

# Gender Norms and Labor-Supply Expectations Experimental Evidence from Adolescents

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## Context

- Large and persistent negative effects of childbearing on labor-market outcomes of women, but not of men (e.g. Kleven et al. 2019a; Kleven et al. 2019b; Kuziemko et al. 2018; Angelov et al. 2015)
- Child-birth as one of the main reasons for persistent gender inequalities (Kleven et al. 2019a)
- Strong gender norms as one theoretical explanation (e.g. Akerlof and Kranton 2000, 2010; Bertrand et al. 2015)

## This Paper

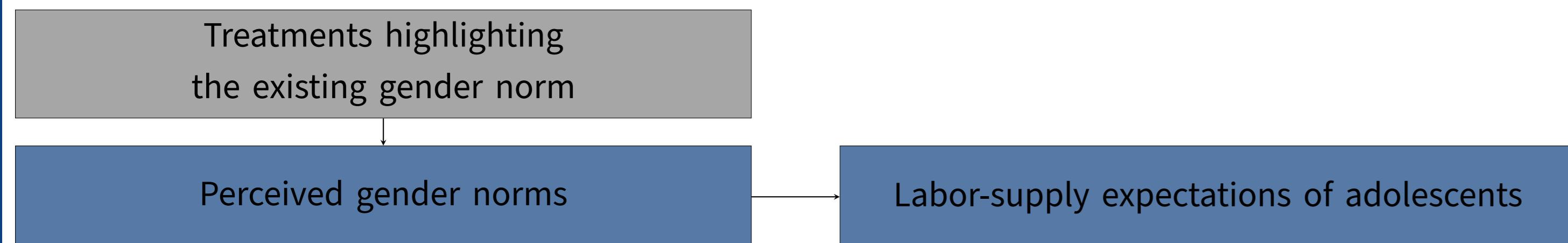
### Research Question

- What are the causal effects of perceived gender norms on labor-supply expectations of adolescents?

### Approach

- Design and run large-scale online survey experiment in a sample with 2,000 German adolescents aged between 14 and 17 years

### Experimental Design



## Data: Online Survey among Adolescents

Online survey with 2,000 respondents aged between 14 and 17 years in Germany

- Conducted between October and December 2019
- Main survey encompassed questions related to education, career and labor market decisions and rich set of questions on sociodemographics.
- Sample resembles characteristics of the German population aged 14 to 17 years
- Experimental design registered at AEA-registry AEARCTR-0003021

## Eliciting Labor Supply Expectations

Elicit labor-supply expectations for respondents themselves and their partner in a hypothetical scenario:

- Imagine you are 30 years old and you have a child aged between 1 and 6 years with your partner. How many hours per week would you like to work in order to earn money?
- Answers: 0 hours, i.e. not at all; 10 hours; 20 hours; 30 hours; 40 hours, i.e. full-time

## Treatments

Assign respondents to one of four experimental groups:

### 0. Control group

### 1. Salience

What do you think, how many adults in Germany hold the opinion that mothers and fathers, respectively, should reduce their labor-market supply while the children are young?

### 2. Information

Out of 100 adults in Germany, 91 hold the opinion that the mother should reduce her labor-market supply while the children are young. At the same time, out of 100 adults in Germany, 41 hold the opinion that the father should reduce his labor-market supply while the children are young.

### 3. Salience & information

Include both stimuli: (i) ask the belief-elicitation questions, and (ii) provide accurate information about the norm.

## Beliefs About Norm Prescribing Parental Labor Supply

What do you think, how many adults in Germany hold the opinion that mothers and fathers, respectively, should reduce their labor-market supply while the children are young?

