Cover page

The role of culture in shaping employment penalties among different ethnic groups

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# Abstract

This study examines the concept of *employment penalties* and demonstrates how traditional-patriarchal and modern-liberal cultures shape employment penalties differently. Using *ideational*, *economic* and *preference* theories, we examine the relationship between building a family and women’s odds of employment within the labor market and the way in which the competition between the labor market and the marriage market among women undermines the odds of their participating in the labor market and working a full-time job in a prestigious profession (such as PTM [professionals, technical, and managerial] jobs). We then turn to *culture theory* to explain why women in traditional-patriarchal cultures pay significantly higher employment penalties than those in modern-liberal cultures.

A logistic and multinomial regression was applied to data from Israeli social surveys (2002-2013) to examine the differences between Arab women from traditional-patriarchal cultures and Jewish women from modern-liberal cultures in terms of employment penalties. The associations between various explanatory variables and the odds of employment variables were examined. The results show that all women pay employment penalties as a result of building or dissolving a family, but women who live in traditional-patriarchal cultures pay higher penalties than women from modern-liberal cultures. However, for all women, teaching professions are a reasonable compromise that enables them to integrate family-building and career development. Based on this, we can conclude that if conditions similar to those of teaching professions were applied to all professions, all women, especially those raising young children and balancing a career, would be exempt from paying employment penalties and young women would be encouraged to integrate into prestigious occupations (such as PTM or STEM positions).

# Introduction

# In the majority of industrialized societies, changes in how family and employment interface with one another have occurred since about the 1960s, with a steady increase in the age of marriage while both marriage rates and number of children have declined (Lesthaeghe & Surkyn, 1988; Lesthaeghe, 2014). As a consequence, the connections between women's participation in the labor market and the institution of marriage more generally have become the object of academic study (Cherlin, 2004, 2020; Oppenheimer, 1988). The purpose of the present study is threefold. One is to examine the employment penalties women pay when they marry, which can be related to a loss of income due to various reasons; such as a decrease in working hours, dropping out of the labor market entirely, or compromising by taking less prestigious jobs. The second is to examine whether women in traditional-patriarchal societies pay higher employment penalties than women who live in modern-liberal cultures. The third goal is to examine whether for all women, but especially those in traditional-patriarchal societies, the teaching profession represents a reasonable compromise that enables them to combine family-building and career development.

This study uses data from the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics’ (ICBS) Social Survey, (years 2002-2013). The data allows us to compare the employment penalties Jewish women living in liberal-modern cultures face, versus those of Arab women living in traditional-patriarchal cultures. The aim was to discover strategies that will allow women to combine family-building and career development, as building a family can have many advantages. Goldscheider et al. (2015) argue that the marriage strengthens a couple's commitment to both each other specifically and the partnership generally, creating a stability that enhances the mental and physical health of the couple, as well as their children. Additionally, Ogolsky et al. (2019) find that married couples enjoy more support from the family and are more satisfied than unmarried couples. However, bringing employment into the picture results in a second framework that competes with that of the family for physical, mental, and emotional resources (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). In this conflict, penalties are paid on both the family and the labor force.

**Literature review**

***Employment penalties***

Building a family results in women paying *employment penalties* (such as wage loss, exit from employment, or a return to part-time jobs) and a concentration in non-prestigious occupations (Amuedo-Dorantes & Kimmel, 2005; Anderson, Binder, & Krause, 2002; Mills, Rindfuss, McDonald, & te Velde, 2011; Stier & Lewin-Epstein, 2007). There are three types of theories that explain *employment penalties*. The first are *Ideational Theories*, Which explains how, a few decades ago, the changing in culture and values result in post-materialism, individualism and secularism ([Lesthaeghe & Surkyn, 1988](#bookmark=id.17dp8vu)). Sometimes women even prefer to stay single so as not to pay the employment penalties married women pay. A rose in single women and divorce women rates alongside with the rose of the rates of women participation in the labor force were changes observed on the first part of the gender revolution ([Goldscheider et al., 2015](#bookmark=id.3rdcrjn)), as well as during the demographic transition in the early 1960s, in which marriage rates declined, the age of first marriage rose, and birth rates dropped ([Courgeau & Bruijn, 1999](#bookmark=id.26in1rg)). There was also an increase in divorce, cohabitation, more single women, and increasing rates of single motherhood ([Cherlin, 2004](#bookmark=id.lnxbz9); [Goldscheider et al., 2015](#bookmark=id.3rdcrjn); Oppenheimer, 1988).

