time pressure from others," and "I cannot deal with important things properly due to a lack of time" (a = .86; Van der Lippe et al., 2016). Answers ranged from 1 (always) to 5 (seldom). We recoded scores so that higher scores indicate more time pressure.

Negative emotions. In order to measure negative emotions, participants were asked to indicate how often during the past week: "you felt depressed," "you felt that everything you did was an effort," "your sleep was restless," "you were

happy (recoded)," "you felt lonely," and "you felt sad" (a = .81; Van der Lippe et al., 2016). Answers ranged from 1 (never) to 5 (all the time).

Results

Preliminary analyses

First, we conducted a correlational analysis to investigate whether background variables were associated with our independent and dependent variables (see Table 2). Participants' age, marital status and whether they had children living at home were all associated with several outcome variables. For instance, older participants reported lower relationship quality, but higher work-life satisfaction. Also, and as compared to cohabiting participants, married participants were more likely to be in a relationship in which the woman earns less and works fewer hours than her male partner. Lastly, participants with children living at home were more likely to live in a traditional country based on implicit gender stereotypes and were less satisfied with their work-life combination. We thus included participants' age, marital status and whether they had children living at home as covariates in our multilevel models. Furthermore, we included participants' total household income as another covariate to our models, in order to show that the effects of income, education and working hours are indeed due to women's *relative* position compared to her partner and not because of absolute differences (e.g., couples with higher income in general compared to couples with lower income).

Next, in order to prevent multicollinearity, we compared the correlations of our three independent (i.e., relative income, education and working hours) and moderating variables (i.e., countries' gender empowerment and implicit gender stereotypes; see Table 2). We stated in our pre-registration that our aim is to investigate whether one of the three objective status plays a crucial role for couples' relationship and life outcomes, and thus prefer to use them as separate variables in our model. However, we stated that in the case of multicollinearity, we would make one variable combining the three independent variables when correlations between the three were higher than $r = .50$. None of the correlations between the three independent variables was higher than $r = .50$.

With regard to countries' indicators of gender stereotypical culture, the correlation between the dummies of gender empowerment and implicit gender stereotypes was $\varphi = .43$, $p < .001$. As our aim is to show how the salience of gender stereotypes in countries contribute to couples' relationship and life outcomes, we decided to create z-scores out of the IAT-scores and GEM index per country and calculate the mean between these two z-scores. Based on this mean, we created a dummy variable of traditional countries versus egalitarian countries (see Table 2). Here, we diverged from our pre-registration where we stated that we would run two separate analyses for the two indicators of gender stereotypical culture when the correlation between the dummies is higher than .50. We considered combining the two indicators to be more optimal than running two separate models as this way we were able to run fewer analyses, preventing multiple comparisons. However, we conducted separate analyses for both indicators of a countries' gender stereotypical culture, which did not result in different patterns in the reported results.

Table 2

Correlation analyses of background, independent, and dependent variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
1. Age	-																					
2. Age partner	.86**	-																				
3. Gender	-.07**	.17**	-																			
4. Marital status	.32**	.31**	-.03	-																		
5. Divorced before	.13**	.07**	-.03	-.27**	-																	
6. Children living at home	.10**	.12**	.04	-.20**	.05*	-																
7. Own education level	-.11**	-.10**	.15**	-.01	-.05*	-.03	-															
8. Partner's education level	-.12**	-.13**	-.02	-.02	-.05	.02	.59**	-														
9. Working hours	-.06**	-.10**	-.18**	-.05*	-.04	-.03	-.02	.00	-													
10. Partner's working hours	-.06*	.04	.22**	-.05*	.04	.09**	-.03	.02	.25**	-												
11. Net income	.06*	.04	-.04	.01	.03	.02	-.08**	-.04	.15**	.14**	-											
12. Total household income	-.04	-.05*	-.05**	.06**	.01	-.07**	.31**	.36**	.07**	.05*	.19**	-										
13. Relative income	-.01	.11**	.49**	-.06**	.02	.06**	.16**	.07**	.01	.17**	.01	-.03	-									
14. Relative educational	-.09**	-.04	.15**	.01	-.04	-.02	.07**	-.15**	.01	.07**	.00	-.02	.21**	-								
15. Relative working hours	.01	.01	.04	-.04	.02	.12**	.02	.10**	.12**	.09**	.10**	.06	.23**	.01	-							
16. Countries' IAT-score	-.02	-.02	.00	-.03	-.02	.05*	-.09**	-.03	-.03	-.06**	.53**	.05*	-.04	-.01	-.12**	-						
17. Countries' GEM-index	-.02	-.06**	-.18**	-.02	.04	-.04	.02	.06**	-.08**	-.21**	-.44**	.18**	-.18**	-.06**	-.23**	-.30**	-					
18. Culture (combined z-scores IAT & GEM)	.00	-.03	-.11**	.01	.03	-.06**	.06**	.05*	-.03	-.09**	-.59**	.08**	-.09**	-.03	-.06**	-.81**	.81**	-				
19. Relationship quality	-.09**	-.11**	-.08**	.02	-.03	.05*	-.03	.03	-.01	-.02	.04	.05*	-.10**	.00	-.01	.03	.04	.01	-			
20. Work-life satisfaction	.09**	.06**	-.03	.09**	-.03	-.04*	-.05*	-.06**	-.09**	-.03	.03	.03	-.06**	-.03	-.04	.04	.06**	.01	.15**	-		
21. Time pressure	.00	.00	.00	.02	-.01	.02	-.03	-.01	-.03	-.01	-.04	-.02	.00	.04	-.01	-.01	.05*	.04	.04*	.05*	-	
22. Negative emotions	.04	.08*	.15**	.00	-.01	.00	.01	-.04*	-.02	.07**	-.10**	-.19**	.12**	.03	.06**	-.14**	-.18**	-.02	-.31**	-.25**	-.08**	-

Note. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$. The following variables are dummy-coded: Gender with 1 = male and 2 = female; Marital status with 0 = cohabiting and 1 = married; Children living at home with 0 = yes and 1 = no. Relative income is the percentage of the woman's income of the total household income. Relative education is the man's educational level substracted from the educational level of the woman. A similar calculation was conducted for relative working hours. Higher scores thus indicate a higher status of the woman in relation to her male partner.

Overview of multilevel analyses

We conducted two-level multilevel random intercept regression models in SPSS. All models included organization as Level 2 variable as participants work in 259 different organizations (i.e., our data is multilevel). We conducted multilevel regression models without any predictors to justify the need for random intercept models. These models indicated that there is especially high variance on the organization level for work-life satisfaction (23.7%), but also for relationship quality (4.4%) and negative emotions (3.3%).

In Model 1, we included background variables (i.e., age, marital status, children living at home and total household income) and women's income, education and working hours relative to their partners. In Model 2, we ran one model with the main effects of countries' gender stereotypical culture (mean z-scores of IAT and GEM). In Model 3, we ran one model which added the interaction effects of women's relative status (income, education and working hours) and countries' gender stereotypical culture (see Appendix E for regression coefficients and standard errors of all models). Furthermore, in case of significant interactions, the full model is analyzed separately for traditional versus egalitarian countries. Also, in case of significant interactions, we will report the simple slopes for the significant status-indicators (M-1SD and M+1SD). Lastly, the ESWS (Van der Lippe et al., 2016) only includes nine different countries, so it could be that our results are driven by one very influential country. In order to check for influential countries, we conducted nine similar analyses excluding every country once (the Jackknife procedure; Rodgers, 1999). We included the results of this procedure in the supplemental materials.

Does women's higher relative status predict negative relationship and life outcomes?

In line with Hypothesis 1, participants in relationships in which the woman earns more than her male partner reported lower relationship quality and more negative emotions (see Table 3). Furthermore, participants in relationships in which the woman is higher educated than the man reported that they experienced more time pressure (see Table 3).

However, we found no support for Hypothesis 1 on some of the other variables.

There were no associations of relative working hours on our dependent variables (see Table 3). Women's status relative to their partner was not associated with work-life satisfaction (see Table 3). Also, relative income was not associated with experienced time pressure and relative education was not associated with relationship quality and negative emotions (see Table 3).

Does countries' gender stereotypical culture qualify these results?

In line with Hypothesis 2, we found a significant interaction effect of women's relative income and countries' gender stereotypical culture on participants' relationship quality (see Table 3). Running the models separately for traditional and egalitarian countries, we found that participants living in traditional countries reported lower relationship quality when they had a relationship in which the woman earns more than her male partner in traditional countries, $b = -1.48$, $SE = .39$, $p < .001$, but this was not the case for participants living in egalitarian countries, $b = .22$, $SE = .63$, $p = .722$. Simple slope analyses showed a significant effect for couples in which the woman earns more than the man, $b = -.44$, $SE = .21$, $p = .031$, indicating that for these couples, living in a traditional country was associated with lower relationship quality than living in an egalitarian country. Simple slope analyses showed no significant effects for couples in which the man earns more than the woman, $b = .23$, $SE = .20$, $p = .254$. In sum, these analyses show that men and women's relationship quality suffer when the woman earns more than her male partner and that this is especially the case for those men and women who live in country in which a traditional gender stereotypical culture is endorsed.

Furthermore, we found a significant interaction effect of women's relative education level and countries' gender stereotypical culture on relationship quality (see Table 3). We found that there was no association of women's educational level relative to her partner and participants' relationship quality in traditional countries, $b = -.04$, $SE = .05$, $p = .463$, whereas in egalitarian countries participants reported higher relationship quality when they were in a relationship in which the woman is higher educated than the man, $b = .14$, $SE = .06$, $p = .025$. Simple slope analyses showed that there was a significant effect for couples in which the woman is higher educated than the man, $b = -.36$, $SE = .18$, $p = .050$, indicating that for these couples, living in an egalitarian country is associated with higher relationship quality compared to living in a traditional country. Simple

slope analyses showed no effects for couples in which the man is higher educated than the woman, $b = .15$, $SE = .18$, $p = .414$.

We also found a significant interaction effect of women's relative working hours and countries' gender stereotypical culture on work-life satisfaction (see Table 3). However, we found no significant differences of participants living in traditional, $b = -.01$, $SE = .00$, $p = .180$, versus egalitarian countries, $b = .02$, $SE = .01$, $p = .105$. Also, simple slope analyses showed no significant differences of participants in a relationship in which the woman works more hours than the man, $b = -.12$, $SE = .22$, $p = .544$, compared to participants in a relationship in which the man works more hours than the woman, $b = .44$, $SE = .23$, $p = .065$.

We found no support for Hypothesis 2 on women's relative status (i.e., relative income, education and working hours) and experienced time pressure and negative emotions (see Table 3).

Table 3
Hierarchical linear regression models of main effects of women's status relative to their partners on dependent variables (Model 1) and of interaction effects of women's relative status and culture on dependent variables (Model 3).

	Relationship Quality	Work-Life Satisfaction	Time Pressure	Negative Emotions
Relative income	**-1.09 (.32)****	-.41 (.33)	-.03 (.17)	**.29 (.10)****
Relative education	.04 (.04)	-.00 (.04)	**.06 (.02)****	-.01 (.01)
Relative working hours	.00 (.01)	-.00 (.01)	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)
Relative income x Culture	**-1.65 (.77)***	-.17 (.79)	-.10 (.40)	-.27 (.23)
Relative education x Culture	**-.17 (.08)***	-.00 (.09)	-.01 (04)	.02 (.02)
Relative working hours x Culture	.01 (.01)	**-.03 (.01)***	-.00 (.01)	.01 (.00)

Were there influential countries driving these results?

Effects remain quite similar when excluding every country once from the analyses (see Appendix F).[5] However, the effect of women's relative income on experienced negative emotions became non-significant when excluding Bulgaria. The effect of women's relative education on experienced time pressure became marginally significant when excluding Bulgaria. Also, the interaction of women's relative income and gender stereotypical culture on relationship quality became

marginally significant when excluding Sweden and Bulgaria. The interaction of relative education and gender stereotypical culture on relationship quality became marginally significant when excluding UK and Hungary and non-significant when excluding Bulgaria (see Appendix F). The results that change due to the jackknife procedure need to be interpreted with care.

General discussion

In this paper, we investigated the role of national context on relationship and life outcomes of men and women in relationships in which the woman has surpassed the man in societal status. These non-traditional relationships were characterized by women's income, education level and working hours relative to their male partner. We investigated whether countries' gender stereotypical culture (i.e., gender empowerment and implicit gender stereotypes) qualified the relationship and life outcomes of men and women in non-traditional relationships.

Replicating and extending previous work showing first evidence of the difficulties men and women experience when they are in a relationship in which the woman has higher status than the man, our results suggest that especially women's income and -to a lesser extent- educational degree relative to their male partner negatively impair relationship and life outcomes. When men and women were in a relationship in which the woman earns more than the man, they reported lower relationship quality and experienced more negative emotions. When men and women were in a relationship in which the woman is higher educated than the man, they experienced more time pressure. Furthermore, these negative outcomes for non-traditional couples are qualified by the gender stereotypical culture of a country. The salience of gender inequality in a country was conceptualized by a normative, more implicit indicator (i.e., inhabitants' average implicit gender stereotypes) as well as a factual, more explicit indicator (i.e., women's representation in non-stereotypical roles) of countries' gender stereotypical culture. This combination of traditional norms and factual outcomes in countries affected the relationship quality of non-traditional couples. Specifically, men and women living in traditional countries reported lower relationship quality when they were in a relationship in which the woman earns more than her partner, whereas this was not the case for participants living in egalitarian countries. Furthermore, we found that men and women living in egal-

itarian countries reported higher relationship quality when they were in a relationship in which the woman is more highly educated than the man, whereas this was not the case for men and women living in traditional countries.

It is argued that it becomes more accepted for women to be educated and potentially even higher educated than their partner, because these relationships are nowadays more common in most European countries (De Hauw, Grow, & Van Bavel, 2017; Schwartz & Han, 2014). As these relationships become more accepted, relationships in which the woman is higher educated than the man have become more stable than before (Schwartz & Han, 2014). On the other hand, although increasing in frequency, relationships in which the woman earns more than the man are still less common (Van Bavel, Schwartz, & Esteve, 2018; Portegijs & Van den Brakel, 2018). Men are still expected to be breadwinners of their family which is conceptualized by the financial means they can provide, whereas women are still expected to be the main caregiver of their family (Park, Smith, & Correll, 2010; Morgenroth & Heilman, 2017). As the male breadwinner model remains the status quo in many countries (see e.g., Cooke, 2006), non-traditional couples in which the woman earns more than her partner threaten these cultural values and might therefore experience more difficulties than non-traditional couples in which the woman is more highly educated or works more hours than her partner. These difficulties involve social and economic penalties by others outside the relationship (Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, under review), but also increased relationship conflict, feelings of guilt towards one's partner and work-family conflict compared to traditional couples (Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted). Rather than practical differences such as differences in working hours, it seems that especially symbolic status differences between couples explain negative outcomes for non-traditional couples. This implies that an increasing number of paid hours of women alone is not enough to change gender inequality, changing the culture in society is at least as important.

