

FATHERS ON LEAVE AND GENDER EQUALITY:
A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE
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Fathers on Leave Alone
The case of Spain



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Types of Spanish Leave to Be Used by Fathers (Structural Characteristics) / 1

Paternity Leave : only for men, 2 weeks full paid, although some (rare) collective agreements increase it in one or two additional weeks (for instance, the municipality of Madrid acknowledges 4 weeks). Can be taken at birth of the child (the perceived “natural” use of the leave) or after maternity leave. Fully paid by the Social Security

Maternity Leave: 6 weeks compulsory for women after birth + 10 weeks that can be transferred to the partner by the mother (some collective agreements recognize a longer leave). Fully paid by the Social Security

Breastfeeding Break: Two ½ hours a day till the 9th month (12th in the public sector). If established by collective agreement, it can be summed up to 2 additional weeks (4 in the public sector) of maternity (since 2013 also to paternity) leave. Fully paid by the employer.



Types of Spanish Leave to Be Used by Fathers (Structural Characteristics) / 2

Full-Time Parental Leave (Ex): each parent can take leave until three years after childbirth, with no limit in the number of periods of leave. Unpaid (though some regions preview a lump sum in some circumstances).

Part-Time Parental Leave (RJ): each parent can reduce the working day by between an $1/8^{\text{th}}$ and $1/2$ of its normal duration to care for a child until the twelfth year. Unpaid.



	Maternity leave			Paternity leave	Parental leave (to care children)		
	Women	Men	%		Women	Men	%
2008	353.585	5.575	1,6	279.756	36.300	1.471	3,9
2009	334.786	5.726	1,7	273.024	32.549	1.393	4,1
2010	326.752	5.805	1,8	275.637	33.239	1.573	4,5
2011	318.607	5.798	1,8	269.715	32.599	1.529	4,5
2012	293704	5028	1,7	245.867	28163	1488	5,0
2013	283.923	4.919	1,7	237.988	n.a.	n.a.	
Total	1.911.357	32.851	1,7	1.581.987	162.850	7.454	4,4

Source: Statistical Yearbook of the Ministry of Employment and Social Security

Phenomenology of FULL-time parental leave

Only 0.5% men against 10.4% women took such a leave, and mostly only **once in life** (79% women and 86% men) as is the case in part-time leave

As in part-time leave, full-time leave is taken mainly for the first child (56% among those with 2 or more children).

And similarly it is taken also mostly after maternity leave (64% among women) and for a maximum of one year (85% of women did it so), being the most common to take it for 6 months or less (46%). Among men it is even shorter: half of them take it for 1 month and 83% for a maximum of 1 year.

After leave, all men returned to a full-time job, but only 55% of women, who a third returned to a part-time job or part-time leave (35%), while only 7% gave up paid work altogether or were fired (3%).



Total interviewees so far: **24 fathers on Leave Alone**

Working sector: Public sector (20); Private sector (4)

Professions: Civil Guard (14), Electro-mechanical (1), Lab technician (1), Administrative (2), Primary Teacher (1), Janitor (1), Consultant (2), Nurse (1), Policeman (1)

Leaves used to be alone with the child:

Full-time parental leave : 5

Part-time parental leave 4

Maternity leave: 11

Breastfeeding break: 9

Other leaves: 2



Profile of Analyzed Interviewees

10 fathers on Leave Alone

Working sector: Public sector (6), Private sector (4)

Professions: Civil Guard (2), Electro-mechanical (1), Lab technician (1), Administrative (1), Primary Teacher (1), Janitor (1), Consultant (2), Nurse (1)

Combinations of Leaves used to be ALONE with the Child:

Full-time parental leave: 3 (non-paid)

Part-time parental leave: 2 (non-paid)

Maternity leave plus Breastfeeding break: 5 (paid)

Combinations of SHARED leaves:

Paternity leave: 6 (paid)

Paternity leave plus full-time parental leave: 1 (paid/non-paid)

Paternity leave plus marriage leave: 1 (paid)