One of the strategies that women use in order to minimize employment penalties is staying single and delaying the marriage age. For example, Oppenheimer attempts to explain the phenomenon of delayed age of first marriage by the claim that women and men postpone marriage until they have finished their education, as it is easier to determine what the potential financial contribution of each partner will be once they can enter the labor market ([Oppenheimer, 1988](#bookmark=id.35nkun2)). According to Oppenheimer, each spouse is dependent upon the other's income, so it makes sense to seek out a partner with a high earning potential. As a partner’s earning potential cannot be fully determined while the couple is both completing an education, it is thus preferable to postpone marriage. Women in particular have two motivations for this; waiting to finish their education makes it easier to determine the couple’s earning potential, but also allows women to maximize their own potential contributions by acquiring a higher education and employment experience. Thus, we can expect that marriage at a young age, which is more suitable for childbirth, results in women having to pay employment penalties as they prioritize family and marriage over a career. Building a family limits the resources a woman can invest in developing her professional skills.

The second type of theories for explaining employment penalties are *economic theories* about human capital (investment in one’s education and training) (Becker, 1985, 1992), which argue that disrupting labor market activity for the purpose of building a family constricts women in the labor market, both on the individual level (impacting women’s opportunities within the labor force) and on the societal level (women’s abilities are not fully utilized within the labor market).

Family-building increases the woman’s specialization in her traditional role as wife/mother and the man’s position as breadwinner (Becker, 1985). Women’s specialization in the household, which Becker claims is a natural specialization that is reinforced by socialization, results in women committing to the needs of the home by dropping out of the labor market. Once they are out of the labor force, women lose employment experience and human capital, resulting in a loss of wages. In his essay on the family, Becker (Becker, 1985, 1992) argues that marital life is a relationship of exchange, as both husband and wife try to maximize household income. Thus, each spouse looks for the other’s contribution to the relationship. According to this approach, women find it relatively easier to maximize their contributions through housework and childcare, while the man’s advantage lies in the labor market; therefore, women choose to use their relative advantage and contribute their time in the home. At the same time, women may also suffer economic penalties when they focus on family-related specializations such as household duties and childcare. This motivates some women to enter the labor market and become economically independent. However, this choice can cause the balance they previously achieved in the household to suffer, and the profit from the marriage decreases.

All this may cause an increase in divorce rates (Becker, 1985). The macroeconomic debate on divorce often focuses on the wife’s relative income (Becker, 1981; Oppenheimer, 1997). When women become economically independent, they can separate from their husbands. Moreover, the more a woman earns, the higher the odds of divorce are (Becker, Landes and Michael, 1977). The first explanation for this phenomenon posits that when both husband and wife participate in the labor market, the wife’s specialized focus on the household decreases, which triggers a decrease in the husband’s focus on the workforce. As a result, the gains from the marriage also decrease. Even working women may lose because of her invisible work at home. Moreover, a husband loses because when his wife does not participate in the labor force, he can invest in his career and increase his economic gains. This means that the household as a whole also experiences an increase in economic gains.

The second explanation for why divorce rates increase along with the wife’s income focuses on the opportunities that are available to women depending on their financial status. When a woman participates in the labor market and is financially independent, she has the ability to divorce, especially when she is not satisfied with her marriage. A woman who is not financially independent will find it much harder to leave her husband, as she stands to lose much more than a woman with an independent income. The husband’s income is an important factor in a woman’s calculations. If it is higher than her own, her motivation to divorce is lower; if it is lower than her own, the opposite is true. Thus, the opportunity for a woman to request a divorce is tied to her income relative to that of her husband (Kalmijn, Loeve and Manting, 2007). In short, employed women will face losses if they decide to divorce and pay employment penalties.

This theory posits that the considerations women make about starting a family, remaining single, marrying, finding an alternative partner, or divorcing all depend on the expected gains and losses (Becker, 1992). The expectation is that marriage will punish them by removing them from the labor market, pushing them into part-time employment, reducing their range of opportunities, or directing them to work in female-oriented professions (for example, teaching, which generally allows women to integrate work and family life). These penalties accumulate throughout a woman’s life and result in gender segregation within the labor market, with most women draining into female-oriented professions.

The third theory used to analyze employment penalties is Hakim’s *preference theory* (Hakim 2003), which explains how segregation in the labor market comes about. Most women become aware of the nature of the labor market early in their lives and end up choosing professions that allow them to build a family. In other words, in exchange for family-friendly work, flexible hours, vacations, etc., women are willing to give up full-time or prestigious employment; when there are no other options, they may even drop out of the job market entirely. In contrast, family-building does not interfere with men’s accumulation of human capital, employment experience, and rewards; they sometimes even receive salary increases as a result of starting a family. This further widens the gender gap (Glauber, 2018).

Decisions about starting a family, dissolving a marriage, and building a career cannot be discussed without considering the cultural influences at play. In their article on fertility decisions, Pollak & Watkins (1993) argue that *culture* fill the gap between the *economic* models (how people choose) and *sociological* theories (the inability to choose). They argue that when individuals make decisions, they are made within a wide range of culturally approved behaviors, which suggests that culture has a strong influence on behavior.