Limitations and suggestions for future research

Although we show initial evidence that the gender stereotypical culture of a country affects relationship quality of non-traditional couples, the national context seems to have less direct impact on men and women's life outcomes (i.e., work-life satisfaction, experienced time pressure and negative emotions). How-

ever, the gender stereotypical culture of a country could also affect couples in a more indirect way. To illustrate, many women in The Netherlands -a country in this study that was considered to have a traditional gender stereotypical culture- work part-time (Portegijs & Van den Brakel, 2018). Dutch women who experienced negative life outcomes due to non-traditional divisions of work within their relationship might have already reduced their working hours to overcome these negative outcomes. As a consequence, they no longer experience time pressure or work-life dissatisfaction because of violating traditional gender roles but have still adjusted their behavior to better match the gender stereotypical culture of a country. Future, longitudinal research is needed to investigate the indirect impact of a country's gender stereotypical culture on the life outcomes of non-traditional couples.

A limitation of this research is that there were only nine countries in our dataset. Future research should replicate these effects by including more countries. Rather than including a normative (i.e., implicit gender stereotypes) and factual (i.e., gender empowerment) indicator of countries' gender stereotypical culture, future research could investigate the role of a more explicit indicator: the salience of non-traditional relationships in a country. The frequency of non-traditional relationships within a country might also affect relationship and life outcomes of these couples. This might also capture more indirect ways in which the gender stereotypical culture affect non-traditional couples, because the countries in which non-traditional couples are least common might also be the countries in which many couples have internalized the gender stereotypical culture and have adjusted their roles in the relationship to fit the male breadwinner model. Next to these country-level characteristics, it could be argued that individual- and community-level characteristics have their influence on couples as well. For instance, and with regard to individual-level characteristics, women's own implicit gender stereotypes influence how they cope and behave when they perceive to have surpassed their partner in status (Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted). Also, the community that couples live in seems to matter for relationship outcomes as well. Divorce rates of marriages in which the woman is higher educated than their male partner are lower in communities in which these marriages are more common compared to communities with more traditional marriages (Theunis et al., 2018). These studies suggest that other characteristics have an impact on couples' life too. To illustrate, a couples' social network (i.e., having many friends who are also in non-traditional relationships)

or working in an organization in which many women have surpassed their partner in status might buffer the negative relationship outcomes for non-traditional couples. People unconsciously shape their implicit gender associations by seeing men and women in typical roles and when many couples have atypical gender roles, stereotypical associations also become less traditional (Payne, Vuletich, & Lundberg, 2017; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). Furthermore, these friends and colleagues might provide social support which is an important factor predicting individuals' well-being and outcomes and might therefore act as a buffer for couples who break with traditional prescriptive gender stereotypes (Abenroth, Van der Lippe, & Maas, 2012). Our results suggest that couples' decisions should not be seen as a private matter but are rather influenced by societal expectations and norms. Future research could include some of the abovementioned characteristics of the context to investigate how they interact and shape the realities of non-traditional couples. Furthermore, future research could examine the link between changing societal gender norms and relationship outcomes for couples in relationships who break with traditional gender norms by conducting longitudinal research. This design allows to investigate how norms change over time and how this is related to different relationship outcomes for men and women in relationships in which the woman has higher status than their partner.

Some of our findings became less strong when one country was excluded from the analysis, providing an indication that there were some influential countries in our dataset (Rodgers, 1999). Bulgaria was the most influential country and was also the country with the most traditional gender stereotypical culture (Ruppanner, 2010; Maume, Hewitt, Ruppanner, 2018; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). To illustrate, the effect of women's relative income on experienced negative emotions became non-significant when excluding Bulgaria. It could be that the gender stereotypical culture is most salient for non-traditional couples living in Bulgaria and thus also has the strongest direct impact on the relationship and life outcomes of men and women. Future research should include more countries and investigate whether the salience of a countries' gender stereotypical culture indeed explains these effects.

Although our results were largely in line with our explanations, it seems that the number of hours women work in relation to their partner had no effect on men and women's relationship and life outcomes. Because we included women's in-

come and education level relative to their partner to our models, it could be that working hours in itself does not signal societal status. Most definitions of status include income, education level and prestige in society (Adler et al., 2000; Duncan, 1961). Although Gong (2007) argues to include working hours as an indicator of status as it signals partner's employment status, no association between working hours (above the effect of income and education level) and relationship quality is found in this study.

Lastly, women's relative societal status within the relationship did not affect how satisfied men and women were with their work-life combination. This finding is in contrast with earlier findings showing that women reported lower work-life satisfaction in a diary setting when they perceived to have higher societal status than their partner (Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted). General work-life satisfaction might be something different than daily work-life satisfaction, as general measures often show less variety than daily measures (e.g., because general measures are more susceptible for socially desirable responses compared to daily measures; Ohly, Sonnentag, Niessen, & Zapf, 2010). For this reason, it could be that the decreased daily work-life satisfaction that non-traditional couples experience is not reflected in their general work-life satisfaction. Non-traditional couples that have experienced dissatisfaction with their work-life combination for a longer period might have already adjusted their behavior (e.g., by the woman reducing her work hours; Vink, Derks, Ellemers, & Van der Lippe, submitted).

Implications

This work shows how a countries' gender stereotypical culture influence people's relationship and life outcomes and highlights the importance of a structural rather than an individual approach in tackling gender inequality for romantic relationships. The salience of traditional gender stereotypes prescribing men to be the breadwinner and women to be main caregiver of their family on national scale influences relationship quality of men and women who break with these expectations. Specifically, our work shows that especially in countries that endorse traditional gender attitudes (i.e., Hungary, Bulgaria, The Netherlands, Germany) and/or have fewer women in senior positions (i.e., Portugal, Bulgaria, Hungary), men and women in relationships in which the woman earns more than her male partner experience more difficulties than couples in more tradi-

tional relationships.

If social norms about who should be the breadwinner and who should be the caregiver change, couples in which the woman is the one with higher status in the relationship might experience less difficulties. For couples living in egalitarian countries, men and women reported higher relationship quality when they were in a relationship in which the woman is higher educated than the man. This is in line with Schwartz and Han (2014), who state that since relationships in which the woman is higher educated than the man become more common, these relationships become also more accepted which supports their stability. The growing evidence that individual outcomes improve not only from interpersonal and more individual approaches (e.g., couple therapy) but also from structural change is important information for governments and policy makers who try to improve gender equality within societies.

Conclusion

We show first evidence that countries' gender stereotypical culture has its influence on men and women in relationships in which the woman is the one with the highest status of both partners. It turns out to be a bottleneck when women earn more than their male partner and thus break with the male breadwinner model. This is especially the case in countries that endorse the male breadwinner model and have a traditional genders stereotypical culture. On the other hand, countries that are characterized by a more egalitarian gender stereotypical culture seem to facilitate other relationships in which men and women have equal status or women are the ones with the highest status of both partners.

Chapter 6

References
Appendices
Nederlandse samenvatting
Dankwoord
Curriculum Vitea
KLI Dissertation Series

References

Abele, A. E., & Wojciszke, B. (2007). Agency and communion from the perspective of self versus others. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *93*, 751-763.

Abendroth, A. K., Van der Lippe, T., & Maas, I. (2012). Social support and the working hours of employed mothers in Europe: The relevance of the state, the workplace, and the family. *Social Science Research*, *41*, 581-597.

Adler, N. E., Epel, E. S., Castellazzo, G., & Ickovics, J. R. (2000). Relationship of subjective and objective social status with psychological and physiological functioning: preliminary data in healthy white women. *Health Psychology*, *19*, 586-592.

Aiken, L. S. & West, S. G. (1991). *Multiple regression: Testing and interpreting interactions.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Amanatullah, E. T., & Morris, M. W. (2010). Negotiating gender roles: Gender differences in assertive negotiating are mediated by women's fear of backlash and attenuated when negotiating on behalf of others. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *98*, 256– 267.

Barker, L. J., Cohoon, J. M., & Thompson, L. D. (2010). Work in progress—A practical model for achieving gender parity in undergraduate computing: Change the system, not the student. *Frontiers in Education Conference (FIE)*, S1H–1. Washington, D.C.

Bartley, S. J., Blanton, P. W., & Gilliard, J. L. (2005). Husbands and wives in dual-earner marriages: Decision-making, gender role attitudes, division of household labor, and equity. *Marriage & Family Review*, *37*, 69-94.

Batalova, J. & Cohen, P. (2002). Premarital cohabitation and housework: Couples in cross-national perspective. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *64*, 743–755.

Baumeister, R. F., Stillwell, A. M., & Heatherton, T. F. (1995). Personal narratives about guilt: Role in action control and interpersonal relationships. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, *17*, 173-198.

Bear, J. B., & Glick, P. (2017). Breadwinner bonus and caregiver penalty in workplace rewards for men and women. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, *8*, 780-788.

Belle, D. (1990). Poverty and women's mental health. *American Psychologist*, *45*, 385-389.

Bertrand, M., Kamenica, E., & Pan, J. (2015). Gender identity and relative

income within households. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *130*, 571–614.

Blom, N., & Hewitt, B. (2019). Becoming a female-breadwinner household in Australia: Changes in relationship satisfaction. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 1-18.

Bittman, M., England, E., Sayer, L., Folbre, N., & Matheson, G. (2003). When does gender trump money? Bargaining and time in household work. *American Journal of Sociology*, *109*, 186-214.

Bosson, J. K., Vandello, J. A., Burnaford, R. M., Weaver, J. R., & Arzu Wasti, S. (2009). Precarious manhood and displays of physical aggression. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *35*, 623-634.

Branscombe, N. R., Ellemers, N., Spears, R., & Doosje, B. (1999). The context and content of social identity threat. *Social identity: Context, commitment, content*, 35-58.

Brescoll, V. L., & Uhlmann, E. L. (2005). Attitudes toward traditional and nontraditional parents. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *29*, 436–445.

Brines, J. (1994). Economic dependency, gender, and the division of labor at home. *American Journal of Sociology*, *199*, 652-688.

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2013b). *Employment by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic ethnicity.* Retrieved from http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.pdf.

Buss, D. M. (2004). *Evolutionary psychology: The new science of the mind* (2nd ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Buss, D. M. (2011). *Evolutionary psychology: The new science of the mind* (4th ed.) London, England: Allyn & Bacon.

Buss, D. M. & Kenrick, D. T. (1998). Evolutionary social psychology. In D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, & G. Lindey (Eds.) *The handbook of social psychology* (4th ed., Vol 2, pp. 982-1026). Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (2015). *Meer werkende vrouwen.* Retrieved from https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/nieuws/2015/34/meer-werkende-vrouwen.

Chaney, K. E., Rudman, L. A., Fetterolf, J. C., & Young, D. M. (2017). Paying a price for domestic equality: Risk factors for backlash against nontraditional husbands. *Gender Issues*, 1-20.

Cherlin, A. J. (2004). The deinstitutionalization of American marriage. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *66*, 848-861.

Cherry, F., & Deaux, K. (1978). Fear of success versus fear of gender-inappropriate behavior. *Sex Roles*, *4*, 97–101.

Cheryan, S., Cameron, J. S., Katagiri, Z., & Monin, B. (2015). Manning up: Threatened men compensate by disavowing feminine preferences and embracing masculine attributes. *Social Psychology*, *46*, 218-227.

Cook, W. L., & Kenny, D. A. (2005). The actor–partner interdependence model: A model of bidirectional effects in developmental studies. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, *29*, 101-109.

Cooke, L. P. (2006). "Doing" gender in context: Household bargaining and risk of divorce in Germany and the United States. *American Journal of Sociology*, *112*, 442-472.

Cooke, L. P., Erola, J., Evertsson, M., Mencarini, L., Mignot, J. (2013). Labor and love: Wives ' employment and divorce risk in its socio-political context. *Social Politics*, *20*, 482–509.

Croft, A., Schmader, T., & Block, K. (2015). An underexamined inequality: Cultural and psychological barriers to men's engagement with communal roles. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *19*, 343-370.

Croft, A., Schmader, T., Block, K., & Baron, A. S. (2014). The second shift reflected in the second generation: Do parents' gender roles at home predict children's aspirations? *Psychological Science*, *25*, 1418-1428.

Cronbach, L. J. & Furby, L. (1970). How we should measure "change" – or should we? *Psychological Bulletin*, *74*, 68-80.

Cuddy, A. J., Fiske, S. T., & Glick, P. (2004). When professionals become mothers, warmth doesn't cut the ice. *Journal of Social issues*, *60*, 701-718.

Davis, S., Greenstein, T., & Marks, J. (2007). Effects of union type on division of household labor: Do cohabiting men really perform more housework? *Journal of Family Issues*, *28*, 1246–1272.

De Hauw, Y., Grow, A., & Van Bavel, J. (2017). The reversed gender gap in education and assortative mating in Europe. *European Journal of Population*, *33*, 445-474.

Dernberger, D. A., & Pepin, J. R. (2020). Gender flexibility, but not equality: Young adults' division of labor preferences. *Sociological Science*, *7*, 36-56.

Diekman, A. B., & Eagly, A. H. (2000). Stereotypes as dynamic constructs: Women and men of the past, present, and future. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *26*, 1171-1188.

Drago, R., Black, D., & Wooden, M. (2005). Female breadwinner families: Their existence, persistence and sources. *Journal of Sociology*, *41*, 343-362.

Duncan, O. D. (1961). A socioeconomic index for all occupations. In Reiss A.

(Ed.), *Occupations and Social Status* (pp. 109–138). New York: Free Press.

Eagly, A.H. (1987). *Sex Differences in Social Behavior: A Social-role Interpretation*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review*, *109*, 573-598.

Eagly, A. H., Wood, W., & Diekman, A. (2000). Social role theory of sex differences and similarities: A current appraisal. In T. Eckes & H. M. Trautner (Eds.) *The Developmental Social Psychology of Gender* (pp. 123–174). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Eastwick, P. W., Eagly, A. H., Glick, P., Johannesen-Schmidt, M. C., Fiske, S. T., Blum, A. M. B., … Volpato, C. (2006). Is traditional gender ideology associated with sex-typed mate preferences? A test in nine nations, *Sex Roles*, *54*, 603–14.

Ellemers, N. (2018). Gender stereotypes. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *69*, 275-298.

Endendijk, J. J., Derks, B., & Mesman, J. (2018). Does parenthood change implicit gender-role stereotypes and behaviors? *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *80*, 61–79.