None: 1

Number of children: One child (4); Two children (6)

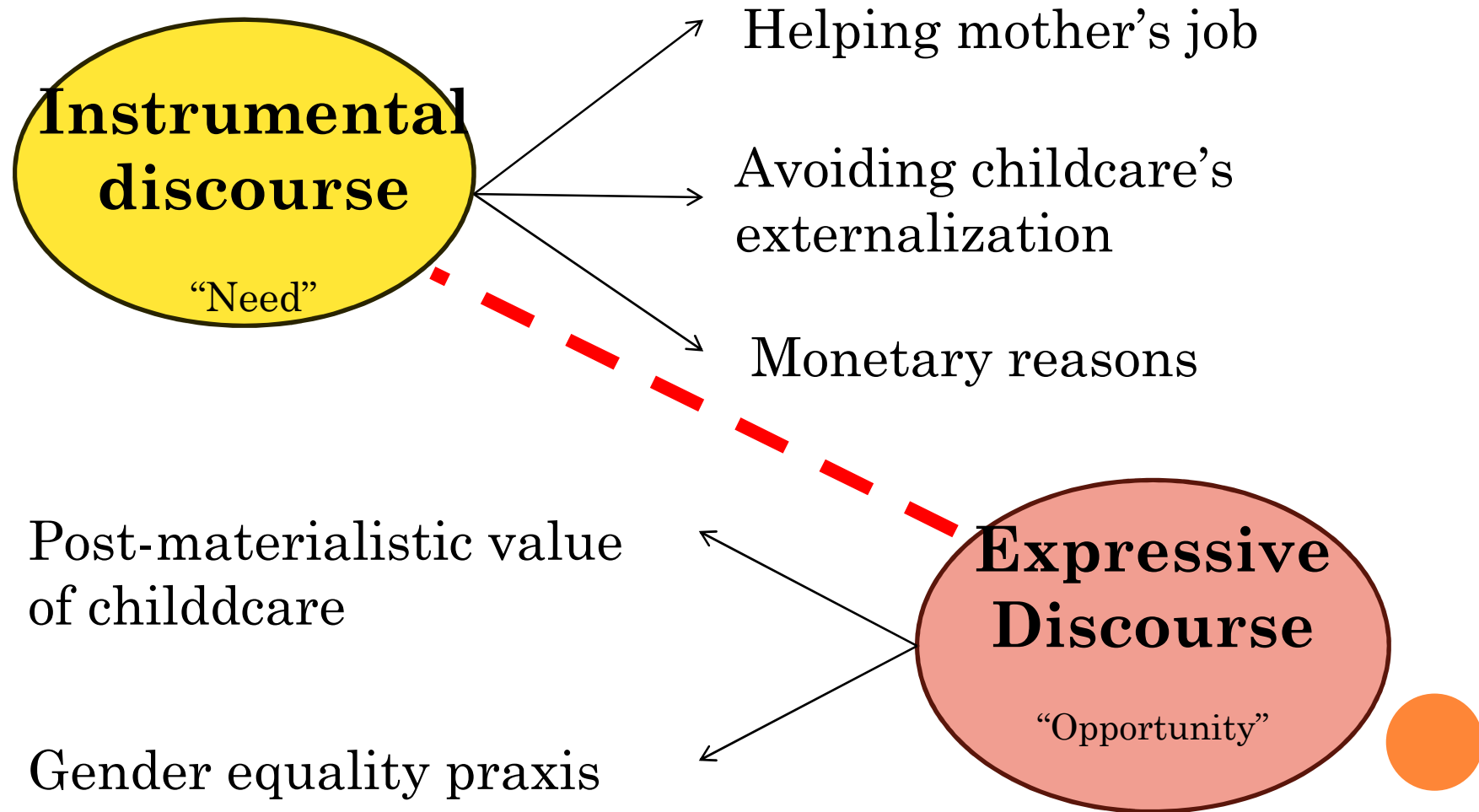
Age of Interviewees: Average: 39,3 years old (min: 32, max:50)