As a result, we can argue that when women choose to build a family, their decisions are free of outside influence and made rationally in modern societies, but may be dictated by normative culture in more traditional societies. Thus, we cannot use economic and self-selection theories when considering marriage and the way in which women come to their decisions regarding it, because in traditional-patriarchal cultures, marriage is valued more highly than any economic gains a women’s employment might bring, in spite of the penalties housewives and mothers may face. This means that in traditional-patriarchal societies, women more likely to marry and less likely to divorce.

Documentation of employment penalties can be found in Hakim’s studies (Hakim, 2002, 2003, 2006) about liberal-modern societies. Hakim developed a thesis called *preference theory* based on the *theory of selection*, arguing that women make decisions according to their preferences. She found three patterns of choice among women: career choice, family choice, and an adaptive lifestyle choice allowing the integration of family and career building. Most women choose the third pattern, while only a minority choose the career or family options. This third choice involves giving up prestige and choosing female-oriented jobs, such as teaching or seasonal/temporary work, as well as a turn to part-time jobs once women have children (Hakim, 2003). Hakim argues that married women tend to view themselves as secondary earners and therefore choose occupations that are compatible with their family life, such as seasonal or temporary work (in the United States) or work on a part-time basis (in the United Kingdom) (Hakim, 2003 p360). This thesis is built on the observation that certain occupations, such as teaching and secretarial work, employ women almost exclusively, not only in Europe but across the whole world (Anker, 2000). Teaching is an ideal family-friendly occupation because it allows mothers to be at home with their children during school holidays, including the long summer holiday (Cinamon & Rich, 2005).

According to England and colleagues (England, Bearak, Budig & Hodges, 2016), even women with high qualifications and high earning capacity cannot escape employment penalties: they pay salary penalties when they decide to have children. Less is known about employment penalties in traditional societies, where *self-selection theory* is irrelevant (H’madoun, 2000) because women are not as free to make decisions as they are in more modern societies. According to Inglehart and Welzel (2005), as the level of socio-economic development increases in countries around the world, values that constrain individuals in their freedom of choice change, allowing people to take more control over their lives and develop their creative human potential. This means that *cultural theories* can be considered more appropriate in this context, as they argue that a woman can choose only from a range of behaviors affirmed by the dominant culture, and her choices are often not intended to promote her socio-economic status (Pollak & Watkins, 1993).

Culture can also be an important factor when determining a working woman’s decision to divorce. Kalmijn, Loeve and Manting (2007) argue that in a culture with traditional gender norms, a woman who earns more than her husband is considered a threat to the husband’s identity as the breadwinner, increasing the odds of divorce. On the other hand, within modern-liberal cultures where gender roles are more egalitarian, the expectation is that a woman’s economic independence is not a threat to her marriage; on the contrary, it decreases the odds of divorce. Findings show that the odds of divorce are higher among economically independent women.

Such theories cannot be used to explain the choices of women who live in traditional-patriarchal cultures. In such a culture, even economically independent women need marriage and the family as protection from any criticism or disapproval, as in developing societies it is not always acceptable for a woman to want education and independence for herself. A marriage and family may offer acceptance and act as a shield in these cases. (Fogiel-Bijaoui 2017; Kandiyoti 1988; Barakat, 2015). In a patriarchal society, the family is a fundamentally important institution that stands at the center of a woman’s life. That means that women will be less willing to give up on having a family, even though the family also functions as a framework of control and supervision (Fogiel-Bijaoui 2016).

For several decades now, modernization processes taking place in traditional societies have encouraged women’s education and career development (Culpan & Marzotto, 1982). However, conservatism, religion, and the level of religiosity of a society reduce women’s chances of participating in the labor market. This is true both in the MENA region (Middle East and North Africa) and in Eastern and Western Europe (Fischer & Aydiner-Avsar, 2018). When women in traditional societies are exposed to modernization, they tend to embrace economic development while maintaining deep religious values as an economic safeguard (Fischer & Aydiner-Avsar, 2018). These findings reinforce the results of a study by Culpan & Marzuto (1982), who found that traditional women in Turkey embrace modernization for financial reasons but continue to attach value to the institution of marriage. Hence, the expectation is that traditional women will pay higher employment penalties for getting married.

## The case of Israel: The differences between the two populations

The diverse population in Israel serves as a good example when studying women employment penalties and the differences between modern-liberal and traditional-patriarchal societies in the penalties paid. Jews (75% of the Israeli population) and Arabs (21% of the population) live alongside each have different way of life. The majority Jews most of whom live a liberal-modern lifestyle while the Arab minority live traditional- patriarchal lifestyle (ICBS, 2016; 2018). The Israeli case Also useful is that fact that we can examine the women career choice and to check her employment concessions through their choice to become a teachers.