Endendijk, J. J., Groeneveld, M. G., van der Pol, L. D., van Berkel, S. R., Hallers-Haalboom, E. T., Mesman, J., & Bakermans-Kranenburg, M. J. (2014). Boys don't play with dolls: Mothers' and fathers' gender talk during picture book reading. *Parenting*, *14*, 141-161.

England, P. (2010). The gender revolution: Uneven and stalled. *Gender & Society*, *24*, 149-166.

England, P. (2011). Missing the big picture and making much ado about almost nothing: Recent scholarship on gender and household work. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, *3*, 23-26.

Evertsson, M. & Nermo, M. (2004). Dependence within families and the division of labor: compar- ing Sweden and the United States. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *66*, 1272–1286.

Faul, F., Erdfelder, E., Lang, A. G., & Buchner, A. (2007). G* Power 3: A flexible statistical power analysis program for the social, behavioral, and biomedical sciences. *Behavior research methods*, *39*, 175-191.

Ferguson, T. J., Stegge, H., Eyre, H. L., Vollmer, R., & Ashbaker, M. (2000). Context effects and the (mal)adaptive nature of guilt and shame in children. *Genetic, Social, and General Psychology Monographs*, *123*, 319-

345.

Frisco, M. L., & Williams, K. (2003). Perceived housework equity, marital happiness, and divorce in dual-earner households. *Journal of Family Issues*, *24*, 51-73.

Funk, J. L., & Rogge, R. D. (2007). Testing the ruler with item response theory: Increasing precision of measurement for relationship satisfaction with the couples satisfaction index. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *21*, 572-583.

Fuwa, M. (2004). Macro-level gender inequality and the division of household labor in 22 countries. *American Sociological Review*, *69*, 751–767.

Gawronski, B., & Bodenhausen, G. V. (2006). Associative and propositional processes in evaluation: An integrative review of implicit and explicit attitude change. *Psychological Bulletin*, *132*, 692-731.

Gawronski, B., Morrison, M., Phills, C. E., & Galdi, S. (2017). Temporal stability of implicit and explicit measures: A longitudinal analysis. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *43*, 300–312.

Geist, C. (2005). The welfare state and the home: Regime differences in the domestic division of labor. *European Sociological Review*, *21*, 23–41.

Glick, P., Wilk, K., & Perreault (1995). Images of occupations: Components of gender and status in occupational stereotypes. *Sex Roles*, 32, 565-582.

Goldstein, J. R., & Harknett, K. (2006). Parenting across racial and class lines: Assortative mating patterns of new parents who are married, cohabiting, dating or no longer romantically involved. *Social Forces*, *85*, 121-143.

Gong, M. (2007). Does status inconsistency matter for marital quality? *Journal of Family Issues*, *28*, 1582–1610.

Gornick, J., Meyers, M. and Ross, K. (1997). Supporting the employment of mothers: Policy variation across fourteen welfare states. *Journal of European Social Policy*, *7*, 45–70.

Greenstein, T. N. (2000). Economic dependence, gender, and the division of labor at home: A replication and extension. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *62*, 322-335.

Greenwald, A., & Banaji, M. (1995). Implicit social cognition: Attitudes, self-esteem, and stereotypes. *Psychological Review*, *102*, 4–27.

Greenwald, A. G., McGhee, D. E., & Schwartz, J. L. K. (1998). Measuring individual differences in implicit cognition: The Implicit Association Test. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *74*, 1464–1480.

Greenwald, A. G., Nosek, B. A., & Banaji, M. R. (2003). Understanding and using the Implicit Association Test: An improved scoring algorithm. *Journal*

of Personality and Social Psychology, *85*, 197-216.

Greenwald, A. G., Poehlman, T. A., Uhlmann, E. L., Banaji, M. R. (2009). Understanding and using the Implicit Association Test: III. Meta-analysis of predictive validity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *97*, 17–41.

Guimond, S., Chatard, A., Martinot, D., Crisp, R. J., & Redersdorff, S. (2006). Social comparison, self-stereotyping, and gender differences in self-construals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *90*, 221.

Ha, T., Van Den Berg, J. E., Engels, R. C., & Lichtwarck-Aschoff, A. (2012). Effects of attractiveness and status in dating desire in homosexual and heterosexual men and women. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *41*, 673-682.

Hahn, A. & Gawronski, B. (2019). Facing one's implicit biases: From awareness to acknowledgement. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *116*, 769-794.

Haidt, J. (2003). The moral emotions. In Davidson, R. J., Scherer, K. R, & Goldsmith, H. H. (Eds.), *Handbook of affective sciences* (pp. 852-870). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Haines, E. L., Deaux, K., & Lofaro, N. (2016). The times they are a-changing… or are they not? A comparison of gender stereotypes, 1983-2014. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *40*, 353-363.

Hammond, M. D., & Overall, N. C. (2015). Benevolent sexism and support of romantic partner's goals: Undermining women's competence while fulfilling men's intimacy needs. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *41*, 1180–1194.

Hardie, J. H., Geist, C., & Lucas, A. (2014). His and hers: Economic factors and relationship quality in Germany. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 76*, 728-743.

Heckert, D. A., Nowak, T. C., & Snyder, K. A. (1998). The impact of husbands' and wives' relative earnings on marital disruption. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *60*, 690-703.

Hegarty, P., & Pratto, F. (2001). Sexual orientation beliefs: Their relationship to anti-gay attitudes and biological determinist arguments. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *41*, 121-135.

Heilman, M. E. (2001). Description and prescription: How gender stereotypes prevent women's ascent up the organizational ladder. *Journal of Social Issues*, *57*, 657-674.

Heilman, M. E., & Okimoto, T. G. (2008). Motherhood: a potential source of bias in employment decisions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *93*, 189.

Heilman, M. E., & Okimoto, T. G. (2007). Why are women penalized for success at male tasks?: The implied communality deficit. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *92*, 81–92.

Heilman, M. E., & Wallen, A. S. (2010). Wimpy and undeserving of respect: Penalties for men's gender-inconsistent success. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *46*, 664-667.

Helms, H. M., Proulx, C. M., Klute, M. M., McHale, S. M., & Crouter, A. C. (2006). Spouses' gender-typed attributes and their links with marital quality: A pattern analytic approach. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *23*, 843-864.

Hettinger, V. E., Hutchinson, D. M., & Bosson, J. K. (2014). Influence of professional status on perceptions of romantic relationship dynamics. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, *15*, 470.

Hochschild, A. R., & Machung, A. (2012). Revised edition: *The second shift: Working parents and the revolution at home*. London, England: Penguin Books.

Hook, J. (2006). Care in context: Men's unpaid work in 20 countries. *American Sociological Review*, *71*, 639–660.

Hornsey, M. J., Wellauer, R., McIntyre, J. C., & Barlow, F. K. (2015). A critical test of the assumption that men prefer conformist women and women prefer nonconformist men. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *41*, 755-768.

Hudson, W. W. (1998). Index of sexual satisfaction. In C. M. Davis, W. L. Yarber, R. Bauserman, G. Schreer, & S. L. Davis (Eds.), *Handbook of Sexuality-Related Measures* (pp. 512-513). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Jalovaara, M. (2003). The joint effects of marriage partners' socioeconomic positions on the risk of divorce. *Demography*, *40*, 67–81.

Joel, S., Eastwick, P. W., & Finkel, E. J. (2017). Is romantic desire predictable? Machine learning applied to initial romantic attraction. *Psychological Science*, *28*, 1478–1489.

Jost, J. T., Banaji, M. R., & Nosek, B. A. (2004). A decade of system justification theory: Accumulated evidence of conscious and unconscious bolstering of the status quo. *Political Psychology*, *25*, 881-919.

Jost, J. T., Glaser, J., Kruglanski, A. W., Sulloway, F. J. (2003). Political conservatism as motivated social cognition. *Psychological Bulletin*, *129*, 339–375.

Kalmijn, M. (2003). Union disruption in the Netherlands: Opposing influences of

task specialization and assortative mating? *International Journal of Sociology*, *33*, 36–64.

Kite, M. E., & Deaux, K. (1987). Gender belief systems: Homosexuality and the implicit inversion theory. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *11*, 83-96.

Knudsen, K. & Wærness, K. (2008). National context and spouses' housework in 34 countries. *European Sociological Review*, *24*, 97–113.

Lachance-Grzela, M., & Bouchard, G. (2010). Why do women do the lion's share of housework? A decade of research. *Sex roles*, *63*, 767-780.

Latten, J. J. & Mulder, C. H. (2013). Partner relationships in the Netherlands: New manifestations of the Second Demographic Transition. *Genus*, *69*, 103-121.

Laurin, K., Kay, A. C., & Shepherd, S. (2011). Self-stereotyping as a route to system justification. *Social Cognition*, *29*, 360-375.

Ledermann, T., Macho, S., & Kenny, D. A. (2011). Assessing mediation in dyadic data using the actor-partner interdependence model. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, *18*, 595-612.

Lippa, R. A. (2007). The preferred traits of mates in a cross-national study of heterosexual and homosexual men and women: An examination of biological and cultural influences. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *36*, 193-208.

Lyngstad, T. H. (2004). The impact of parents' and spouses' education on divorce rates in Norway. *Demographic research*, *10*, 121-142.

Marini, M., Sriram, N., Schnabel, K., Maliszewski, N., Devos, T., Ekehammar, B., … G., Nosek, B. A. (2013). Overweight people have low levels of implicit weight bias, but overweight nations have high levels of implicit weight bias. *PLoS ONE*, *8*, e83543.

MacInnis C. C. & Buliga, E. (2019). "Don't get above yourself": Heterosexual cross-class couples are viewed less favorably. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *44*, 50-66.

Maddux, W. W., & Brewer, M. B. (2005). Gender differences in the relational and collective bases for trust. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, *8*, 159-171.

Major, B. & O'Brien, L. T. (2005). The social psychology of stigma. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *56*, 393-421.

Marshall, T. C. (2010). Gender, peer relations, and intimate romantic relationships. In J. Chrisler & D. McCreary (Eds.), *Handbook of gender research in psychology* (Vol. 2., pp. 281-310). New York: Springer.

Maume, D. J., Hewitt, B., & Ruppanner, L. (2018). Gender equality and restless

sleep among partnered Europeans. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *80*, 1040–1058.

McNulty, J. K., Baker, L. R., & Olson, M. A. (2014). Implicit self-evaluations predict changes in implicit partner evaluations. *Psychological Science*, *25*, 1649–1657.

McNulty, J. K., Olson, M. A., Meltzer, A. L., & Shaffer, M. J. (2013). Though they may be unaware, newlyweds implicitly know whether their marriage will be satisfying. *Science*, *342*, 1119–1120.

Meeussen, L., Van Laar, C., & Verbruggen, M. (2019). Looking for a family man? Norms for men are toppling in heterosexual relationships. *Sex Roles*, *80*, 429–442.

Meisenbach, R. J. (2009). The female breadwinner: Phenomenological experience and gendered identity in work/family spaces. *Sex Roles*, *62*, 2-19.

Miller, P. J. E., Caughlin, J. P. & Huston, T. L. (2003). Trait expressiveness and marital satisfaction: The role of idealization processes. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *65*, 978-995.

Molm, L. & Cook, K. (1995). Social exchange and exchange networks. In K. Cook, G. Fine, & J. House (Eds.), *Sociological Perspectives on Social Psychology* (pp. 209-235). Massachutes: Allyn & Bacon.

Morgenroth, T., & Heilman, M. E. (2017). Should I stay or should I go? Implications of maternity leave choice for perceptions of working mothers. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *72*, 53-56.

Müller, R. (2003). Union disruption in West Germany. Educational homogeneity, children, and trajectories in marital and nonmarital unions. *International Journal of Sociology*, *33*, 3–35.

Murray, S. L. (1999). The quest for conviction: Motivated cognition in romantic relationships. *Psychological Inquiry*, *10*, 23-34.

Muthén, L. K., & Muthén, B. O. (2008). Mplus (Version 5.1). *Los Angeles, CA: Muthén & Muthén*.

Nitsche, N., & Grunow, D. (2018). Do economic resources play a role in bargaining child care in couples? Parental investment in cases of matching and mismatching gender ideologies in Germany. *European Societies*, *20*, 785-815.

Nosek, B. A., Smyth, F. L., Sriram, N., Lindner, N. M., Devos, T., Ayala, A., … Greenwald, A. G. (2009). National differences in gender–science stereotypes predict national sex differences in science and math achievement. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *106*, 10593-

10597.

OCW in Cijfers (2018). *Verschillen in het hoogst behaalde onderwijsniveau van vrouwen en hun partner op basis van de Enquête Beroepsbevolking (EBB).* Retrieved from https://www.ocwincijfers.nl/emancipatie/vrouw-en-en-onderwijs/onderwijsniveau-van- stellen.

Ohly, S., Sonnentag, S., Niessen, C., & Zapf, D. (2010). Diary studies in organizational research: An introduction and some practical recommendations. *Journal of Personnel Psychology*, *9*, 79–93.

Oishi, S. (2012). *The psychological wealth of nations: Do happy people make a happy society?* West Sussex, England: Wiley.

Olson, M. A., Fazio, R. H., & Hermann, A. D., Sr. (2007). Reporting tendencies underlie discrepancies between implicit and explicit measures of self-esteem. *Psychological Science*, *18*, 287–291.

Orbuch, T. & Custer, L. (1995). The social context of married women's work and its impact on Black husbands and White husbands. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *57*, 333-345.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2018). *Employment Outlook 2018 (Statistical Annex)*. Retrieved from https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/employment/oecd-employment-outlook-2018_empl_outlook-2018-en#page1.

Ortony, A., Clore, G. L., & Collins, A. (1988). *The cognitive structure of emotions.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Park, B., Smith, J., & Correll, J. (2010). The persistence of implicit behavioral associations for moms and dads. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *46*, 809-815.

Park, L. E., Young, A. F., & Eastwick, P. W. (2015). (Psychological) distance makes the heart grow fonder: Effects of psychological distance and relative intelligence on men's attraction to women. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *41*, 1459-1473.

Payne, B. K., Vuletich, H. A., & Lundberg, K. B. (2017). The bias of crowds: How implicit bias bridges personal and systemic prejudice. *Psychological Inquiry*, *28*, 233–248.

Petriglieri, J. L. (2019). How dual-career couples make it work. Retrieved from: https://hbr.org/2019/09/power-couples.

Petriglieri, J. L. (2018). Talent management and the dual-career couple: Rigid tours of duty are the wrong approach to development. *Harvard Business Review*, *96*, 106-113.

Pew Research Center (2013). *Breadwinner moms*. Retrieved from https://www. pewsocialtrends.org/2013/05/29/breadwinner-moms/.