Age of youngest child: Average: 2,5 years old (min: 1; max: 7)

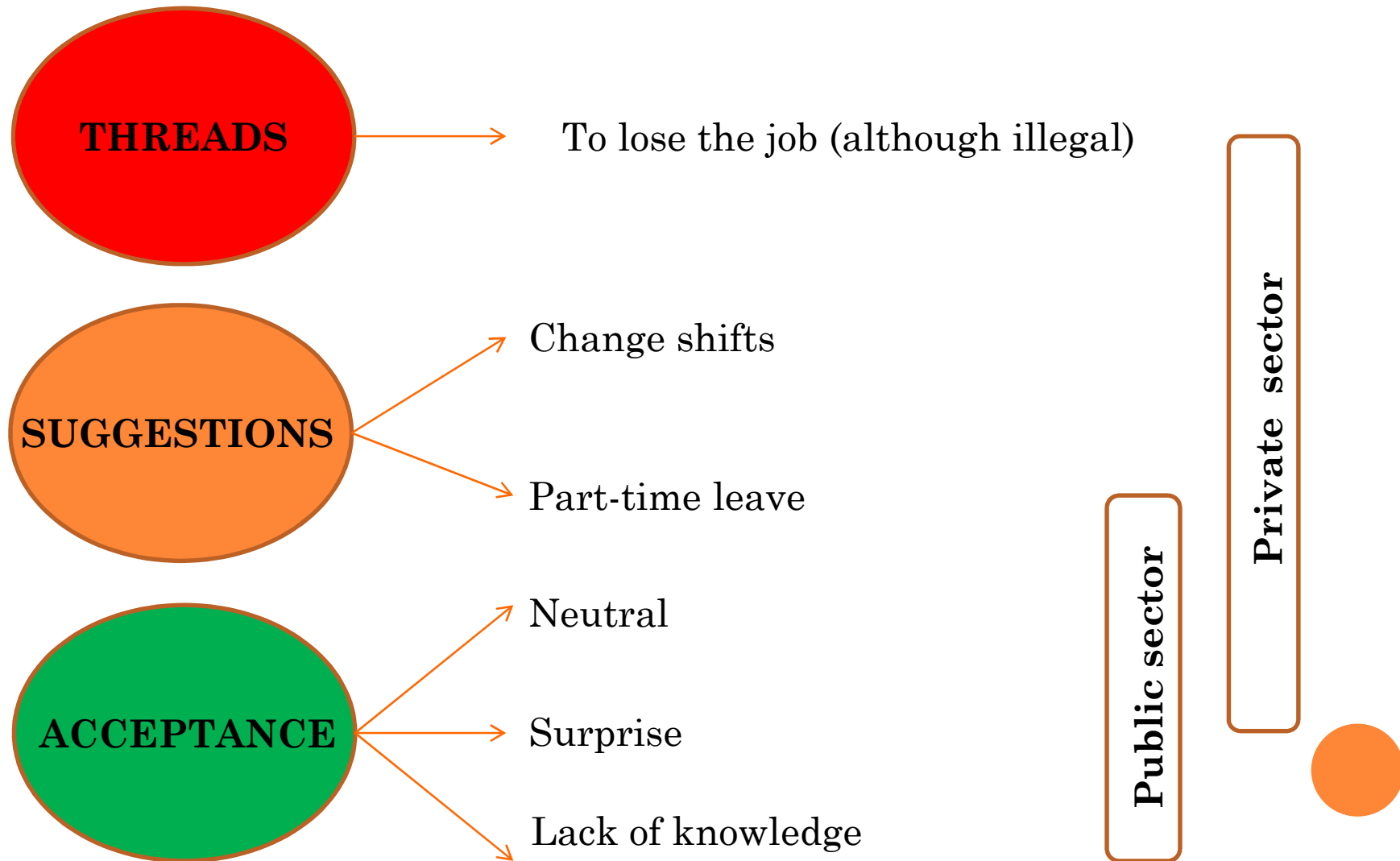
Level of education: Primary studies (0); Secondary Studies (5), University studies (5)