In Israel, most teachers are women (OECD, 2019), and until a few years ago a full-time teaching job amounted to 24 hours a week—now it is 36 hours. For most other professions, a full-time schedule consists of 40–42 hours per week (Katz, 2017). Teaching is considered to be an “intermediate status profession” — not particularly prestigious, but not a low wage job either (Cinamon & Rich, 2005). Teachers’ working hours mostly align with the hours when children are at home and with annual vacations, meaning that women can both work and care for their children without having to sacrifice one or the other (Cinamon & Rich, 2005). This is why Israeli teaching salaries are low compared to other jobs requiring the same amount of education, as well as teaching salaries in Western countries (OECD, 2019). Because of this, teaching is considered to be a “mother’s job” in Israel.

### Arabs

Marital status among Arabs has influenced by modernization process which has begun to make its way into Arab society. Arab women education, employment and socio-economic status increased (Azaiza, 2013). However, this evolution has also led to new dilemmas for Arab women, especially when it comes to marriage. The institute of marriage conseder most important to Arab women because of several factors. The most important one is the norms and traditions in the patriarchal society.It is not considered acceptable to be single. Since sex outside of marriage is considered immoral (Hasan, 2002) and thus not allowed, cohabitation is not a viable option for most women (Hleihel, 2009). Violating this prohibition can result in severe punishment and even murder (Hasan, 2002).

Nevertheless, the status of Arab women is beginning to change as they benefit from increasing rates of education and employment (Meler, 2017; Sa’ar, 2001; Azaiza, 2013), delays in marriage (resulting in the decline of women marrying very early), and an increase in the number of single women aged 25 years and above (Hleihel, 2009; Lewin, 2012). These changes are slowly accrued because Arab women in Israel suffer from triple discrimination: they belong to a national minority (Fogiel-Bijaoui, 1999; Herzog, 2004), face a lack of job opportunities in ethnic enclaves (Khattab, 2002), and have to confront male hegemony in a patriarchal structure (Abou-Bakr, 2015; Hasan, 2002; Kandiyoti, 1988; Sa’ar, 2001).

### Jews\*\*\*\*\*

Marriage among Israeli Jewish women is unique in that while a high percentage of women participate in the labor market, they remain fairly conservative when it comes to ideas of marriage and child-rearing (Raz-Yurovich, 2014). Despite the enormous societal changes brought on by the increasing importance of individualism, marriage still remains popular among Israeli Jews (Fogiel-Bijaoui, 2017).

Marriage rates among Jews is stable, although the age of marriage is on the rise (Lavee & Katz, 2003). That can be explained by choosing cohabitation as living arrangement (Manor & Okun, 2016). Maybe this strategies Jewish women use in order to avoid employment penalties is delay marriage so that they can first establish their economic status. which would be in line with the economic theories discussed earlier (Cherlin, 1980; Oppenheimer, 1988).

Thus, marriage does not seem to be an obstacle when it comes to the employment of Jewish women (Ekert-Jaffe & Stier, 2009; Okun & Oliver, 2007). Indeed, among Jews gender employment gap has been almost entirely closed, as it was less than 3% in 2011 compared to 40% among Arabs (Mandel & Birgier, 2016). Even ultra-Orthodox women, whose culture is patriarchal, manage to balance marriage and employment. This is due to public policies that advance women’s participation in the labor market by making sure that high-tech jobs are accessible and appropriate for ultra-Orthodox individuals (Raz & Tzruya, 2018), and that ensure training and teaching in line with Ultra-Orthodox culture and is accessible to women living in this culture (Fried-Stern, 2012).

In modern Israel, generally speaking, there are two populations living side by side: the majority Jewish population has modern-liberal characteristics and, alongside them, the Arab minority population has mostly traditional-patriarchal characteristics (Lavee & Katz, 2003). The differences between the groups "scream" through the differences of the gender employment gap that has been almost entirely closed among Jews (3%) but still 40% among Arabs in 2011 (Mandel & Birgier, 2016). Arab women experience a culture wherein there is competition between the institutions of marriage and work (Sabbah-Karkaby & Stier, 2017). Marriage seem to be an obstacle when it comes to the employment of Arab women (Ekert-Jaffe & Stier, 2009; Okun & Oliver, 2007). In contrast, Jewish women in Israel live in a culture where marriage is not an obstacle to advancing their career (Okun, Oliver & Khait-Marelly, 2007). These particular cultural differences may result in differing employment penalties that women in each culture may pay. As teaching professions tend to be a reasonable occupational compromise that allows women to build a family while remaining employed, this option may be more attractive in traditional-patriarchal societies where women’s functioning in the family setting is more valued than their participation in the labor market.

**Hypothesis**

In line with *economic* and *self-selection theories*, we hypothesized as follows: (1) married and divorced women will pay more employment penalties than single women. Compared to single women, married and divorced women have: a) lower odds of participating in the labor force vs. not participating; b) lower odds of working in full-time vs. part-time jobs; c) lower odds of working in prestigious occupations vs. teaching professions; and d) lower odds of working in prestigious occupations vs. all the other..