Figure A: Norm that *mothers* should reduce labor supply while children are young

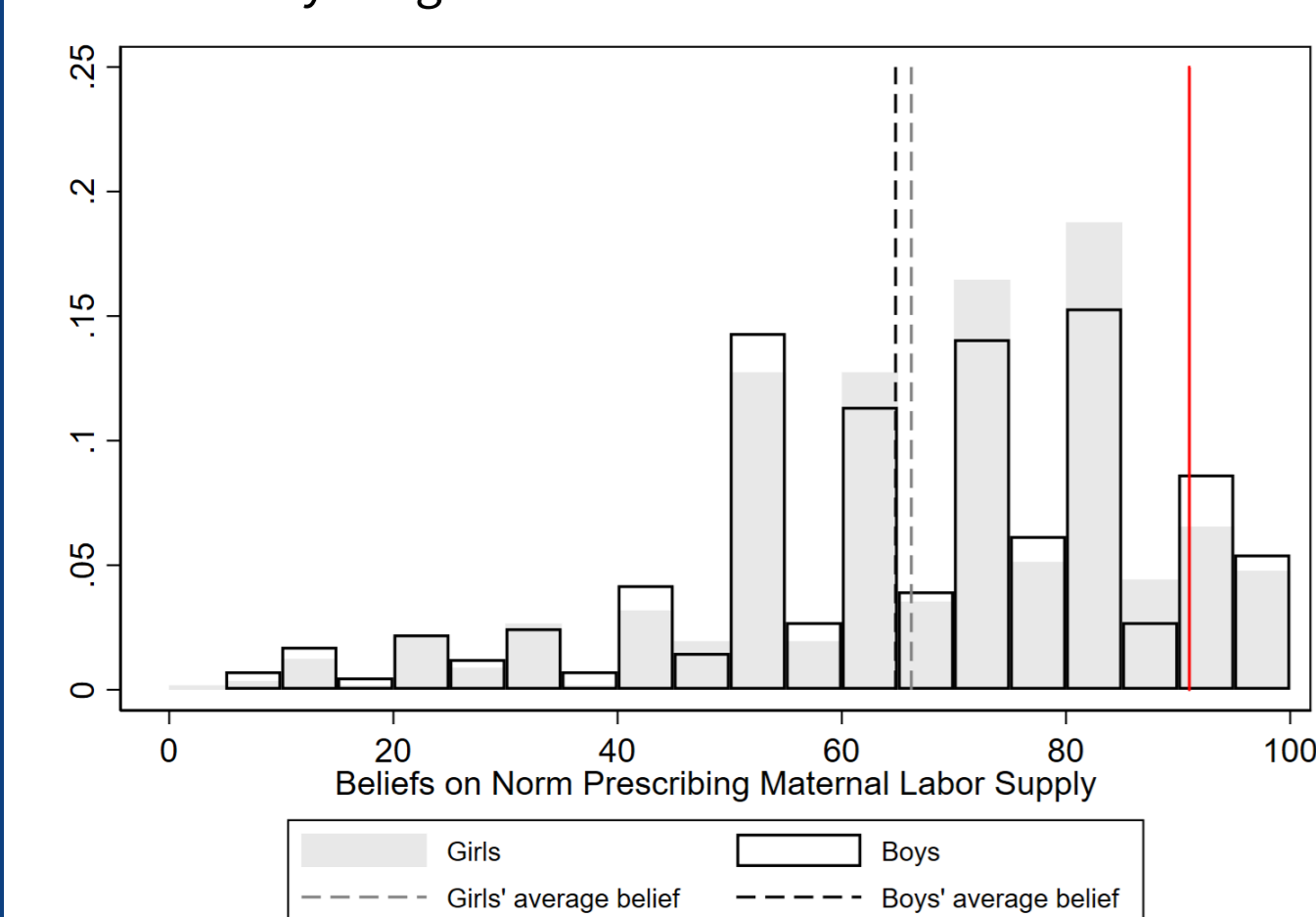
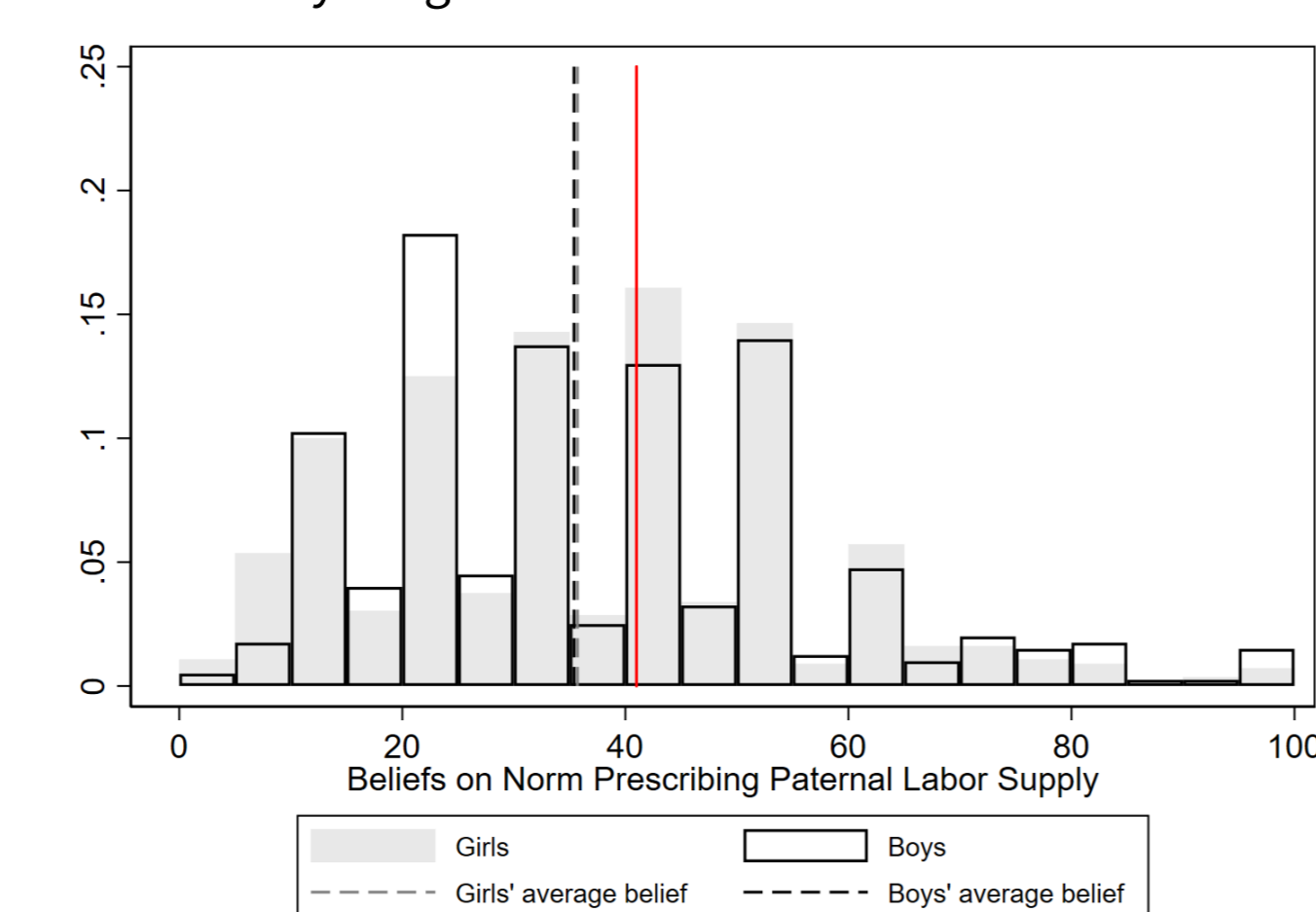


