

Studying the obstacles to fathers' leave take-up with survey and interviews – how to reach the non-users?

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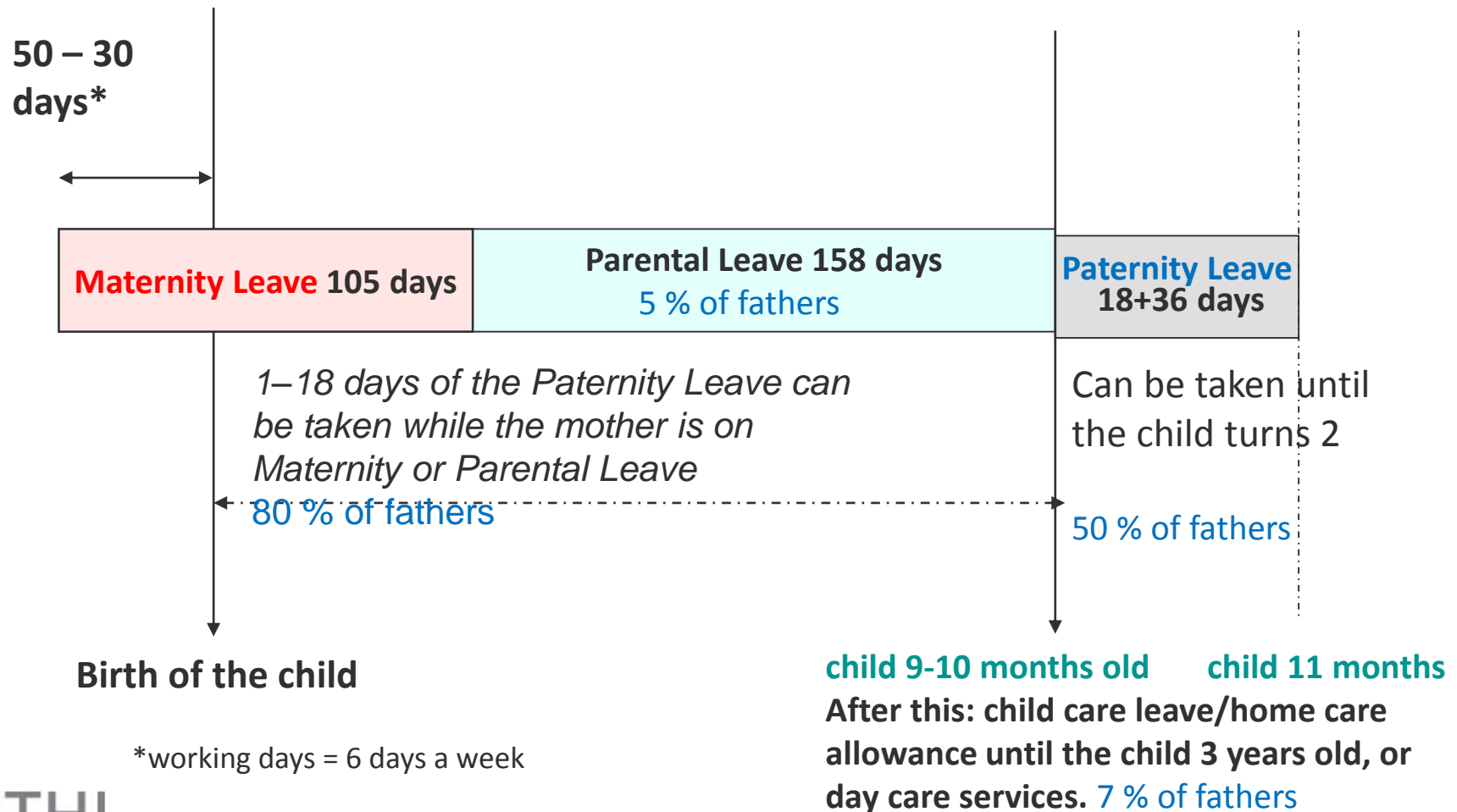
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Maternity, Paternity and Parental Leave in Finland 2013→ and % of fathers using each option 2015



*working days = 6 days a week



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Fathers who do not take any form of leave

- Approximately 20 % of fathers
- Register-based information about 'non-users' (Saarikallio-Torp & Haataja 2016)
 - more often without vocational education
 - unemployed, students or entrepreneurs
 - belonged to the lowest income decile
- Parental leave survey 2013: non-use more typical among
 - Entrepreneurs, low household income, child's mother not having a job

Surveys to fathers

Parental leave survey 2006

- fathers with two-year-old child from the register of beneficiaries of the National Insurance Institute: random 3 % of paternity benefit recipients and random ¼ of parental benefit recipients.
- sample 2976, N=1058, rr 35,6 %; over-representation of quota users, age 30+, higher income.

Parental leave survey 2013

- fathers with two-year-old child from the register of beneficiaries of the National Insurance Institute: random 5328 of short leave takers (1-12 days), all longer leave takers (13+ days).
- Sample 6781, N=2161, rr 32 %; over-representation of quota users, from Southern Finland, age 30+.

Visible Fathers survey 2016

- fathers with three-year-old child from the Population Register Center.
- Random sample 6809, N= 929, rr 14 %; over-representation of leave-takers, from Southern Finland, age 40+, high education level.