Pew Research Center (2018). *Stay-at-home moms and dads account for about one-in-five U.S. parents.* Retrieved from https://www.pewresearch.org/ fact-tank/2018/09/24/stay-at-home-moms-and-dads-account-for-about-one-in-five-u-s-parents/.

Pierce, L., Dahl, M. S., & Nielsen, J. (2013). In sickness and in wealth: Psychological and sexual costs of income comparison in marriage. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *39*, 359-374.

Pleck, J. H. (1993). Are "family supportive" employer policies relevant to men? In J. C. Hood (Ed.), *Men, work, and family* (pp. 217–237). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Portegijs, W. & Van den Brakel, M. (2018). *Emancipatiemonitor 2018*. Retrieved from https://digitaal.scp.nl/emancipatiemonitor2018/assets/pdf/emanci-patiemonitor-2018-SCP.pdf.

Prentice, D. A., & Carranza, E. (2002). What women and men should be, shouldn't be, are allowed to be, and don't have to be: the contents of prescriptive gender stereotypes. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *26*, 269-281.

Proulx, C. M., Helms, H. M., & Buehler, C. (2007). Marital quality and personal well-being: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *69*, 576–593.

Ratliff, K. A., & Oishi, S. (2013). Gender differences in implicit self-esteem following a romantic partner's success or failure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *105*, 688–702.

Reis, H. T. & Gable, S. L. (2003). Toward a positive psychology of relationships. In C. L. M. Keyes & J. Haidt (Eds.), *Flourishing: positive psychology and the life well-lived* (pp.129-159). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Rosenbluth, S. C., Steil, J. M. & Whitcomb, J. H. (1998). Marital equality: What does it mean? *Journal of Family Issues*, *19*, 227-244.

Ridgeway, C. L. (2001). Gender, status, and leadership. *Journal of Social Issues*, *57*, 637-655.

Ridgeway, C. L. & Correll, S. J. (2000). Limiting inequality through interactions: The end(s) of gender. *Contemporary Sociology*, *29*, 110-120.

Riggs, J. M. (1997). Mandates for mothers and fathers: Perceptions of breadwinners and care givers. *Sex Roles, 37*, 565–580.

Robles, T. F., Slatcher, R. B., Trombello, J. M., & McGinn, M. M. (2014). Marital quality and health: A meta-analytic review. *Psychological bulletin*, *140*, 140-187.

Rodgers, J.L. (1999). The bootstrap, the jackknife, and the randomization test: a sampling taxonomy. *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, *34*, 441.

Rudman, L. A. (1998). Self-promotion as a risk factor for women: The costs and benefits of counterstereotypical impression management. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *74*, 629–645.

Rudman, L. A., & Fairchild, K. (2004). Reactions to counterstereotypic behavior: the role of backlash in cultural stereotype maintenance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *87*, 157-176.

Rudman, L. A., & Glick, P. (1999). Implicit gender stereotypes and backlash toward agentic women: The hidden costs to women of a kinder, gentler image of managers. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *77*, 1004-1010.

Rudman, L. A., & Kilianski, S. E. (2000). Implicit and explicit attitudes toward female authority. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *26*, 1315-1328.

Rudman, L. A. & Mescher, K. (2013). Penalizing men who request a family leave: Is flexibility stigma a femininity stigma? *Journal of Social Issues*, *69*, 322-340.

Rudman, L. A., Moss-Racusin, C. A., Phelan, J. E., & Nauts, S. (2012). Status incongruity and backlash effects: Defending the gender hierarchy motivates prejudice toward female leaders. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *48*, 165-179.

Ruppanner, L. (2010). Conflict and housework: Does country context matter? *European Sociological Review*, *26*(5), 557–570.

Rusbult, C. E., Martz, J. M., & Agnew, C. R. (1998). The investment model scale: Measuring
commitment level, satisfaction level, quality of alternatives, and investment size.
Personal Relationships, *5*, 357-391.

Ryff, C. D., & Keyes, C. L. M. (1995). The structure of psychological well-being revisited. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *69*, 719-727.

Sainsbury, D. (1999). Gender, policy regimes, and politics. In D. Sainsbury (Ed.), *Gender and welfare state regimes* (pp. 245–275). New York: Oxford University Press.

Schmader, T., Major, B., Eccleston, C. P., & McCoy, S. K. (2001). Devaluing domains in response to threatening intergroup comparisons: Perceived legitimacy and the status value asymmetry. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *80*, 782.

Schwartz, C. R., & Han, H. (2014). The reversal of the gender gap in education and trends in marital dissolution. *American Sociological Review*, *79*, 605-629.f

Spanier, G. B. (1976). Measuring dyadic adjustment: New scales for assessing the quality of marriage and similar dyads. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *38*, 15-28.

Spears, R., Doosje, B., & Ellemers, N. (1997). Self-stereotyping in the face of threats to group status and distinctiveness: The role of group identification. *Personality and social psychology bulletin*, *23*, 538-553.

Stake, J. E., & Eisele, H. (2010). Gender and personality. In *Handbook of gender research in psychology* (pp. 19-40). Springer, New York, NY.

Steele, C. M., & Aronson, J. (1995). Stereotype threat and the intellectual test performance of African Americans. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *69*, 797–811.

Statistics Netherlands (2011). *Jaarboek onderwijs in cijfers*. The Hague/Heerlen.

Syrda, J. (2019). Spousal relative income and male psychological distress. *Personality and Social Psychological Bulletin*, 1-17.

Swanborn, P. (2010). *Case Study Research: What, Why and How?* London: Sage Publications, 2010.

Tangney, J. P., & Dearing, R. L. (2002). *Shame and guilt.* New York, NY: Guilford.

Tinsley, C. H., Howell, T. M., & Amanatullah, E. T. (2015). Who should bring home the bacon? How deterministic views of gender constrain spousal wage preferences. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *126*, 37-48.

Theunis, L., Schnor, C., Willaert, D., & Van Bavel, J. (2018). His and her education and marital dissolution: Adding a contextual dimension. *European Journal of Population*, *34*, 663–687.

Thompson, L., & Walker, A. J. (1982). The dyad as the unit of analysis: Conceptual and methodological issues. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *44*, 889-900.

Trope, Y. & Liberman, N. (2010). Construal-level theory of psychological distance. *Psychological Review, 117*, 440-463.

Twenge, J. M. (1997). Changes in masculine and feminine traits over time: A meta-analysis. *Sex Roles*, *36*, 305-325.

Twenge, J. M. (2009). Status and gender: The paradox of progress in an age of narcissism. *Sex Roles*, *61*, 338-340.

Umberson, D., Williams, K., Powers, D. A., Liu, H., & Needham, B. (2006). You make me sick: Marital quality and health over the life course. *Journal of health and social behavior*, *47*, 1-16.

Van Bavel, J., Schwartz, C. R., & Esteve, A. (2018). The reversal of the gender gap in education and its consequences for family life. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *44*, 341-360.

Van der Lippe, T. & Glebbeek, A. (2003). Time competition survey. ICS, Utrecht University/University of Groningen.

Van der Lippe, T., Lippényi, Z., Lössbroek, J., van Breeschoten, L., van Gerwen, N., & Martens, T. (2016). European sustainable workforce survey [ESWS]. *Utrecht: Utrecht University*.

Vandello, J. A., & Bosson, J. K. (2013). Hard won and easily lost: A review and synthesis of theory and research on precarious manhood. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, *14*, 101-113.

Vandello, J. A., Bosson, J. K., Cohen, D., Burnaford, R. M., & Weaver, J. R. (2008). Precarious manhood. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *95*, 1325-1339.

Wallen, A. S., Morris, M. W., Devine, B. A., & Lu, J. G. (2017). Understanding the MBA gender gap: Women respond to gender norms by reducing public assertiveness but not private effort. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *43*, 1150–1170.

Warner, D. F., & Kelley-Moore, J. (2012). The social context of disablement among older adults: Does marital quality matter for loneliness?. *Journal of health and social behavior*, *53*, 50-66.

Warren, T. (2007). Conceptualizing breadwinning work. *Work, Employment and Society*, *21*, 317–336.

West, C., & Zimmerman, D. H. (1987). Doing gender. *Gender & society, 1*, 125-151.

Wilbur, C. J., & Campbell, L. (2010). What do women want? An interactionist account of women's mate preferences. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *49*, 749–754.

Wilcox, W. B. & Marquardt, E. (2010). *When marriage disappears: The new middle America.* The National Marriage Project. Retrieved from http://

www.stateofourunions.org

Wilcox, W. B., & Nock, S. L. (2006). What's love got to do with it? Equality, equity, commitment and women's marital quality. *Social Forces*, *84*, 1321–1345.

Willer, R., Rogalin, C. L., Conlon, B., & Wojnowicz, M. T. (2013). Overdoing gender: A test of the masculine overcompensation thesis. *American Journal of Sociology*, *118*, 980–1022.

Wout, D. A., Shih, M. J., Jackson, J. S., & Sellers, R. M. (2009). Targets as perceivers: How people determine when they will be negatively stereotyped. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *96*, 349–362.

Young, D. M., Moss-Racusin, C. A., & Sanchez, D. T. (2014). Implicit agency, communality, and perceptual congruence in couples: Implications for relationship health. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *55*, 133-138.

Zentner, M., & Eagly, A. H. (2015). A sociocultural framework for understanding partner preferences of women and men: Integration of concepts and evidence. *European Review of Social Psychology*, *26*, 328-373.

Zentner, M., & Mitura, K. (2012). Stepping out of the caveman's shadow: Nation's gender gap predicts degree of sex differentiation in mate preferences. *Psychological Science*, *23*, 1176-1185.

Zentner, M. & Renaud, O. (2007). Origins of adolescents' ideal self: An intergenerational perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *92*, 557-574.

Zerhouni, O., Rougier, M., & Muller, D. (2016). "Who (really) is Charlie?": French cities with lower implicit prejudice toward Arabs demonstrated larger participation rates in Charlie Hebdo rallies. *International Review of Social Psychology*, *29*, 69–76.

Zhang, H. (2015). Wives' relative income and marital quality in urban China: Gender role attitudes as a moderator. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, *46*, 203–220.

Chapter 6

Supplementary materials Chapter 2 to 5

Chapter 2

Appendix A: Pilot studies measuring status and gender ratio of several occupations in United States and The Netherlands

In two pilot tests, we assessed the predicted ratio of male/female jobholders and prestige of 50 different jobs (based on Glick, Wilk, & Perreault, 1995). In order to find occupations for Ryan and Anna for Study 1, the first pilot test was conducted in the United States and participants ($N = 31$ of which 20 men, M_{age} = 34.48, SD_{age} = 7.22) were recruited through MTurk. In order to find occupations for Ryan and Anna in Study 2, the second pilot was conducted in the Netherlands and participants ($N = 51$ of which 11 men, M_{age} = 31.80, SD_{age} = 12.02) were recruited through convenience sampling. In both pilots, participants responded to two items; "Please indicate what you expect is the ratio of current male and female job holders in the following occupations:", with responses given on a slider from 0 (only male) to 100 (only female) and "Please indicate the prestige you expect is associated with the following occupations:", with responses ranging from 1 (*very low prestige*) to 7 (*very high prestige*).

With regards to the first pilot, interrater reliability was satisfactory with α = .97 for gender ratio and α = .99 for prestige. The intraclass correlation efficient was .97 [.95: .98] for gender ratio and .99 [.98; .99] for prestige, all measured on absolute agreement. With regards to the second pilot, the interrater reliability was also satisfactory with α = .98 for gender ratio and α = .99 for prestige. The intraclass correlation efficient was .97 [.96: .98] for gender ratio and .98 [.97; .99] for prestige, all measured on absolute agreement.

We first analyzed what occupations did not differ from the mean gender ratio ($M = 39.67$, $SD = 14.54$ for the first pilot; $M = 44.56$, $SD = 10.96$ for the second pilot) and then calculated whether they significantly differed in prestige, resulting in this division of occupations. All occupations we used in Study 1 (i.e., results of the first pilot) were equal in gender ratio except for typesetter, which had a higher ratio of female jobholders. However, if taken the mean ratio of the two occupations within one condition (so mean of typesetter combined with mean

of assembler) they did not differ from the mean gender ratio. The occupations we used in Study 2 (i.e., results of the second pilot) were equal in gender ratio, except for lawyer and food preparation worker (that had higher ratio of female workers) and bartender, professor and book binder (that had lower ratio of female workers). However, if taken the mean ratio of the two occupations within one condition (e.g., mean of lawyer combined with mean of professor) they did not differ from the mean gender ratio. The final occupations in Study 1 are shown in Table A.1 and the final occupations in Study 2 are shown in Table A.2.