Figure B: Norm that *fathers* should reduce labor supply while children are young



Notes: Correct values indicated by vertical lines. Sample: Respondents who received respective belief elicitation questions.

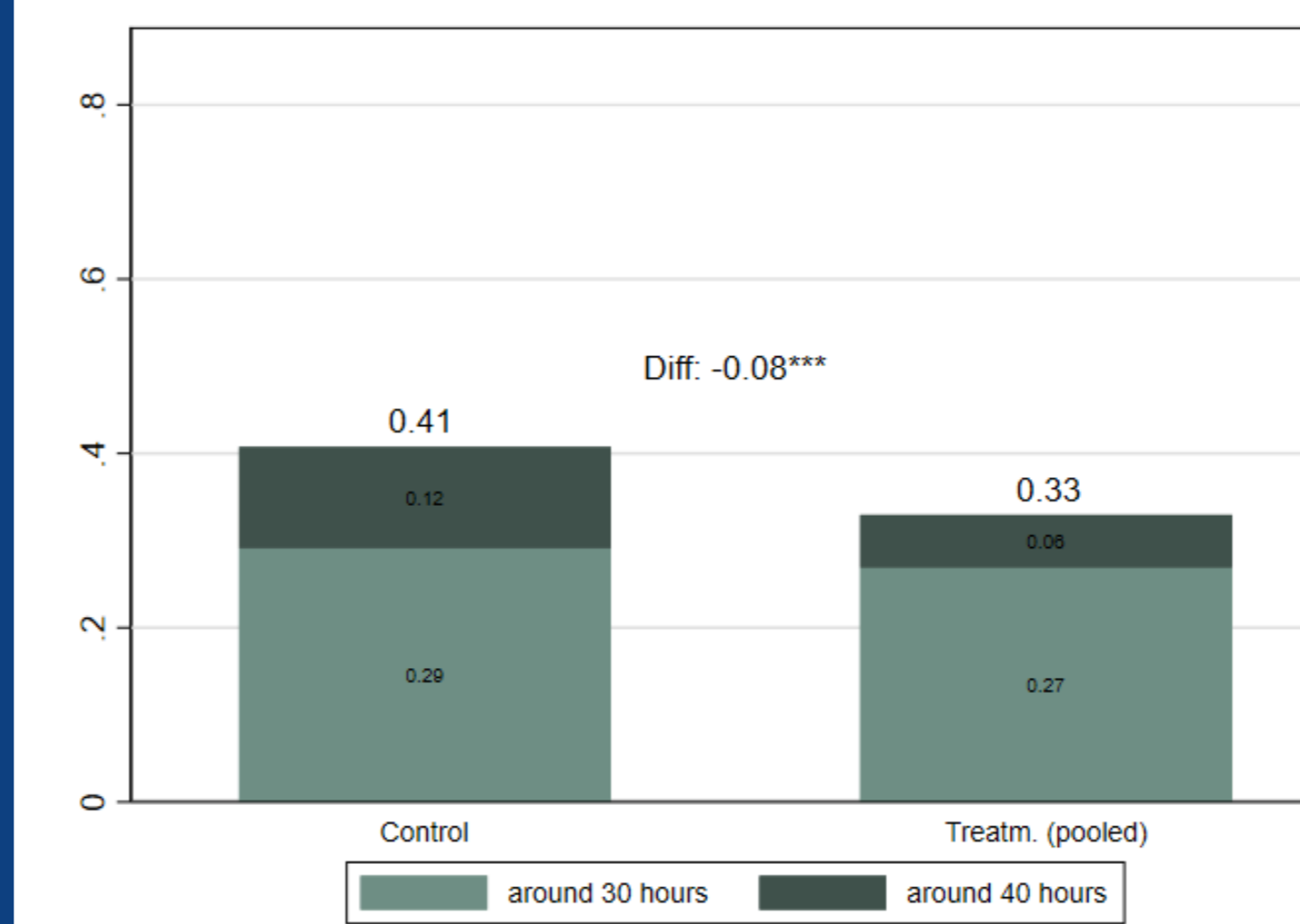
## Conclusion

- Highlighting existing gender norm concerning parental labor supply persistently reduce labor-supply expectations of adolescents in Germany
- Policy Relevance: Promising approach may be targeting adolescents' perceptions → change how men and women (mothers and fathers) are portrayed in schoolbooks, advertisements, or the media