In line with our review of theories on modern-liberal cultures and traditional-patriarchal cultures, we hypothesized as follows: (2) women in Arab society, characterized as a traditional-patriarchal society, pay higher employment penalties than Jewish women for entering and leaving the institution of marriage. Compared to married and divorced Jewish women, married and divorced Arab women have: a) lower odds than single women of participating in the labor market vs. not participating; b) lower odds of working in full-time vs. part-time jobs; c) lower odds of working in prestigious occupations vs. to teaching professions; and d) lower odds of working in prestigious occupations vs. all other occupations.

**Methods**

**Data sources**

This study is based on data collected from Israeli social surveys, which were conducted by the Israeli Bureau of Statistics (ICBS) from 2002-2013. The surveys are unique and have significant advantages for a study of this type: at the micro-level, the data is extremely detailed and provides a wide range of information, including on the education and employment of individuals. It also includes information on participants’ self-defined current religion and the level of religiosity of individuals from the Arab population (Muslim, Christian, or Druze) and Jewish population (ultra-Orthodox, religious, traditional-religious, traditional/less-religious, or secular/non-religious). Levels of religiosity are particularly important because religion has a large impact on gender roles and family behavior in Israel (Atrash & Schellekens, 2011). Utilizing the social surveys allows for a comparative investigation of different populations. The information provided enables a thorough examination of the relationship between family formation and employment in particular.

**Subjects**

This study focuses on married women aged 20–45 in three categories: women (general), Jewish women, and Arab women.

**Explanatory variables**

The explanatory variables were divided into macro-level and micro-level. At the macro level, the explanatory variables were *nationality* and *religion* (Arab or Jewish group). At the micro level, they were *single, married, or divorced* and separated women.

**Control variables**

*Years of the survey:* an interval variable ranging from 2002 until 2013.

*Age* : (1) 20–24; (2) 25–29; (3) 30–35; and (4) 40–45.

*Women’s and spouse’s education level*: (1) secondary education; (2) matriculation certificate; (3) non-academic certificate; and (4) academic certificate.

*Work experience*: (1) no experience; (2) less than one year; (3) 1–4 years; (4) 5–9 years; (5) 10–14 years; (6) 15–19 years; (7) 20–24 years; and (8) 25 years or more.

*Residence ownership*: (1) woman owns the place of residence; and (2) woman does not own the place of residence.

*Number of vehicles available to the woman*: (1) none; (2) one vehicle; (3) 2 vehicles; and (4) 3 vehicles or more.

*Student status*: Respondents currently enrolled in studies and who reported that the last school they attended was an academic institution were classified as students and coded as (1); non-students were coded as (0).

*Residence region*: (0) periphery; (1) center.

*Religiosity level among Jews*: (1) Ultra-Orthodox; (2) religious; (3) traditional/religious; (4) traditional/less-religious; (5) secular/non-religious (groups 4 and 5 were integrated in the data because of their similar lifestyle).

*Religiosity level among Arabs*: (1) very religious; (2) religious; (3) not so religious; and (4) not religious.

**Dependent variables**

(1) *Participates in the labor force* — yes or no; (2) *position percentages*: (a) full (35 hours or more) or (b) part-time job (less than 35 hours). For teachers, full-time is considered 24 hours or more, while part-time is less than 24 hours. To analyze these two variables, a logistic regression was used, which enabled us to examine the factors that increase the odds of a women’s participation in the laborforce and working a full-time job. To test for differences between the coefficients for Arab and Jewish women, we employed the Wald chi square statistic using Allison’s formula (Allison, 1999), which allowed us to distinguish the differences between the Arab and Jewish coefficients. The results answered the question, “Is the difference between Jewish and Arab women significant?” in the coefficients of the explanatory variables (*age at first marriage*) where:

is the coefficient for Jewish women, is the coefficient for Arab women, and is the estimated standard error. (3) *Occupation*: (a) teachers and others engaged in the teaching profession; (b) professional technological and managerial (PTM) jobs; and (c) all other jobs. In order to test the *occupation* variables, a multinomial regression was employed; this allowed us to examine the factors that increase the odds of women’s participation in a PTM occupation vs. teaching and other occupations. To examine the differences between Jewish and Arab women, an interaction was performed. The data analysis focused on five comparisons summarized as follows: (1) Labor force participation vs. non-participation; (2) Full-time vs. part-time jobs; (3) PTM occupations vs. teaching; (4) PTM occupations vs. all others; and (5) teaching vs. all others.

**Results**

The results have been divided into two subsections: descriptive statistics and multivariate for two models for family penalties.