Table A.1

Division of Ryan and Anna's occupations across conditions in Study 1

Absolute Status Man	Relative Status Woman	Occupations Ryan ($M_{prestige}$, $SD_{prestige}$) ($M_{genderratio}$, $SD_{genderratio}$)		Occupations Anna ($M_{prestige}$, $SD_{prestige}$) ($M_{genderratio}$, $SD_{genderratio}$)	
Ryan low	Anna lower	Book binder (2.19, 1.14) (44.26, 18.94)	Food store manager (2.87, 1.09) (43.90, 14.24)	Bus driver (1.90, .91) (40.77, 20.74)	Dish washer (1.39, .84) (36.94, 26.01)
Ryan low	Anna equal	Book binder (2.19, 1.14) (44.26, 18.94)	Food store manager (2.87, 1.09) (43.90, 14.24)	Assembler (2.27, 1.20) (36.26, 15.11)	Typesetter (2.61, 1.05) (51.52, 19.49)
Ryan low	Anna higher	Book binder (2.19, 1.14) (44.26, 18.94)	Food store manager (2.87, 1.09) (43.90, 14.24)	Professor (5.84, .78) (43.35, 12.46)	Dentist (5.45, 1.15) (42.29, 11.38)
Ryan medium	Anna lower	Radio announcer (4.35, 1.38) (35.68, 18.31)	Accountant (4.48, 1.06) (43.90, 13.71)	Book binder (2.19, 1.14) (44.26, 18.94)	Food store manager (2.87, 1.09) (43.90, 14.24)
Ryan medium	Anna equal	Radio announcer (4.35, 1.38) (35.68, 18.31)	Accountant (4.48, 1.06) (43.90, 13.71)	Radiologist (4.58, 1.23) (43.61, 17.49)	Sales manager (3.90, 1.26) (38.68, 9.90)
Ryan medium	Anna higher	Radio announcer (4.35, 1.38) (35.68, 18.31)	Accountant (4.48, 1.06) (43.90, 13.71)	Physician (6.16, .97) (45.23, 17.90)	Lawyer (5.90, 1.08) (38.65, 11.72)

Table A.2

Division of Ryan and Anna's occupations across conditions in Study 2

Absolute Status Man	Relative Status Woman	Occupations Ryan ($M_{prestige}$, $SD_{prestige}$) ($M_{genderratio}$, $SD_{genderratio}$)		Occupations Anna ($M_{prestige}$, $SD_{prestige}$) ($M_{genderratio}$, $SD_{genderratio}$)	
Ryan low	Anna lower	Book binder (2.54, 1.20) (48.92, 10.95)	Clothing sewer (2.67, 1.13) (47.31, 17.49)	Dish washer (1.61, .94) (41.67, 13.49)	Bellhop (2.06, 1.06) (40.60, 18.81)
Ryan low	Anna equal	Book binder (2.54, 1.20) (48.92, 10.95)	Clothing sewer (2.67, 1.13) (47.31, 17.49)	Upholsterer (2.46, 1.13) (46.54, 20.72)	Food preparation worker (2.51, 1.17) (56.54, 11.21)
Ryan low	Anna higher	Book binder (2.54, 1.20) (48.92, 10.95)	Clothing sewer (2.67, 1.13) (47.31, 17.49)	Radiologist (5.04, 1.47) (47.67, 12.59)	Architect (5.29, 1.13) (42.62, 12.60)
Ryan medium	Anna lower	Geologist (4.27, 1.30) (42.62, 11.67)	Police officer (4.08, 1.22) (42.94, 8.97)	Factory worker (2.10, 1.02) (45.23, 17.23)	Bartender (2.25, 1.14) (49.37, 8.61)
Ryan medium	Anna equal	Geologist (4.27, 1.30) (42.62, 11.67)	Police officer (4.08, 1.22) (42.94, 8.97)	Management analysist (3.92, 1.13) (45.10, 13.70)	Business operations specialist (4.18, 1.23) (42.50, 13.86)
Ryan medium	Anna higher	Geologist (4.27, 1.30) (42.62, 11.67)	Police officer (4.08, 1.22) (42.94, 8.97)	Lawyer (5.71, 1.29) (52.01, 10.89)	Professor (5.96, 1.33) (39.17, 13.07)

Appendix B: Alternative SEM models in Study 1

We tested additional models to make sure that our modified theoretical model provided the best fit to our data. A model in which we constrained all expected paths to zero provided worse fit than our theoretical model, $\Delta\chi^2$ ($\Delta df = 9$) = 128.71, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .18, CFI = .69, SRMR = .13. Further, a model in which we switched mediator and dependent variables also resulted in worse fit than our theoretical model, $\Delta\chi^2$ ($\Delta df = 13$) = 153.06, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .18, CFI = .65, SRMR = .17. Lastly, a model in which we switched mediator and dependent variables and included the same modifications as our final model also resulted in bad fit with the data, $\Delta\chi^2$ ($\Delta df = 12$) = 172.40, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .17, CFI = .75, SRMR = .15.

Appendix C: Alternative SEM models in Study 2

We tested similar additional models as we did in Study 1. A model in which we constrained all expected paths to zero provided worse fit than our final model, $\Delta\chi^2$ ($\Delta df = 13$) = 280.75, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .20, CFI = .48, SRMR = .14. A model in which we switched mediator and dependent variables also resulted in worse fit than our final model, $\Delta\chi^2$ ($\Delta df = 3$) = 218.51, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .19, CFI = .59, SRMR = .14.

Chapter 3

Appendix D: Principal component analyses with varimax rotation for dominance and weakness items as filled out by women and men evaluating themselves and their partners.

Table D.1

Rotated factor loadings of PCA on dominance and weakness items of women's evaluation of themselves

Item	1	2	3
In my relationship I am ruthless	.75		
In my relationship I am dominant	.86		
In my relationship I hold the reins	.69		
In my relationship I am firm	.32	-.63	
In my relationship I am passive		.65	
In my relationship I am insecure		.76	
In my relationship I am compliant			.95
In my relationship I am a push-over		.71	

Note. Items in **bold** are included in the final analyses.

Table D.2

Rotated factor loadings of PCA on dominance and weakness items of women's evaluation of their partner

Item	1	2
In our relationship I think my partner is ruthless	.78	
In our relationship I think my partner is dominant	.77	
In our relationship I think my partner holds the reins	.64	
In our relationship I think my partner is firm	.43	-.56
In our relationship I think my partner is passive		.66
In our relationship I think my partner is insecure		.80
In our relationship I think my partner is compliant	-.57	
In our relationship I think my partner is a push-over		.75

Note. Items in **bold** are included in the final analyses.

Table D.3

Rotated factor loadings of PCA on dominance and weakness items of men's evaluation of themselves

Item	1	2	3
In my relationship I am ruthless	.80		
In my relationship I am dominant	.84		
In my relationship I hold the reins	.62	-.44	
In my relationship I am firm	.65		
In my relationship I am passive		.56	.46
In my relationship I am insecure		.68	-.40
In my relationship I am compliant			.81
In my relationship I am a push-over		.69	

Note. Items in **bold** are included in the final analyses.

Table D.4

Rotated factor loadings of PCA on dominance and weakness items of women's evaluation of their partner

Item	1	2	3
In our relationship I think my partner is ruthless	.83		
In our relationship I think my partner is dominant	.79		-.32
In our relationship I think my partner holds the reins	.76		
In our relationship I think my partner is firm	.75	-.35	
In our relationship I think my partner is passive		.67	
In our relationship I think my partner is insecure		.77	
In our relationship I think my partner is compliant			.90
In our relationship I think my partner is a push-over		.62	.50

Note. Items in **bold** are included in the final analyses.

Chapter 5

Appendix E: Regression coefficients and standard errors for all hierarchical linear regression models

Table E.1

Hierarchical linear regression models of women's status relative to their partners on relationship quality

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 3 Traditional Countries	Model 3 Egalitarian Countries
Relative income	**-1.09 (.32)****	**-1.07 (.33)****	.17 (.67)	**-1.48 (.39)*****	.22 (.63)
Relative education	.04 (.04)	.05 (.04)	**.15 (.07)***	-.04 (.05)	**.14 (.06)***
Relative working hours	.00 (.01)	.00 (.01)	-.00 (.01)	.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)
Countries' gender stereotypical culture		-.08 (.13)	-.10 (.13)		
Relative income X Culture			**-1.65 (.77)***		
Relative education X Culture			**-.17 (.08)***		
Relative working hours X Culture			.01 (.01)		

Table E.2

Hierarchical linear regression models of women's status relative to their partners on work-life satisfaction

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 3 Traditional Countries	Model 3 Egalitarian Countries
Relative income	-.41 (.33)	-.42 (.33)	-.29 (.69)	-.49 (.39)	-.33 (.67)
Relative education	-.00 (.04)	-.00 (.04)	-.01 (.07)	-.01 (.05)	-.01 (.07)
Relative working hours	-.00 (.01)	-.00 (.01)	.02 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	.02 (.01)
Countries' gender stereotypical culture		.13 (.18)	.15 (.18)		
Relative income X Culture			-.17 (.79)		
Relative education X Culture			-.00 (.09)		
Relative working hours X Culture			**-.03 (.01)***		

Table E.3

Hierarchical linear regression models of women's status relative to their partners on time pressure

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 3 Traditional Countries	Model 3 Egalitarian Countries
Relative income	-.03 (.17)	-.01 (.17)	.06 (.35)	-.03 (.19)	.08 (.35)
Relative education	**.06 (.02)****	**.06 (.02)****	.06 (.03)†	.05 (.03)†	.06 (.04)†
Relative working hours	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.01)	-.01 (.00)	-.00 (.01)
Countries' gender stereotypical culture		-.08 (.06)	-.08 (.06)		
Relative income X Culture			-.10 (.40)		
Relative education X Culture			-.01 (04)		
Relative working hours X Culture			-.00 (.01)		

Table E.4

Hierarchical linear regression models of women's status relative to their partners on negative emotions

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 3 Traditional Countries	Model 3 Egalitarian Countries
Relative income	**.29 (.10)****	**.29 (.10)****	**.50 (.20)***	.20 (.11)†	**.43 (.21)***
Relative education	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.02 (.02)	.00 (.01)	-.01 (.02)
Relative working hours	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	-.01 (.00)
Countries' gender stereotypical culture		.04 (.05)	.03 (.05)		
Relative income X Culture			-.27 (.23)		
Relative education X Culture			.02 (.02)		
Relative working hours X Culture			.01 (.00)		

Appendix F: Testing for influential countries

Table F.1

Jackknife-procedure to test for influential countries with regard to Model 1

	Relationship Quality			Work-Life Satisfaction			Time Pressure			Negative Emotions		
	Relative Income	Relative Education	Relative Work Hrs	Relative Income	Relative Education	Relative Work Hrs	Relative Income	Relative Education	Relative Work Hrs	Relative Income	Relative Education	Relative Work Hrs
Model 1	-1.09 (.32)**	.04 (.04)	.00 (.01)	-.41 (.33)	-.00 (.04)	-.00 (.01)	-.03 (.17)	.06 (.02)**	-.00 (.00)	.29 (.10)**	-.01 (.01)	-.00 (.00)
Without UK	-1.07 (.33)**	.03 (.04)	.00 (.01)	-.37 (.34)	-.00 (.04)	-.00 (.01)	.01 (.17)	.05 (.02)*	-.00 (.00)	.28 (.10)**	-.01 (.01)	-.00 (.00)
Without Germany	-1.17 (.33)***	.05 (.04)	.00 (.01)	-.26 (.34)	.01 (.04)	.00 (.01)	-.11 (.17)	.06 (.02)**	-.01 (.00)†	.30 (.10)**	-.01 (.01)	-.00 (.00)
Without Finland	-1.11 (.34)*	.05 (.04)	.00 (.01)	-.42 (.34)	-.01 (.04)	-.00 (.01)	-.04 (.17)	.06 (.02)**	-.00 (.00)	.30 (.10)**	-.01 (.01)	-.00 (.00)
Without Sweden	-1.12 (.34)**	.05 (.04)	.00 (.01)	-.46 (.34)	.01 (.04)	-.00 (.01)	-.06 (.17)	.05 (.02)*	-.00 (.00)	.31 (.10)**	-.01 (.01)	.00 (.00)
Without NL	-1.09 (.32)**	.04 (.04)	.00 (.01)	-.41 (.33)	-.00 (.01)	-.00 (.01)	-.03 (.17)	.06 (.02)**	-.00 (.00)	.29 (.10)**	-.01 (.01)	-.00 (.00)
Without Portugal	-1.11 (.33)*	.05 (.04)	.00 (.01)	-.39 (.34)	.00 (.04)	-.00 (.01)	-.03 (.17)	.06 (.02)**	-.01 (.00)†	.28 (.10)**	-.01 (.01)	-.00 (.00)
Without Spain	-1.13 (.33)**	.04 (.04)	.01 (.01)	-.37 (.34)	.00 (.04)	-.00 (.01)	-.01 (.17)	.06 (.02)**	-.01 (.00)†	.25 (.10)*	-.01 (.01)	-.00 (.00)
Without Hungary	-1.03 (.36)**	.06 (.04)	.00 (.01)	-.38 (.37)	-.01 (.04)	.00 (.01)	-.06 (.18)	.06 (.02)**	-.00 (.00)	.31 (.11)**	-.01 (.01)	-.00 (.00)
Without Bulgaria	-.77 (.38)*	.10 (.05)*	-.00 (.01)	-.87 (.40)*	-.03 (.05)	-.00 (.00)	.19 (.20)	.04 (.03)†	-.00 (.00)	.12 (.12)	-.00 (.01)	.00 (.00)

Table F.2

Jackknife-procedure to test for influential countries with regard to the Interactions of Model 3

	Relationship Quality			Work-Life Satisfaction			Time Pressure			Negative Emotions		
	Relative income X Culture	Relative education X Culture	Relative working hrs X Culture	Relative income X Culture	Relative education X Culture	Relative working hrs X Culture	Relative income X Culture	Relative education X Culture	Relative working hrs X Culture	Relative income X Culture	Relative educatio n X Culture	Relative working hrs X Culture
Model 3	-1.65 (.77)*	-.17 (.08)*	.01 (.01)	-.17 (.79)	-.00 (.09)	-.03 (.01)*	-.10 (.40)	-.01 (.04)	-.00 (.01)	-.27 (.23)	.02 (.02)	.01 (.00)
Without UK	-1.82 (.80)*	-.15 (.09)†	.01 (.01)	-.44 (.83)	-.01 (.09)	-.03 (.01)*	-.30 (.42)	-.00 (.05)	.00 (.01)	-.21 (.24)	.02 (.03)	.01 (.00)*
Without Germany	-1.77 (.76)*	-.17 (.08)*	.01 (.01)	.02 (.79)	.02 (.09)	-.02 (.01)†	-.21 (.40)	-.00 (.04)	-.00 (.01)	-.26 (.23)	.01 (.03)	.01 (.00)
Without Finland	-1.57 (.78)*	-.18 (.09)*	.01 (.01)	-.15 (.80)	.01 (.09)	-.02 (.01)*	-.04 (.40)	-.02 (.04)	-.00 (.01)	-.30 (.23)	.02 (.03)	.01 (.00)
Without Sweden	-1.63 (.86)†	-.21 (.09)*	.02 (.01)	.07 (.87)	-.05 (.09)	-.02 (.01)†	-.01 (.44)	-.01 (.05)	-.01 (.01)	-.44 (.25)†	.04 (.03)	.00 (.00)
Without NL	-1.65 (.77)*	-.17 (.08)*	.01 (.01)	-.17 (.79)	-.00 (.09)	-.03 (.01)*	-.10 (.40)	-.01 (.04)	-.00 (.01)	-.27 (.23)	.02 (.02)	.01 (.00)
Without Portugal	-1.72 (.80)*	-.19 (.09)*	.01 (.01)	-.30 (.82)	-.01 (.09)	-.02 (.01)†	-.13 (.41)	-.02 (.04)	-.00 (.01)	-.28 (.24)	.03 (.03)	.00 (.00)
Without Spain	-1.73 (.81)*	-.18 (.09)*	.00 (.01)	-.22 (.84)	-.01 (.09)	-.03 (.01)†	-.15 (.42)	-.04 (.05)	.00 (.01)	-.13 (.24)	.02 (.03)	.01 (.00)
Without Hungary	-1.73 (.80)*	-.16 (.09)†	.01 (.01)	-.09 (.82)	-.01 (.09)	-.02 (.01)†	-.14 (.41)	-.00 (.04)	-.00 (.01)	-.27 (.24)	.02 (.03)	.00 (.00)
Without Bulgaria	-1.48 (.80)†	-.12 (.09)	.00 (.01)	-.83 (.85)	-.07 (.10)	-.03 (.01)*	.13 (.43)	-.03 (.05)	.00 (.01)	-.56 (.24)*	.03 (.03)	.01 (.00)**

Nederlandse samenvatting (Summary in Dutch)

De traditionele, heteroseksuele relatie waarbij de man de kostwinner is en de vrouw de zorg voor het huishouden en het gezin opneemt, wordt steeds minder vanzelfsprekend (Portegijs & Van den Braker, 2018; Pew Research Center, 2013). Vrouwen in Westerse landen zijn hoger opgeleid en nemen in grotere getallen deel aan de arbeidsmarkt in vergelijking tot eerdere generaties vrouwen (OECD, 2018; Statistics Netherlands, 2011; CBS, 2015). Ook mannen nemen een groter deel van de huishoudelijke taken en zorg voor de kinderen op zich in vergelijking tot mannen uit eerdere generaties (Hochschild & Maschung, 2012; Pew Research Center, 2018; Pleck, 1993). Als gevolg hiervan zijn gelijkheid, vriendschap en persoonlijke groei belangrijkere motivaties voor mensen om een romantische relatie aan te gaan dan meer traditionele redenen, zoals (financiële) afhankelijkheid tussen partners (Latten & Mulder, 2013; Cherlin, 2004).