Parental leave survey 2013: Main obstacles to...

the father's month (six weeks of parental leave for fathers) Or

childcare leave (on homecare allowance until child turns three)

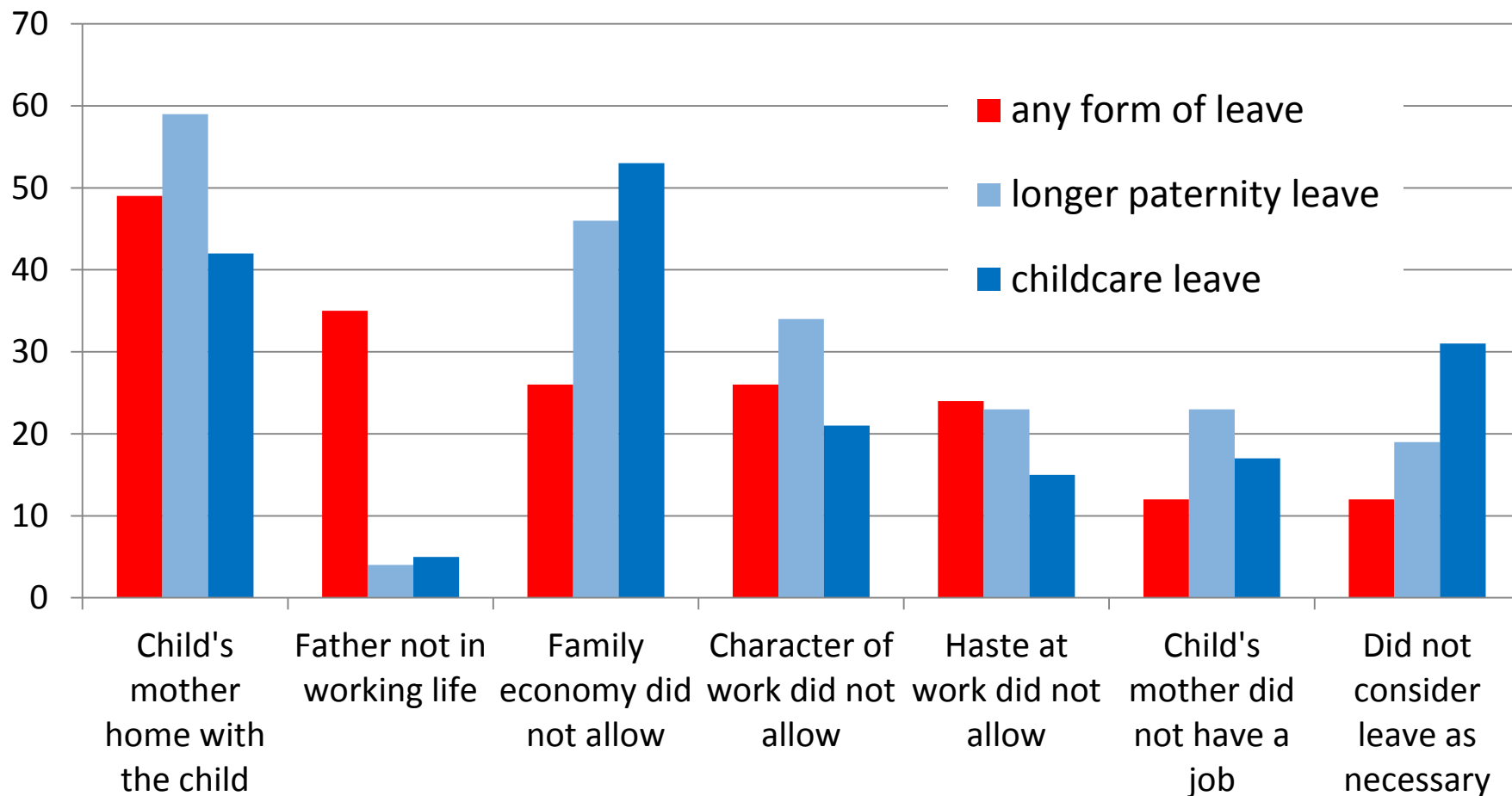
- Financial reasons: family economy did not allow
- Child's mother's position: at home on homecare allowance / no job waiting
- Father's leave not considered necessary / the child started in daycare
- Also situation at work: character of work or haste at work did not allow

paternity leave (three weeks while the mother on maternity/parental leave)

- Situation / haste at work / character of work
- Family economy
- Father not in working life



Visible fathers survey 2016: Reasons for not taking... (% of the 'non-takers' of each form of leave)



Interviews with fathers

- Interviews of HR managers and fathers at workplaces (2014-2015, Family leave study)
- Interviews of fathers and superiors in male-dominated branches (2016-2017, Visible fathers)
- Workplaces with negative attitudes toward fathers' leave not likely to participate
- Easier to reach fathers who took leave
 - At workplaces, HR management as a gatekeeper in choosing fathers for interviews → 'positive examples'?
 - Work organizations only have information about their employees' leave-taking, not about fatherhood as such
 - Fathers considering the subject personally important and feeling that their experience is valued more likely to participate

Discussion

- Better survey response rates when targeting paternity/parental benefit recipients.
- Difficult to reach young fathers with low education level, living in the countryside.
- Do mothers' survey responses with higher response rate (44 % in 2013) provide a more accurate picture about fathers' non-take-up than responses from few non-user-fathers?
- Take-up of at least the short paternity leave has become a norm – is there a stigma on non-users which prevents them from agreeing to be interviewed?