**Descriptive results**

In order to examine the differences between Arab and Jewish women and economy-related activities such as participation in the workforce, full-time employment, and acquiring prestigious occupations, frequency calculations were made for each of the populations. Table 1 displays the results.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the Sample of Women Aged 20–45**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Arab women  % | Jewish women  % |  |
| **N=3,733** | **N=16,030** | **Labor force participation** |
| 39.9 | 67.8 | Single women |
| 23.7 | 75.3 | Married women |
| 36.1 | 73.6 | Divorced women |
| **N=866** | **N=7,656** | **Full-time job** |
| 65.7 | 68.5 | Single women |
| 61 | 73.8 | Married women |
| 48.6 | 70.5 | Divorced women |
| **N=812** | **N=6,972** | **Occupation** |
|  |  | **Teaching occupation** |
| 18.4 | 7.9 | Single women |
| 37.4 | 16.8 | Married women |
| 21.1 | 9.31 | Divorced women |
|  |  | **PTM occupation** |
| 14.8 | 22.4 | Single women |
| 13.7 | 30.7 | Married women |
| 2.6 | 25.8 | Divorced women |
| Source: Israel Social Survey 2002–2013, Jewish and Arab women age 20–45 | | |

The data in Table 1 demonstrates employment penalties for Jewish and Arab women. As seen in the table, rates of economic activities (workforce participation, full-time employment, and working in prestigious occupations) of married Arab women are lower than those of single Arab women (except for teaching professions). We can see opposite results among Jewish women: married women have higher rates of economic activities than single women. For example, rates of married Jewish women working in prestigious occupations exceed rates of single women doing so (30.7% and 22.4%, respectively).

An opposite picture appears for Arab women; particularly noticeable is the difference between workforce participation rates of married and single women (23.7% vs. 39.9%, respectively). These trends were true for all variables of employment except the teaching profession, where the proportion of married Arab women was significantly higher than the proportion of single women (37.4%, 18.4%, respectively). As expected, married Arab women show lower rates of economic activities than their Jewish counterparts.

**Multivariate results**

In order to examine the differences in employment penalties (their odds in the labor market, i.e. participation in the workforce, full-time employment, prestige of occupation) between Arab and Jewish women according to family status, logistic and multinomial logit regressions were performed. These were calculated for the entire population (sample for the total Arab and Jewish population) and for the samples of Arab and Jewish women separately. Furthermore, in order to examine whether there were significant differences between Jewish and Arab women, we employed Allison tests for logistic regression models and interactions in multinomial logit models.

Table 2 represents employment penalties for Arab and Jewish women and the differences between them. The table shows employment odds among the whole sample (Arab and Jewish women), with its main purpose being to show the employment odds for married and divorced women vs. single women. Two of these models are presented for each of these groups (whole sample, Jewish, and Arab): two logistic models (models 1a, 1b, 1c) that show the odds of participation in the labor market vs non-participation, and also the odds of working in full-time vs. part-time jobs (models 2a, 2b, 2c). In addition, the table’s right-hand columns show the results of the Allison tests while examining differences between Arab and Jewish women.

**Table 2: Logistic Regressions of Employment Activity by Ethnic Group (exponentiated coefficients)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | All women | | Jews | | Arabs | | Differences between Arabs and Jews\* | | Differences between Arabs and Jews\* | |
|  | Logit  (1) | Logit  (2) | Logit  (1) | Logit  (2) | Logit  (1) | Logit  (2) | Wald Chi square for differences  (1) | *p*-value  (1) | Wald Chi square for differences  (2) | *p*-value  (2) |
| Covariates | l.f. participation vs. … | Full-Time job vs. part-time job | l.f. participation vs. … | Full-Time job vs. part-time job | l.f. participation vs. … | Full-Time job vs. part-time job |  |  |  |  |
| Marital status |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Single | Ref. | Ref. | Ref. | Ref. | Ref. | Ref. | Ref. | Ref. | Ref. | Ref. |
| Married | 0.69\*\* | 0.79\*\* | 0.82\*\* | 0.99 | 0.33\*\* | 0.51\*\* | 26.880 | 0.0001 | 8.083 | 0.0045 |
| Divorce | 0.86 | 0.78\*\* | 0.89 | 0.83\* | 1.07 | 0.39\* | 0.00392 | 0.9501 | 3.613 | 0.0573 |
| Constant | 14.3 | -24.9+ | 18.5 | -46.5\*\* | -35.1 | -33.6 | 1.87027 | 0.1714 | 0.00171 | 0.967 |
| -2Log Likelihood | 18240 | 15754 | 15124 | 13274 | 2063 | 1508 |  |  |  |  |
| N | 20,233 | 13,913 | 16,030 | 11,958 | 3,733 | 1,210 |  |  |  |  |
| Source: Israel Social Survey 2002–2013, Jewish and Arab women age 20–45.  Notes: + p<0.1, \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01; PTM= professional technological and managerial occupations; calculations in the Allison tests are based on different logistic models without the explanatory variable religiosity. | | | | | | | | | | |

Table 3 presents Multinomial logit models made for examining the odds of working in PTM vs. teaching (Models 3a, 3b, 3c); to work in PTM vs. other occupations (Models 4a, 4b, 4c) and in teaching vs. other occupations (Models 5a, 5b, 5c).