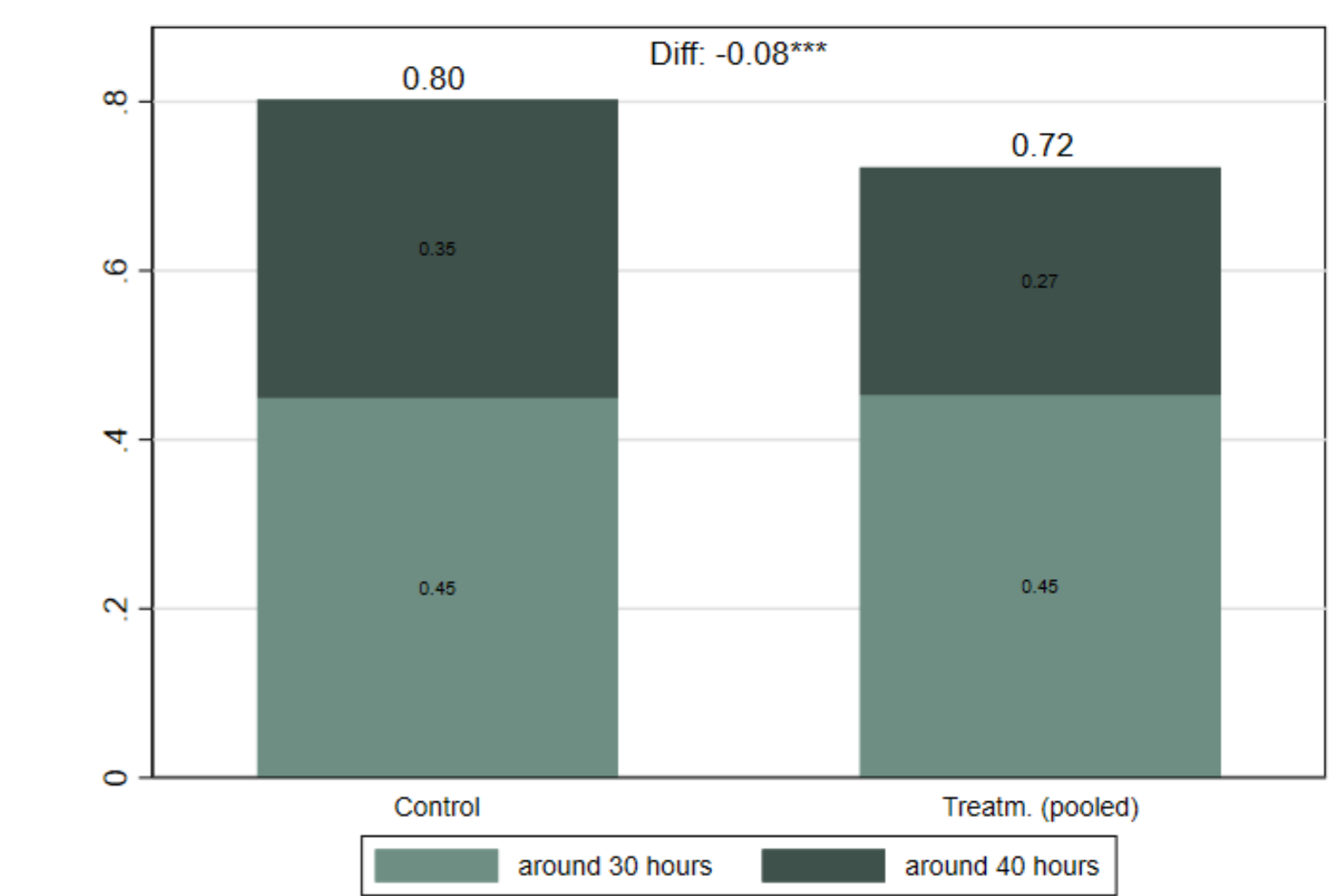
## Treatment Effects: Self-expected Labor Supply

Imagine you are 30 years old and you have a child aged between 1 and 6 years with your partner. How many hours per week would you like to work in order to earn money?