Ondanks deze ontwikkelingen zijn relaties waarbij traditionele rollen zijn omgedraaid -doordat de vrouw meer maatschappelijke status heeft vergaard dan de man- nog zeldzaam (Pew Research Center, 2013; Portegijs & Van den Brakel, 2018). Aan de ene kant zijn in bijna alle Europese landen vrouwen nu vaker hoger opgeleid dan hun mannelijke partner. Maar het percentage vrouwen dat meer verdient dan hun partner is nog zeer laag (De Hauw, Grow, & Van Bavel, 2017; Portegijs & Van den Brakel, 2018). In Nederland verdient bijvoorbeeld maar 12% van de vrouwen met jonge kinderen meer dan hun mannelijke partner (Portegijs & Van den Brakel, 2018). Tevens laten steeds meer empirische studies zien dat deze niet-traditionele koppels meer negatieve relatie-uitkomsten ervaren dan meer traditionele koppels waarbij de man meer maatschappelijke status geniet dan de vrouw. Zo is het gebruik van erectiestoornissen medicatie hoger onder mannen die minder verdienen dan hun partner vergeleken met mannen die zelf meer verdienen (Pierce, Dahl, & Nielsen, 2013). Vrouwen die meer verdienen dan hun man zeggen dat zij schuldgevoelens en zorgen ervaren over hun rol als kostwinner (Meisenbach, 2009). Ook is het gebruik van angst- en slapeloosheid medicatie hoger onder vrouwen die meer verdienen dan hun man dan onder vrouwen die minder verdienen (Pierce, Dahl, & Nielsen, 2013). Niet-traditionele koppels rapporteren over het algemeen lagere relatietevredenheid dan traditionele koppels (Bertrand, Kamenica, & Pan, 2015; Wilcox & Nock, 2006; Zhang, 2015; Blom & Hewitt, 2018; Gong, 2007). Tenslotte is het percentage echtscheidingen hoger onder niet-traditionele dan traditionele huwe-

lijken (Goldstein & Harknett, 2006; Kalmijn, 2003; Müller, 2003).

Het blijft echter de vraag wat de onderliggende mechanismen zijn die de negatieve ervaringen van niet-traditionele koppels verklaren. In dit proefschrift onderzoek ik hoe gendersterotypes van invloed zijn op de ervaringen van niet-traditionele stellen. Specifiek kijk ik hoe drie socio-culturele factoren de uitwerking van gendersterotypes op relatiedynamieken verklaren. Ten eerste kijk ik hoe anderen kijken naar niet-traditionele stellen. Vervolgens onderzoek ik hoe niet-traditionele koppels naar hun eigen relatie kijken en hoe deze verwachtingen hun ervaringen en gedragingen verklaren. Tot slot onderzoek ik de rol van de nationale context op de ervaringen van niet-traditionele stellen. Ik beargumenteer dat de negatieve ervaringen van niet-traditionele koppels gezien moeten worden in het licht van de sociale context waarin koppels opereren. Daarbij nuanceer ik het idee dat er evolutionaire en universele redenen zijn waarom mensen een relatie zouden prefereren waarbij de man de kostwinner is en de vrouw voornamelijk de zorg voor gezin en huishouden draagt. Ik laat kortom zien dat de weerbarstige verwachting dat de man de kostwinner is en de vrouw de zorg voor de kinderen en het huishouden prioriteert van grote invloed is op de ervaringen van koppels die met deze verwachting breken (Park, Smith, Correll, 2010; Morgenroth & Heilman, 2017).

Hoe gendersterotypes mannen en vrouwen richting traditionele relaties duwen

Gendersterotypes zijn hardnekkig en moeilijk te veranderen (Haines, Deaux, & Lofaro, 2016). Gendersterotypes ontstaan uit het observeren van mannen en vrouwen in gendertypische, sociale rollen. Voorbeelden van gendertypische, sociale rollen voor mannen zijn dat zij de kost verdienen en hogere sociale status genieten in de maatschappij. Voor vrouwen zijn gendertypische, sociale rollen dat zij de zorg en het huishouden prioriteren en lagere sociale status genieten (Sociale Rol Theory; Eagly, 1987; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). Genderstereotypes zijn descriptief. Dit houdt in dat ze beschrijven hoe we verwachten dat mannen en vrouwen zich gedragen, bijvoorbeeld dat mannen ambitieus en onafhankelijk zijn, terwijl vrouwen zorgzaam en sensitief zijn (Heilman, 2001). Genderstereotypes zijn daarnaast ook prescriptief: ze schrijven voor hoe mannen en vrouwen (niet) *zouden moeten* zijn (Heilman, 2001; Prentice & Carranza, 2002). Zo worden 'zwakke', feminiene eigenschappen (zoals naïviteit en emotioneel zijn) getolereerd voor vrouwen, terwijl ze voor mannen verboden

terrein zijn (Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Phelan, & Nauts, 2012). Aan de andere kant worden 'dominante', masculiene eigenschappen (zoals arrogantie en dominantie) getolereerd voor mannen, terwijl deze eigenschappen voor vrouwen verboden terrein zijn (Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman et al., 2012). Mannen en vrouwen die breken met deze prescriptieve genderstereotypes riskeren negatieve sociale en economische straffen (ook wel 'backlash' genoemd; Rudman et al., 2012; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Heilman & Wallen, 2010; Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Het blijkt dat vooral de mannen en vrouwen die breken met de sociale rollen die de huidige genderhiërarchie in stand houden het meeste risico lopen op backlash (Rudman et al., 2012). De genderhiërarchie impliceert dat mannen op grond van hun geslacht automatisch met hogere status worden geassocieerd, terwijl vrouwen automatisch met lagere status dan mannen worden geassocieerd (Ridgeway, 2001; Rudman & Killianski, 2000). Mensen zijn gemotiveerd te geloven dat zij in een rechtvaardige samenleving leven en rechtvaardigen daardoor vaak ook de huidige genderhiërarchie (Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004). Als gevolg hiervan lopen zowel mannen die rollen met een lagere status vervullen en vrouwen met rollen met hogere status in de maatschappij het meeste risico op backlash. Specifiek is gevonden dat mensen een man die een rol met lagere status vervult (bijvoorbeeld een man die in een feminiene sector werkt) 'zwak' vinden, waardoor zij weinig respect hebben voor deze man en hem ook niet als baas willen. Dit wordt ook wel de 'zwakte penalty' genoemd (Heilman & Wallen, 2010; Rudman et al., 2012). Aan de andere kant vinden mensen een vrouw die een rol met hogere status vervult (bijvoorbeeld een vrouw die succesvol is in een masculiene sector) 'dominant', waardoor zij haar onsympathiek vinden en ook niet als baas willen. Dit wordt ook wel de 'dominantie penalty' genoemd (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Rudman et al., 2012).

Mensen die breken met prescriptieve genderstereotypes worden dus geconfronteerd met negatieve evaluaties van anderen. Daarnaast hebben genderstereotypes ook een sterke invloed op mensen zelf en proberen mensen het breken van de stereotype verwachtingen te voorkomen (Amanatullah & Morris, 2011; Wallen et al., 2017; Cherry & Deaux, 1978). Bovendien zijn mensen nog sterker geneigd te gehoorzamen aan de huidige genderrolverwachtingen wanneer zij geconfronteerd worden met genderstereotype schendingen (Bosson et al., 2009; Cheryan et al., 2015; Willer, Rogalin, Conlon, & Wojnowicz, 2013).

Mannen die bijvoorbeeld horen dat zij feminiene eigenschappen bezitten, zijn meer geneigd om masculiene gedragingen te vertonen (zoals het steunen van oorlog of interesse hebben in de aankoop van een SUV) dan mannen die horen dat zij masculiene eigenschappen bezitten (Willer et al., 2013).

In dit proefschrift onderzoek ik hoe de hierboven beschreven gendersereotypes van invloed zijn op niet-traditionele relaties waarbij de vrouw hogere status heeft vergaard dan haar mannelijke partner. Ten eerste laat ik zien hoe backlash-mechanismes van invloed zijn op niet-traditionele relaties en verklaren waarom deze relaties minder positief worden geëvalueerd dan meer traditionele relaties waarbij de man een hogere status heeft dan de vrouw. Ten tweede onderzoek ik hoe deze backlash-mechanismes van invloed zijn op de relatie-uitkomsten van partners die zelf een niet-traditionele relatie hebben. Vervolgens onderzoek ik hoe de impliciete gendersereotypes die vrouwen zelf hebben van invloed zijn op hoe zijn omgaan met de niet-traditionele aard van hun relatie. Ten slotte laat ik zien hoe de gendersereotype cultuur van een land van invloed is op de ervaringen van zowel niet-traditionele als traditionele koppels.

Wat vinden mensen van niet-traditionele relaties? Vrouwen en mannen in niet-traditionele relaties riskeren backlash

In Hoofdstuk 2 laat ik zien waarom mensen een niet-traditionele relatie vaak negatiever beoordelen dan een traditionele relatie (MacInnis & Bulliga, 2019; Hettinger, Hutchinson, & Bosson, 2014). Om dit te onderzoeken heb ik twee experimentele studies uitgevoerd in de Verenigde Staten ($N = 233$) en in Nederland ($N = 269$). Participanten hebben een vignet gelezen over een fictief koppel bestaande uit Ryan en Anna. Daarnaast is de status van het beroep van Ryan en Anna gemanipuleerd. Anna heeft een beroep dat ofwel een lagere, een gelijke of een hogere status heeft dan het beroep van Ryan.

Beide studies laten zien dat mensen Anna dominanter vinden dan Ryan wanneer zij een beroep met hogere status heeft dan Ryan. Dit leidt er vervolgens toe dat Anna minder sympathiek wordt bevonden. Ook vinden mensen dat Ryan zwakker is dan Anna wanneer Anna een beroep met hogere status heeft dan Ryan. Dit leidt er vervolgens toe dat mensen weinig respect hebben voor Ryan. Bovendien denken mensen dat de relatie van Ryan en Anna minder gelukkig zal zijn wanneer Anna een beroep met hogere status heeft dan Ryan. Deze

patronen vind ik niet in de condities waarbij Anna en Ryan beroepen van gelijke status hebben of wanneer Ryan een beroep met hogere status heeft dan Anna.

Backlash-mechanismes binnen niet-traditionele relaties

In Hoofdstuk 2 laat ik aan de hand van backlash-mechanismen zien hoe anderen *buiten* de relatie reageren op stellen waarbij de vrouw een hogere maatschappelijke status heeft dan de man. Deze percepties zijn belangrijk om te begrijpen waarom genderstereotypes over heteroseksuele relaties beklijven. Het blijft echter de vraag in hoeverre mensen dezelfde negatieve evaluaties zullen hebben van hun *eigen* partner wanneer zij in een niet-traditionele relatie zitten. Aan de ene kant hebben mensen een veel gedetailleerder beeld van hun partner dan van vreemden, waardoor stellen wellicht minder gevoelig zijn voor stereotype-evaluaties dan vreemden (Trope & Liberman, 2010). Aan de andere kant zijn mensen zich bewust van de heersende gendernormen en proberen zij rollen aan te nemen die zoveel mogelijk in lijn zijn met deze normen (Amanatullah & Morris, 2011; Wallen, Morris, Devine, & Lu, 2017; Cherry & Deaux, 1978; Bosson, Vandello, Burnaford, Weaver, & Wasti, 2009; Cheryan, Cameron, Katagiri, & Monin, 2015; Willer, Rogalin, Conlon, & Wojnowicz, 2013).

In Hoofdstuk 3 onderzoek ik met behulp van een partnerstudie ($N = 188$, 94 stellen) in hoeverre mannen in niet-traditionele relaties zichzelf de zwakkeling in de relatie vinden en in hoeverre zij hun partner de dominantste vinden. Ook onderzoek ik in hoeverre vrouwen in niet-traditionele relaties zichzelf de dominantste vinden in de relatie en in hoeverre zij hun partner de zwakkeling in de relatie vinden. Ik onderzoek in hoeverre vrouwen die hun man zelf een zwakkeling vinden ook minder tevreden zijn met hun relatie en hun seksleven en meer relatieconflict ervaren. Hetzelfde onderzoek ik voor vrouwen die zichzelf de dominantste vinden in de relatie, voor mannen die zichzelf de zwakkeling vinden en voor mannen die hun partner de dominantste vinden. In deze studie vraag ik mannen en vrouwen hun eigen status in te schatten op basis van een maatschappelijke statusladder, waarbij mensen op de hoogste trede de beste opleiding, hoogste inkomen en het meeste prestige genieten in de maatschappij (Adler, Epel, Castellazzo, & Ickovics, 2000). Tevens vraag ik of mensen kunnen inschatten op welke trede van deze maatschappelijke statusladder zij hun partner staat.

De resultaten laten zien dat mannen en vrouwen het over het algemeen eens zijn over de statusverdeling binnen hun relatie. Verder suggereren de resultaten dat mannen en vrouwen in niet-traditionele relaties de man zwakker vinden dan de vrouw. Ten gevolge van deze relatieve zwakte percepties rapporteren vrouwen -en niet mannen- dat zij minder tevreden zijn met hun relatie, en seksleven en dat zij meer relatieconflict ervaren dan vrouwen in meer traditionele relaties. Backlash mechanismen lijken dus vooral de negatieve relatie-uitkomsten van vrouwen deels te voorspellen, maar niet die van mannen.