**Table 3: Multinomial Regressions of Employment Activity by Ethnic Group (exponentiated coefficients)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | All women | | | Jews | | | Arabs | | |
|  | Multi  (3) | Multi  (4) | Multi  (5) | Multi  (3) | Multi  (4) | Multi  (5) | Multi  (3) | Multi  (4) | Multi  (5) |
| Covariates | PTM  vs. Teaching | PTM vs. all the others | Teaching vs. all the others | PTM  vs. Teaching | PTM vs. all the others | Teaching vs. all the others | PTM  vs. Teaching | PTM vs. all the others | Teaching vs. all the others |
| Marital status |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Single | Ref. | Ref. | Ref. | Ref. | Ref. | Ref. | Ref. | Ref. | Ref. |
| Married | 0.42\*\* | 1.063 | 2.546\*\* | 0.67\*\* | 1.06 | 1.06\*\* | 0.54\* | 0.93 | 1.77\* |
| Divorce | 0.87 | 1.018 | 1.174 | 0.86 | 1.06 | 1.24 | 1.06 | 0.92 | 0.79 |
| Constant |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| N | 13,920 | 13,920 | 13,920 | 11,962 | 11,962 | 11,962 | 1,289 | 1,289 | 1,289 |
| Source: Israel Social Survey 2002–2013, Jewish and Arab women age 20–45.  Notes: + p<0.1, \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01; PTM= professional technological and managerial occupations. | | | | | | | | | |

**All women**

The results show employment odds for married and divorced women vs. single women. Five of these models are presented for each of these groups (whole sample, Jewish, and Arab). Two logistic models (models 1a, 1b, 1c) show the odds of participation in the labor market vs non-participation, and also the odds of working in full-time vs. part-time jobs (models 2a, 2b, 2c).

Multinomial logit models were made for examining the odds of working in PTM vs. teaching (Models 3a, 3b, 3c); working in PTM vs. other occupations (Models 4a, 4b, 4c), and working in teaching vs. other occupations (Models 5a, 5b, 5c). In addition, the right-hand columns in Table 2 show the results of the Allison tests for examining differences between Arab and Jewish women.

First, we examine how marriage relates to women’s odds of participating in the workforce' work full time job and work in a prestigious jobs. The models for the whole sample show that marriage reduces women’s odds of participating in the labor market by 31%; working a full-time job by 21%; and working in PTM occupations vs. teaching by 58%. A divorce reduces a woman’s odds of working full-time by 22%. The picture is different for Jewish women, showing a more moderate decline where marriage reduces the odds of participation in the labor market by 18%; the odds of working a full-time job by 17%; and the odds of working in PTM occupations by 33%. Among Arab women, marriage decreases these odds significantly. Marriage decreases the odds of labor force participation by 67%, odds of working a full-time job by 49%; and odds of working in PTM occupations by 46%. Moreover, for Arab women, divorce reduces their odds of working full-time by 61%.

**Differences between Jewish and Arab women**

The Allison tests for examining the difference between Arab and Jewish women showed significant differences. For example, the odds of Jewish married vs. single women participating in the labor market vs. non-participation are only 22% lower; for Arab women, the figure is 67%. In addition, the odds for married Jewish women vs. single women working part-time vs. full-time decrease by only 17% compared to 50% among Arab women.

In the multinomial regression, interaction was examined to observe differences between Arab and Jewish women regarding prospects of working in prestigious professions vs. other occupations and vs. teaching professions. Significant differences were found: the odds of married Jewish women working in a prestigious profession were 1.09 times higher than those of married Arab women. Furthermore, Arab women pay a severe penalty for leaving a marriage, while Jewish women gain an advantage from divorce. Divorced Jewish women have 1.05 times higher odds of working in prestigious occupations than single women. The odds of divorced Arab women working in prestigious occupations decrease by 90% compared to single women. The numbers are similar when examining the differences in the odds of working in a teaching profession: the results showed that Arab women prefer the teaching profession over other jobs, unlike Jewish women.

**Discussion**

The goal of this study was to examine the *employment penalties* that married and divorced women pay, and whether culture determines these penalties. Also important was to examine if teaching professions exempt women from paying these employment penalties. We focused on the Israeli labor force, examining whether married and divorced women pay higher penalties compared to single women. We also searched for differences between Arab and Jewish women to learn about the variances between women who live in traditional-patriarchal cultures (such as Arab women) and women who live in modern-liberal cultures (such as Jewish women).

The main goal of this study was to examine the employment penalties that women pay in the labor force. A second goal was to discover whether there are any differences between Arab women (traditional-patriarchal cultures) and Jewish women (modern-liberal cultures) when it comes to employment penalties, and how their respective cultures may impact these penalties.. The third goal was to examine to what extent the teaching profession represents a workable solution to the work-family conflict, and whether this solution would be more salient in the traditional Israeli Arab society.