Panel A: Girls' expectations to work at least 30 hours per week



Panel B: Boys' expectations to work at least 30 hours per week



Notes: Treatm. (pooled): Respondent in experimental groups *salience*, *information* or *salience and information*. \*\*\*/\*\*/\* indicate significance at the 1%/5%/10% level from linear regression.

## Regression Results: Self-expected Labor Supply

	Self-expected labor supply	
	(1) Girls	(2) Boys
<i>Panel A: Combined treatment effects</i>		
Treatments (pooled)	-2.610*** (0.600)	-1.814*** (0.650)
<i>p-values: MHT Correction</i>		
Treatments (pooled)	0.000	0.004
<i>Panel B: Separate treatment effects</i>		
Salience	-1.965*** (0.731)	-1.328 (0.823)
Information	-2.582*** (0.774)	-1.578* (0.872)
Salience & information	-3.250*** (0.718)	-2.418*** (0.786)
<i>p-values: MHT Correction</i>		
Salience	0.022	0.095
Information	0.004	0.126
Salience & information	0.000	0.014
Control mean	23.84	31.13
Covariates	Yes	Yes
Observations	1164	836
R-squared	0.099	0.039

Notes: OLS regressions. Treatments (pooled): Respondent in experimental groups *Salience*, *Information* or *Salience & information*. Dependent Variables: Hours expecting to work per week when having a child 1-6 (0=0 hours, i.e. not at all; 10=10 hours; 20=20 hours, i.e. part-time; 30=30 hours, 40=40 hours, i.e. full-time); Control mean: Mean of the outcome variable in the control group. Covariates include: age, gender, born in Germany, living with parents, currently in school, current school track leading to university entrance degree, mother working full-time, having siblings, West Germany, living in large city, parents with university education, risk, patience, and imputation dummies. MHT Correction refers to the multiple hypothesis testing procedure presented in List et al. 2019 and corrects for two subgroups (girls and boys). Robust standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\*/\*\*/\* indicate significance at the 1%/5%/10% level.

## Persistence of Treatment Effects

Invite all respondents to participate in follow-up survey two weeks after the main survey

- Re-elicite labor-supply expectations as in the main survey
- Re-survey 1,319 respondents (66 percent of the sample) between 14 and 35 days after the main survey
- Pool experimental groups that did and did not receive factual information about the content of the norm as literature discusses salience effects (as induced by treatment *salience*) as temporary and short-lived

	Self-expected labor supply		
	(1) All	(2) Girls	(3) Boys
Information provision (pooled)	-1.673*** (0.493)	-1.673** (0.676)	-1.537** (0.702)
Information provision (pooled) x follow-up	0.553 (0.518)	0.641 (0.691)	0.438 (0.788)
Follow-up	0.447 (0.359)	0.503 (0.465)	0.378 (0.564)
<i>Info provision in follow-up</i>	-1.120**	-1.032	-1.098
Control mean	26.15	22.63	30.48
Covariates	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations (respondents)	1319	734	585
R-squared	0.199	0.109	0.028

Notes: OLS regressions. Info provision: Respondent received one of the two treatments containing the information about the social norm towards parents (i.e. Information or Salience & information). Sample: Respondents who participated in the follow-up survey. Robust standard errors, adjusted for clustering at the respondent level, in parentheses. \*\*\*/\*\*/\* indicate significance at the 1%/5%/10% level.