De consequenties voor vrouwen die 'de broek aanhebben in de relatie'

In Hoofdstuk 4 repliceer ik de negatieve uitkomsten die vrouwen in niet-traditionele relaties ervaren en onderzoek ik in hoeverre de impliciete genderstereotypes van vrouwen van invloed zijn op hun ervaringen en gedragingen. Gendersteretypes beïnvloeden mensen namelijk vaak zonder dat zij zich daar bewust van zijn (Ellemers, 2018; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). Zo zullen veel mensen expliciet niet stellen dat mannen de kostwinner zouden moeten zijn en vrouwen de zorg voor het gezin zouden moeten dragen. Tegelijkertijd associëren zij onbewust mannen toch sneller met werk en vrouwen met familie dan vice versa (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). Juist deze onbewuste associaties hebben verstrekkende gevolgen voor het gedrag van mensen. Zo hebben moeders met sterke traditionele genderassociaties bijvoorbeeld een minder positief beeld van jongens en meisjes die met gender-incongruent speelgoed spelen dan moeders met meer egalitaire associaties (Endendijk et al., 2014). Ook zijn er verschillende sociologische stromingen die stellen dat mannen en vrouwen die breken met de huidige gendernormen proberen te compenseren door ook veel traditionele gedragingen te laten zien (Bittman et al., 2003; Greenstein, 2000; Brines, 1994; West & Zimmerman, 1987). Vrouwen die veel buiten de deur werken compenseren bijvoorbeeld door thuis relatief meer huishoudelijke taken op te pakken (Bitman et al., 2003). Ik verwacht dat vooral de vrouwen met traditionele impliciete genderassociaties hun gedrag proberen te compenseren wanneer zij meer status hebben vergaard dan hun mannelijke partner.

Om onze eerdere resultaten te repliceren en de aanvullende hypotheses te toetsen heb ik een cross-sectionele studie (N = 314) en een dagboekstudie (N = 112) uitgevoerd. Ten eerste repliceer ik in beide studies dat vrouwen die hun man voorbij zijn gestreefd in status meer negatieve relatie-uitkomsten ervaren

(e.g., lagere relatietevredenheid en meer werk-familie conflict) dan vrouwen in meer traditionele relaties. Bovendien vind ik onder de vrouwen die hun partner voorbij zijn gestreefd dat met name de vrouwen met meer traditionele impliciete genderassociaties hun gedrag proberen te compenseren zodat het meer in lijn is met de huidige gendernorm. Zij denken er bijvoorbeeld op dagelijkse basis aan hoe zij hun werkuren kunnen reduceren ten gunste van het gezin. Ook offeren deze vrouwen meer vrije tijd op dan vrouwen met meer egalitaire associaties. De vrouwen met egalitaire genderassociaties zijn echter niet gevrijwaard van negatieve ervaringen; deze vrouwen voelen zich namelijk op dagelijkse basis wel extra schuldig jegens hun partner.

Maakt de nationale context uit wanneer vrouwen hun partner voorbijstreven?

In Hoofdstuk 4 laat ik zien hoe vrouwen zich voelen over en omgaan met de niet-traditionele aard van hun relatie. Daarbij richt ik mij op interpersoonlijke verschillen tussen vrouwen die genderstereotypes in meerdere of mindere mate hebben geïnternaliseerd. Genderstereotypes op nationaal niveau kunnen echter ook relatiedynamieken van stellen beïnvloeden (Bertrand et al. 2016, Ruppanner, 2010; Maume, Hewitt, & Ruppanner, 2018). Zo lopen mannen die meer huishoudelijke taken uitvoeren een kleiner risico op echtscheiding in de Verenigde Staten dan in Duitsland (Cooke, 2006). Dit komt volgens de auteur doordat het sociale beleid in Duitsland in sterkere mate het mannelijke kostwinnersmodel onderstreept dan het sociale beleid in de Verenigde Staten (Cooke, 2006). In Hoofdstuk 5 beargumenteer ik daarom dat de genderstereotype cultuur van een land ook van invloed is op de uitkomsten van mannen en vrouwen in niet-traditionele relaties. In deze studie kijk ik naar drie objectieve indicatoren van een niet-traditionele relatie: 1) het inkomen, 2) opleidingsniveau en 3) aantal werkuren van vrouwen ten opzichte van hun partner.

Ook gebruik ik twee indicatoren om de nationale genderstereotype cultuur in kaart te brengen. De eerste indicator van de genderstereotype cultuur zijn de impliciete genderstereotypes in een land. Hiertoe gebruik ik data verzameld tussen 2014 en 2019 van de gemiddelde scores van inwoners op de *Gender-Career Implicit Association Task* (https://implicit.harvard.edu; Nosek et al., 2010; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). Hoge scores impliceren dat inwoners van een land gemiddeld genomen mannen makkelijker met werk associëren en

vrouwen met familie. De tweede indicator van de genderstereotype cultuur is de daadwerkelijke gendergelijkheid in een land. Hiertoe gebruik ik de *Gender Empowerment Index* (GEM-index; United Nations, 2013). Deze index is gebaseerd op het relatieve aantal vrouwen in senior posities en inkomensverschillen tussen mannen en vrouwen in fulltimebanen in een land. Een hogere GEM-index impliceert dat er meer gendergelijkheid is in een land.

Ik test hoe deze twee indicatoren van de nationale genderstereotype cultuur relatie-uitkomsten van niet-traditionele vs. traditionele stellen beïnvloeden met behulp van de *European Sustainable Workforce Survey* (ESWS; Van der Lippe, Lippényi, Lössbroek, Van Breeschoten, Van Gerwen, & Martens, 2016). De ESWS (*N* = 2748) is afgenomen in negen verschillende landen: Bulgarije, Finland, Duitsland, Hongarije, Nederland, Portugal, Spanje, Verenigd Koninkrijk en Zweden. Op basis van de nationale GEM-index en IAT-scores van deze landen heb ik een onderscheid gemaakt in traditionele landen (bijvoorbeeld Nederland en Hongarije) en egalitaire landen (bijvoorbeeld Finland en Zweden). De resultaten laten ten eerste zien dat met name het relatieve inkomen van vrouwen, maar ook het relatieve opleidingsniveau van vrouwen negatieve voorspellers zijn van relatie-uitkomsten. De deelnemers die een relatie hebben waarbij de vrouw meer verdient dan de man rapporteren lagere relatiekwaliteit en meer negatieve emoties dan de deelnemers waarbij de man meer verdient dan de vrouw. De deelnemers in een relatie waarbij de vrouw hoger is opgeleid dan de man rapporteren meer tijdsdruk dan deelnemers in een relatie waarbij de man hoger is opgeleid.

Echter worden deze ervaringen ook beïnvloed door de genderstereotype cultuur in het land waar de deelnemers wonen. De deelnemers in traditionele landen rapporteren lagere relatiekwaliteit wanneer zij relaties hebben waarin de vrouw meer verdient dan de man, terwijl dit niet het geval is voor deelnemers in egalitaire landen. Bovendien vind ik dat de deelnemers die in egalitaire landen leven hogere relatiekwaliteit rapporteren wanneer ze een relatie hebben waarin de vrouw hoger is opgeleid dan de man, terwijl ik deze relatie niet vind voor de deelnemers in traditionele landen. Deze resultaten zijn een eerste indicatie dat de nationale context een rol speelt in de mate waarin mannen en vrouwen gestimuleerd worden traditionele rolpatronen te volgen in hun relatie.

Conclusie

In dit proefschrift laat ik zien dat het bereiken van gendergelijkheid op het werk niet alleen beïnvloed wordt door relaties tussen mannen en vrouwen op de werkvloer, maar ook door romantische relaties in de privésfeer. Ik leg drie mechanismes bloot die laten zien hoe gendersteotypes in het relatiedomein ertoe leiden dat mannen en vrouwen gedwongen worden traditionele genderrollen te volgen. Bovendien verklaren deze mechanismes ten dele waarom mannen en vrouwen in niet-traditionele relaties negatieve relatie-uitkomsten ervaren (Syrda, 2019; Blom & Hewitt, 2019; Bertrand, Kamenica, & Pan, 2015; Wilcox & Nock, 2006; Zhang, 2015; Goldstein & Harknett, 2006; Kalmijn, 2003, Müller, 2003; Gong, 2007; Meisenbach, 2009; Pierce, Dahl, & Nielsen, 2013).

Ten eerste lopen niet-traditionele koppels het risico op sociale penalty's van anderen buiten de relatie. Dit mechanisme impliceert dat niet-traditionele koppels maatschappelijke afkeur ervaren en waarschijnlijk ook minder steun zullen krijgen voor hun levenskeuzes dan traditionele koppels. Ten tweede beïnvloeden geïnternaliseerde gendersteotypes van vrouwen zelf ook hoe zij zich voelen en hoe zij omgaan met de niet-traditionele aard van hun relatie. Dit mechanisme laat zien dat vrouwen in niet-traditionele relaties als het ware aan het koorddansen zijn. Het maakt namelijk niet uit of ze gendersteotypes onbewust hebben geïnternaliseerd of niet. In beide gevallen lijken deze vrouwen slechter af te zijn dan vrouwen in traditionele relaties. Dit omdat vrouwen met traditionele impliciete gendersteotypes hun gedrag willen aanpassen en hun vrije tijd opofferen, terwijl vrouwen met egalitaire impliciete gendersteotypes zich schuldig voelen naar hun partner. Tot slot laat ik zien hoe gendersteotypes op nationaal niveau mannen en vrouwen in niet-traditionele relaties kunnen hinderen of stimuleren. Dit mechanisme verduidelijkt dat socioculturele factoren een belangrijke rol spelen bij de ervaringen van niet-traditionele stellen. Deze ervaringen zijn dus niet zomaar toe te schrijven aan evolutionaire, universele verschillen in partnervoorkeuren tussen mannen en vrouwen.

Verder heeft dit proefschrift een interdisciplinaire insteek, doordat ik sociologische en sociaalpsychologische theorieën en onderzoeksmethoden heb gecombineerd. Hierdoor kan ik aantonen hoe gendersteotypes op verschillende niveaus bijdragen aan de negatieve ervaringen van niet-traditionele stellen. Zo hebben sociologische theorieën en methoden bijvoorbeeld inzicht gegeven

in hoe gendersterotypes zich manifesteren op nationaal niveau en zo van invloed zijn op de ervaringen van mannen en vrouwen in niet-traditionele relaties. Sociaalpsychologische theorieën en methoden geven daarnaast een gedetailleerd inzicht in hoe gendersterotypes opereren, dat wil zeggen via backlash mechanisms en impliciete gender associaties. Deze interdisciplinaire aanpak heeft een completer beeld opgeleverd van de uitdagingen waar niet-traditionele stellen voor staan.

Met dit proefschrift laat ik zien dat gendersterotypes een ingewikkeld systeem vormen waarin mannen en vrouwen als het ware richting een traditionele relatie worden geduwd waarbij de man degene is met de hoogste maatschappelijke status van de twee. Statusdynamieken binnen romantische relaties kunnen dus niet over het hoofd gezien worden bij het streven naar gendergelijkheid.

Dankwoord (Acknowledgements)

Het doet me plezier dat er steeds meer aandacht is voor het belang van samenwerking in de wetenschap. Ook dit proefschrift zou nooit tot stand zijn gekomen zonder de input, kritische blik en tomeloze moeite van vele naasten. Het is goed dat het dankwoord het meest gelezen stuk is van het proefschrift. Zo kan ik de mensen die bij hebben gedragen aan dit proefschrift de aandacht geven die zij verdiend hebben.

De meeste dank ben ik verschuldigd aan mijn promotoren Belle Derks, Naomi Ellemers en Tanja van der Lippe. Wat een eer om te mogen leren van zulke topwetenschappers.

Belle, wat was het een feest de afgelopen vijf jaar! Als geen ander heb jij bijgedragen aan alle *ins* en *outs* van dit proefschrift, iets waar ik je heel dankbaar voor ben. Met veel plezier kijk ik terug naar al die uren in jouw kamer waarin je me stimuleerde de inhoud van het proefschrift nog beter te maken. Ook op breder professioneel vlak heb je altijd oog gehouden voor wat goed zou zijn voor mijn carrière. Ik ben je zeer dankbaar voor een aantal cruciale momenten waarop je me voorzichtig gepusht hebt een goede kans aan te grijpen. Tevens is er bij jou altijd ruimte voor de persoonlijke kant, wat ertoe heeft geleid dat ik me heel welkom voel binnen jouw onderzoeksteam.

Naomi, zeven jaar geleden stapte ik als 'groene' research masterstudent jouw kamer binnen voor een kort mentorgesprek. Je adviseerde me toen om mijn eigen pad te bewandelen. Dit was het eerste, maar zeker niet het laatste professionele advies van jou waar ik nu nog steeds wat aan heb. Tijdens het schrijven van dit proefschrift wist jij altijd de grote lijn in het oog te houden. Wat was ik onder indruk dat je iedere keer weer feilloos de pijnpunten van mijn papers wist te herkennen en wat heb ik hier veel van geleerd. Dank ook dat je me de kans gaf om twee jaar mee te werken aan het geweldige *Athena's Angels* initiatief.

Tanja, ondanks je drukke agenda stond jouw deur altijd voor mij open. Jij wist als geen ander hoe je me kon stimuleren om nieuwe literatuur tot me te nemen en daar mijn eigen visie uit te halen. Tegelijkertijd hield jij altijd oog voor de zaken die belangrijk en noodzakelijk waren voor mij om dit proefschrift op een goede manier af te ronden. Ik heb genoten van onze afspraken in het Sjoerd

Groenmangebouw. Dankzij jou heeft dit proefschrift nu een multidisciplinaire insteek.

Lianne, ik weet nog dat ik in de zomer van 2015 hoopte dat 'die andere aio van Belle' een beetje een leuk persoon zou zijn. Ik had toen niet durven hopen dat die persoon half zo leuk zou zijn als jij bent. Wat was het een voorrecht om samen onze promotietrajecten door te lopen. Veel dank dat jij altijd voor mij klaar hebt gestaan (en dat ook nog steeds doet). Je biedt een luisterend oor voor elke grote of juist onbenullige zaak waarmee ik weer op de proppen kom. Zowel wetenschappelijk als persoonlijk heb ik onwijs veel aan je adviezen gehad. Ik kan alleen maar zeggen dat ik hoop dat we nog lang samen academische én persoonlijke paden mogen bewandelen.

Jojanneke, als jij mij in het derde jaar van mijn bachelor niet persoonlijk had gemotiveerd een carrière in de academische wereld te overwegen, was dit proefschrift er misschien wel nooit gekomen. Dank dat je me (nog steeds) laat inzien dat je zowel 'sprankelend' als een goede wetenschapper kunt zijn.