This research examined *economic theories* about *human capital* ([Becker, 1985](#bookmark=id.44sinio), [1992](#bookmark=id.2jxsxqh)), *culture theories* ([Pollak & Watkins, 1993](#bookmark=id.z337ya)), *theory of preference* ([Hakim, 2002](#bookmark=id.3j2qqm3), [2003](#bookmark=id.1y810tw), [2006](#bookmark=id.4i7ojhp)), and *ideational theories* ([Lesthaeghe & Surkyn, 1988](#bookmark=id.17dp8vu)).

The first set of hypotheses dealt with employment penalties paid by all married women (Jewish and Arab). The findings show that the married women have significantly lower employment odds than single women. Married women have lower odds of participating in the labor force than single women. These results support the *job-search theory* (Oppenheimer, 1988) and are reinforced by results obtained by Nabwani (in press), who shows that women who purposely postpone marriage to develop the professional aspect of their lives pay a personal price by reducing their value in the marriage market, thus reducing their odds of marriage. On the other hand, women who do not postpone marriage pay employment penalties.

Moreover, married women are more likely to work in part-time jobs than single women. They are also more likely than single women to work in teaching professions as opposed to other professions (including prestigious ones). The results also show that divorced women’s odds of working full-time are lower than those of single women. Consistent with economictheories, which suggest that an increase in women’s economic independence increases the chances of divorce ([Becker, 1985](#bookmark=id.44sinio)), the results suggest that a woman’s increased economic independence makes divorce more likely. At the same time, divorce also forces women to pay employment penalties. These findings are consistent with *economic theories,* which predict a negative correlation between marriage, divorce, and economic activity in the labor market and posit that disruptions brought on by marriage and divorce force women to pay penalties in the form of economic losses ([Becker, 1985](#bookmark=id.44sinio), [1992](#bookmark=id.2jxsxqh)). This is reflected in the importance that women attribute to their relative advantages (compared to men) in household work, something they are penalized for in the labor market ([Becker, 1992](#bookmark=id.2jxsxqh)). As women invest less time in the labor market and more in the family sphere ([Becker, 1985](#bookmark=id.44sinio)), a vicious cycle is created: women’s specialization in family matters increases their relative advantage in the household, which in turn increases the employment penalties they pay and works to keep them in household roles.

In line with *theory of preference* ([Hakim, 2002](#bookmark=id.3j2qqm3), [2003](#bookmark=id.1y810tw), [2006](#bookmark=id.4i7ojhp)), we hypothesized that women who focus on the family will pay occupational penalties, in the sense that they are likely to choose a teaching profession to ensure their work commitments do not interfere with their duties to the family. The results confirmed our hypothesis: women in the Israeli workforce who focus on family and marriage at a young age prefer teaching professions to other occupations, including prestigious ones.

This phenomenon is more common among Arab women, suggesting that culture plays a role in determining employment aspirations in traditional-patriarchal societies where women are encouraged to prioritize marriage over work (Sabbah-Karkaby and Stier, 2017). In traditional-patriarchal societies, it appears that gender segregation in the workforce can be attributed first and foremost to culture rather than to women’s choices.

The second set of hypotheses on employment penalties focused on the differences between Arab and Jewish women. The findings show significant differences between Arab and Jewish women. Arab women are likely to prioritize their traditional roles in the family over advancing their socio-economic status; they drop out of the job market, reduce their working hours, or choose teaching professions. These findings support *cultural theories* ([Lehrer & Son, 2017](#bookmark=id.1ksv4uv); [Pollak & Watkins, 1993](#bookmark=id.z337ya)) which argue that in traditional societies. individual choices are generally made within the scope of culturally approved behaviors. Jewish women also experience employment penalties, but these are comparatively lower and only occur after women have established themselves in the workforce. The result is that Arab women living in traditional-patriarchal ethnic minority groups pay significantly higher penalties for marriage and divorce than Jewish women do.

The results of this study suggest that *cultural theories* complement the explanations provided by *economic and sociological theories* on why women who live in traditional-patriarchal societies pay greater employment penalties than those living in modern-liberal societies.

\*\*\*\*\*In order to offer a further insights into the role of culture and preference in penalties, in future studies, it would be beneficial to examine these relationships by the use of micro-level data that directly measures attitudes (e.g. emancipative values). Additionally, longitudinal data to assess causality between individual characteristics and the penalties paid.

The findings highlights tow benefits that could help policy makers to continue efforts to close the gender gap in the workforce by applying the family-related benefits characteristic of teaching professions to other occupations, especially for women with young children. Because our findings show the benefits that the teaching professions provide, allowing women to effectively combine both work and family with minimal penalties. Doing so may encourage young women, whether from traditional or modern societies, to choose more prestigious professions (such as STEM or PTM professions). These professions will become more attractive to women when they can feel comfortable that they will receive support from their government to help them combine a career with marriage and family life. This policy suggest sensitive dealing with women especially who live in traditional populations that live alongside modern-liberal populations in the industrial world.

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