During my time as PhD-student, I was part of two amazing lab groups. I am very grateful to the members of the *Derks*-lab (*Belle, Ruth, Francesca, Ilona, Larisa, Wiebren, Reine,* and *Dominique*) for all your input. You are very inspiring colleagues to work with and I greatly enjoy the (informal) meetings that we have. Furthermore, I am very grateful to the (former) members of the *Ellemers*-lab (*Naomi, Félice, Jojanneke, Daan, Wiebren, Elianne, Inga, Onur, Miriam, Tatiana, Tessa, Inga, Piet, Esmee, Martine, Marleen, Jeanette, Annemarieke, Karin, Elena, Beatriz, Nadia, Yonn, Eva, Ronny, Isabella, Jaimy, Savanne* and *Manon*). It still amazes me what our diverse group is capable of. Thank you for inspiring me every week!

Tevens ben ik alle collega's van de afdeling *Sociale, Gezondheids- en Organisatie Psychologie* van de Universiteit Utrecht heel dankbaar voor al hun feedback, collegialiteit, en vooral ook humor! Dit dankwoord wordt te lang als ik jullie allemaal persoonlijk noem, maar weet dat ik me zeer thuis voel op de afdeling en jullie daaraan bijdragen. Toch verdienen een aantal collega's een persoonlijke vermelding. *Tessa*, tijdens een KLI-congres kwamen we erachter dat onze raakvlakken nog veel verder reiken dan we al dachten. Dank dat je zo'n fijne collega en goede vriendin bent! *Larisa*, dank dat je altijd bereikbaar bent voor een luiste-

rend oor, over welk onderwerp dan ook! *Wiebren*, we zijn allebei op dezelfde dag in Utrecht begonnen en wie had toen gedacht dat we nu zo nauw samen zouden werken? Dank dat je zo'n intelligente en fijne collega bent. Nu maar hopen dat dit stuk geen spel- of grammaticafouten bevat… *Ruth*, ik ben nog iedere keer onder de indruk van jouw theoretisch denkvermogen. Wanneer mogen we weer naar Parijs? *Reine*, ondanks je drukke agenda ben jij altijd vrolijk en in voor een praatje. Dank dat je het werk leuk en luchtig maakt! *Madelijn*, ik vind het heel inspirerend hoe jij je creativiteit inzet om de impact van wetenschap te vergroten. Dank dat ik op dit vlak al zoveel van je heb mogen leren. *Esther* en *Tom Frijns,* dank voor al jullie goede adviezen tijdens onze OOR-overleggen. *Veerle*, ik koester warme herinneringen aan de middagen dat we data hebben geanalyseerd onder het genot van klassieke muziek. *Maria*, wat was het fijn om jou af en toe op de gang tegen te komen. Onze gesprekken leverden me altijd een warm gevoel op én een hele rugzak vol goede adviezen. Verder ben ik mijn mede-promovendi heel dankbaar voor hun openheid, feedback en gezelligheid. Specifically, I'd like to thank *Inga, Onur, Chris, Laurens, Samantha,* and *Peikai* for being such great and warm colleagues. I treasure so many fun experiences with you that I am smiling while writing this. Maybe we should vlog about it? Een laatste woord van dank aan mijn afdeling richt ik graag aan *Karin* en *Janet*. Jullie zijn zulke warme en meelevende collega's, dat is echt goud waard voor iedere afdeling!

Ook buiten de Universiteit Utrecht verdienen een aantal collega's een woord van dank. *Sanne*, van de eerste keer samen zenuwachtig voor onze ASPO-presentaties tot dansen in de Blauwe Engel. Wat hebben we veel gedeeld en hoe leuk is het dat je nu in Nederland woont! *Jenny*, ik koester veel warme herinneringen aan onze uitjes. Met name die bizarre kamer in het Cube-hotel en de avond op het Nijmeegse terras doen me nog altijd glimlachen. Verder heb ik veel plezier beleefd aan de Leuven-Utrecht bijeenkomsten; *Colette, Loes, Sanne, Jenny, Catho, Iris* en *Naomi*, dank voor al jullie goede input en collegialiteit. *Marijntje* en *Renée,* dank dat ik met jullie ongegeneerd alle grote en kleine perikelen van het (academische) leven kan delen. I am grateful to the *European Association of Social Psychology* for granting me the opportunity to join the Summer Institute for Social and Personality Psychology at New York University in 2019. *Ruddy*, thank you for making SISPP such a fun experience. Let's hope that we can enjoy the Dutch cuisine soon!

Een speciaal woord van dank gaat uit naar mijn vrienden buiten de wetenschap.

Eefje, al bijna een decennium delen wij lief en leed met elkaar. Wat ben ik trots op de persoon die bent en dankbaar dat je er zo onvoorwaardelijk voor mij bent. *Maud*, jij staat altijd klaar voor mij voor wat dan ook. Wat een genot dat wij onze liefde voor het bourgondische leven zo goed kunnen delen. *Marleen*, wat ben jij een warm, creatief en inspirerend persoon. Dank dat je zo'n fijne vriendin bent. *Maxime, Nikki,* en *Anna*, jullie zijn alle drie zulke slimme, maar ook grappige vrouwen. Er zijn weinig woorden die recht doen aan het plezier dat ik haal uit onze avonturen. *Nanja*, wat heb jij een groot hart! Dank dat ik daar onderdeel van mag uitmaken. *Irene*, er zijn maar weinig mensen met wie ik zo hard kan lachen als met jou. Dank dat je al de helft van mijn leven zo'n goede vriendin bent. *Aniek*, ik bewonder jouw onuitputtelijke optimisme en ambitie. *Misha*, dank voor onze al elf jaar durende vriendschap. *Ingrid*, beter een goede buur dan een verre vriend toch? Gelukkig ben jij ondertussen allebei voor mij! *Vesi*, *Rowena*, *Maria*, *Jochem*, *Martine, Piet, Friso* and *Emma*, thank you for being such smart and considerate friends. I hope you forgive my move to Castricum and therefore my relative absence to our group gatherings.

Gelukkig heb ik ook een heel fijne familie om op terug te vallen. *Simone, Sem, Bert, Rita, Jim, Maartje, Mieke* en *Rosie*, dank dat jullie mij zo warm hebben opgenomen in de familie. *Odilia*, mijn lieve suikertante, dank dat je altijd klaarstaat voor mij. *Thomas*, wat ben ik trots op de slimme en lieve man die je (aan het worden) bent. *Emily*, wat is het fijn om een zus te hebben zoals jij en wat ben ik trots dat je m'n paranimf wilt zijn! *Richard*, ik bewonder je intelligentie en je *laissez-faire* houding (een houding die ik zelf af en toe ook wel wat meer zou willen hebben). Een speciaal woord van dank gaat uit naar mijn ouders. Dank dat jullie altijd voor mij klaarstaan en trots op me zijn wat ik ook doe. *Pap*, je hebt me -al dan niet bewust- zoveel carrière-adviezen gegeven waar ik nog dagelijks profijt van heb. Dank dat je me blijft aanmoedigen om dicht bij mezelf te blijven. *Mam*, tijdens -maar ook al ver voor- de periode dat ik dit proefschrift schrijf, word jij door het leven voor onmogelijke uitdagingen gesteld. Wat bewonder ik het optimisme, de veerkracht en de -af en toe onrealistische- wilskracht die jij keer op keer laat zien.

Mijn laatste woord van dank is bestemd voor *Luuk*. Ons avontuur begon op hetzelfde moment dat ik met dit proefschrift startte. Wat ben ik je dankbaar voor de liefde, het vertrouwen, en de vrijheid die je me geeft. Ik ben nieuwsgierig naar waar ons gezamenlijke pad de komende jaren heen zal gaan.

Curriculum Vitae

Melissa Vink was born on 9 September 1992 in Heemskerk, the Netherlands. In 2010, she started studying Psychology at Leiden University. During her bachelor's program, Melissa participated in the interdisciplinary honours program of the Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences of Leiden University. She obtained her bachelor's degree from Leiden University in 2013. In 2015, she finished her research master's in Social and Organizational Psychology at Leiden University. In the same year, Melissa started her PhD-project on the influence of gender stereotypes on non-traditional relationships. During her PhD-project, she supervised students' bachelor and master theses and taught psychology courses in the bachelor's and master's Psychology program. Furthermore, she was PhD-representative for the Dutch Association of Social Psychology (ASPO) between 2016 and 2019. Melissa was website moderator for *Athena's Angels* between 2017 and 2019. In this role, she supported four professors in their mission to create equal opportunities for women in science. In the summer of 2019, Melissa participated in the Summer Institute for Social and Personality Psychology at New York University in New York, United States of America. Currently, Melissa is a postdoctoral researcher at Utrecht University. In this position, she studies the challenges and pitfalls of diversity and inclusion policies in organizations.

This thesis is part of

The KLI dissertation series

The "Kurt Lewin Institute Dissertation Series" started in 1997. Since 2016, the following dissertations have been published in this series:

2016-01:   Anna van 't Veer: *Effortless morality - cognitive and affective processes in deception and its detection*

2016-02:   Thijs Bouman: *Threat by association: How distant events can affect local*
intergroup relations

2016-03:   Tim Theeboom: *Workplace coaching: Processes and effects*

2016-04:   Sabine Strofer: *Deceptive intent: Physiological reactions in different interpersonal contexts*

2016-05:   Caspar van Lissa: *Exercising Empathy: The Role of Adolescents' Developing Empathy in Conflicts with Parents*

2016-06:   Marlon Mooijman: *On the determinants and consequences of punishment goals: The role of power, distrust, and rule compliance*

2016-07:   Niels van Doesum: *Social mindfulness*

2016-08:   Leonie Venhoeven: *A look on the bright side of an environmentally-friendly life: Whether and why acting environmentally-friendly can contribute to well-being*

2016-09:   Florien Cramwinckel: *The social dynamics of morality*

2016-10:   Junhui Wu: *Understanding Human Cooperation: The Psychology of Gossip, Reputation, and Life History*

2016-11:   Elise C. Seip: *Desire for vengeance. An emotion-based approach to revenge*

2016-12:   Welmer E. Molenmaker: *The (un)willingness to reward cooperation and punish non-cooperation*

2016-13:   Liesbeth Mann: *On Feeling Humiliated. The Experience of Humiliation in Interpersonal, Intragroup, and Intergroup Contexts*

2016-14:   Angela M. Ruepert: *Working on the environment*

2016-15:   Femke Hilverda: *Making sense of food risk information: The case of organic food.*

2016-16:   Debora E. Purba: *Antecedents of turnover, organizational citizenship behavior, and workplace deviance: Empirical evidence from Indonesia.*

2016-17:   Maja Kutlaca: *The Role of Values and Value-Identity Fit in Motivating Collective Action*

2016-18: Felicity Turner: *A New Psychological Perspective on Identity content, its Conceptualization, Measurement, and Application*

2016-19: Tim W. Faber: *When Imitation Falls Short: The Case of Complementary Actions.*

2016-20: Daniela Becker: *Self-control conflict in the eating domain: A cognitive, affective and behavioral perspective*

2016-21: Zoi Manesi: *Prosocial Behavior Under Surveillance: Understanding the Eye-Images Effect*

2017-01: Tracy Cheung: *Turning vice into virtue - when low self-control states facilitate goal-oriented behaviours*

2017-02: Pum Kommattam: *Feeling the Other: Emotion Interpretation in Intercultural Settings*

2017-03: Lotte Veenstra: *Taming Tempers: A situated motivational approach to anger management*

2017-04: Jolien van Breen: *The path of most Resistance: How groups cope with implicit social identity threat*

2017-05: Yuije Cheng: *Creativity Under the Gun: How Threat Features and Personal Characteristics Motivate Creative Responding*

2017-06: Eftychia Stamkou: *The dynamic nature of social hierarchies: The role of norm violations and hierarchical concerns*

2017-07: Anne Marthe van der Bles: *Societal Discontent - Deciphering the Zeitgeist*

2017-08: Willem Sleegers: *Meaning and Pupillometry: The Role of Physiological Arousal in Meaning Maintenance*

2017-09: Julia Sasse: *More Than a Feeling: Strategic Emotion Expression in Intergroup Conflicts*

2017-10: Nils Köbis: *The Social Psychology of Corruption*

2017-11: Tim de Wilde: *Struggling to decide. Competition in group decision-making*

2017-12: Nathalie Boot: *The creative brain: Some insights into the neural dynamics of flexible and persistent creative processes*

2017-13: Johannes Seehusen: *Foregone and Forethought: Motivation in the Context of Past and Future Alternatives*

2017-14: Ernst Willem Meerholz: *The 'other' side of compassion. How the self avoids responsibility for past wrongs*

2017-15: Wieke Scholten: *Banking on Team Ethics: A team climate perspective on root causes of misconduct in financial services*

2018-01: Mike Keesman: *Observing the mind instead of acting on it: How mindfulness empowers people to live healthily*

2018-02: Marije Bakker: *Turning Crisis into Opportunity: the Influence of the Government and the Social environment*

2018-03: Miriam Oostinga: *Breaking (the) ice: Communication error management in law enforcement interactions*

2018-04: Xia Fang: *Perceiving and Producing Facial Expressions of Emotion: The Role of Dynamic Expressions and Culture*

2018-05: David Maij: *Sensing Supernatural Agency - An empirical quest on the socio-cognitive foundations of supernatural beliefs*

2018-06: Mariko Visserman: *The Art of Sacrifice: Self-Other Dilemmas, Biased Perceptions, and the Emergence of Gratitude*

2018-07: Caroline Schlinkert: *Minding the body: The role of rumination and stress in embodied information processing*

2018-08: Aafke van Mourik Broekman: *An Experimental Approach to Group Growth: When Boundaries Between Performers and Observers Are Breached*

2018-09: Judith Rachl: *Unconscious Bonding - Forming Bonds Quickly in Today's Fast-Paced Society*

2018-10: Bibiana Armenta Gutierrez: *Stepping into old age. A dynamic perspective on age identity change in the transition from midlife to older adulthood*

2018-11: Dalya Samur: *From reading to feeling: A language-based approach to alexithymia*

2018-12: Marloes Huis: *Women's empowerment in the context of microfinance services*

2018-13: Ernst Noppers: *Driving adoption. The symbolic value of sustainable innovations*

2018-14: Sosja Prinsen: *Justified indulgence: The effects of self-licensing on self-regulation over time*

2018-15: Ali Mashuri: *Dealing with Separatism Conflict in Indonesia: Examining an Interactive Model of Conflict De-Escalation and Resolution*

2018-16: Darya Moghimi: *Doing Well and Feeling Well: The role of Selection, Optimization, and Compensation as Strategies of Successful (Daily) Life Management*

2019-01: Wendy Schreurs: *Crossing Lines Together: How and why citizens participate in the police domain*