Educational homogeneity (5), Woman more studies (4), Women less studies (1);

Discourses about Reasons to Take a Leave Alone

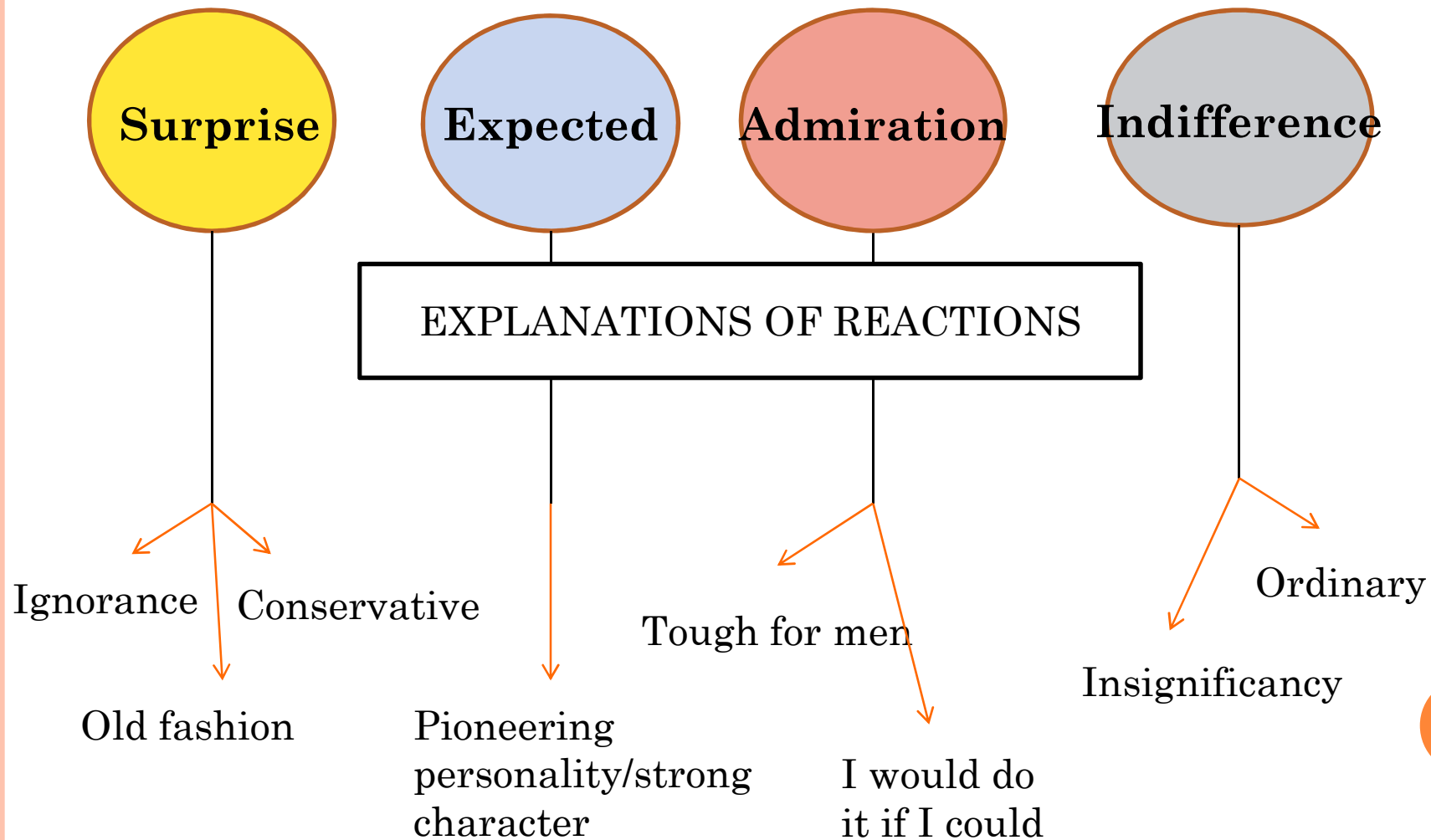


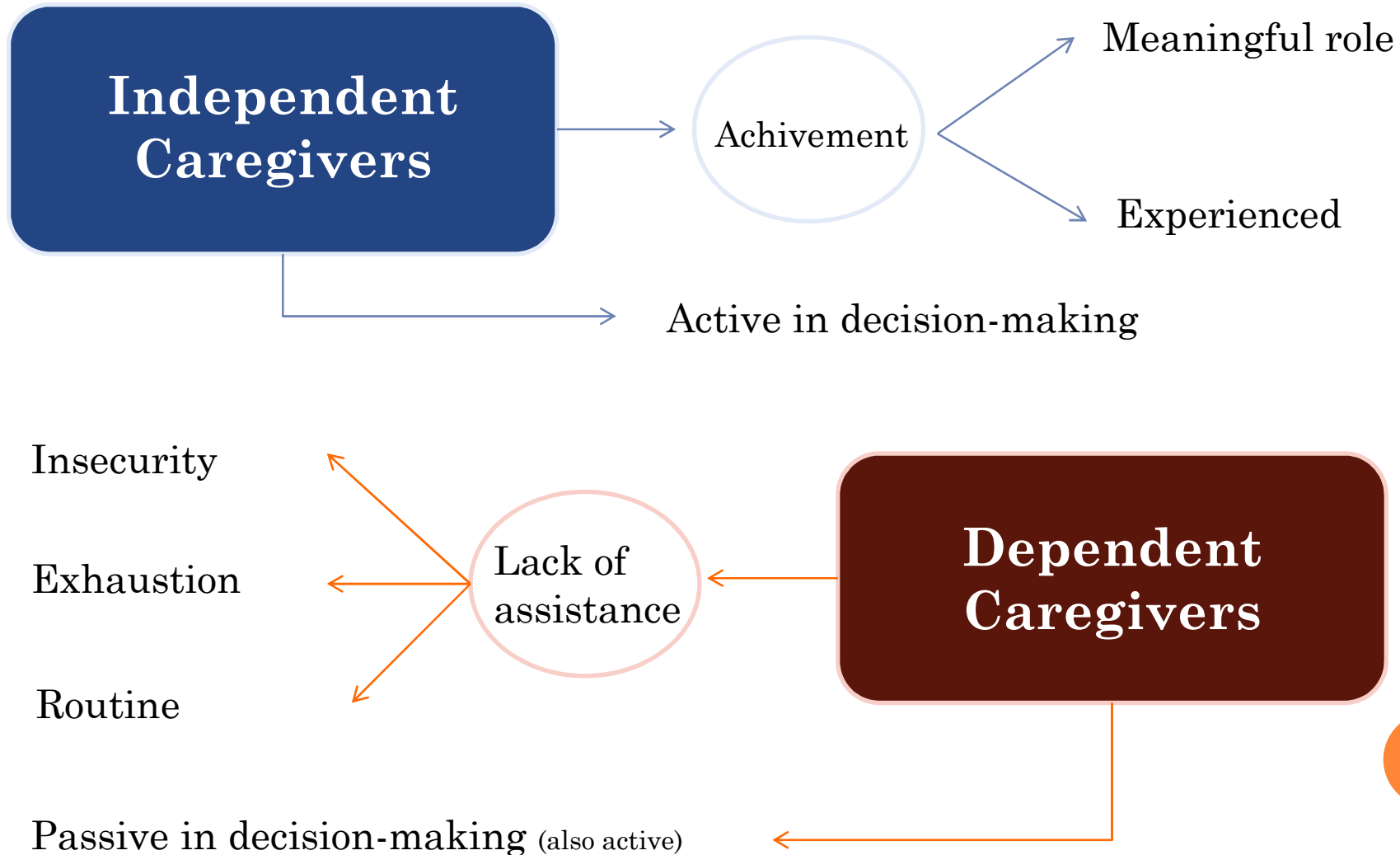
Pressures and Suggestions to Take a Leave Alone



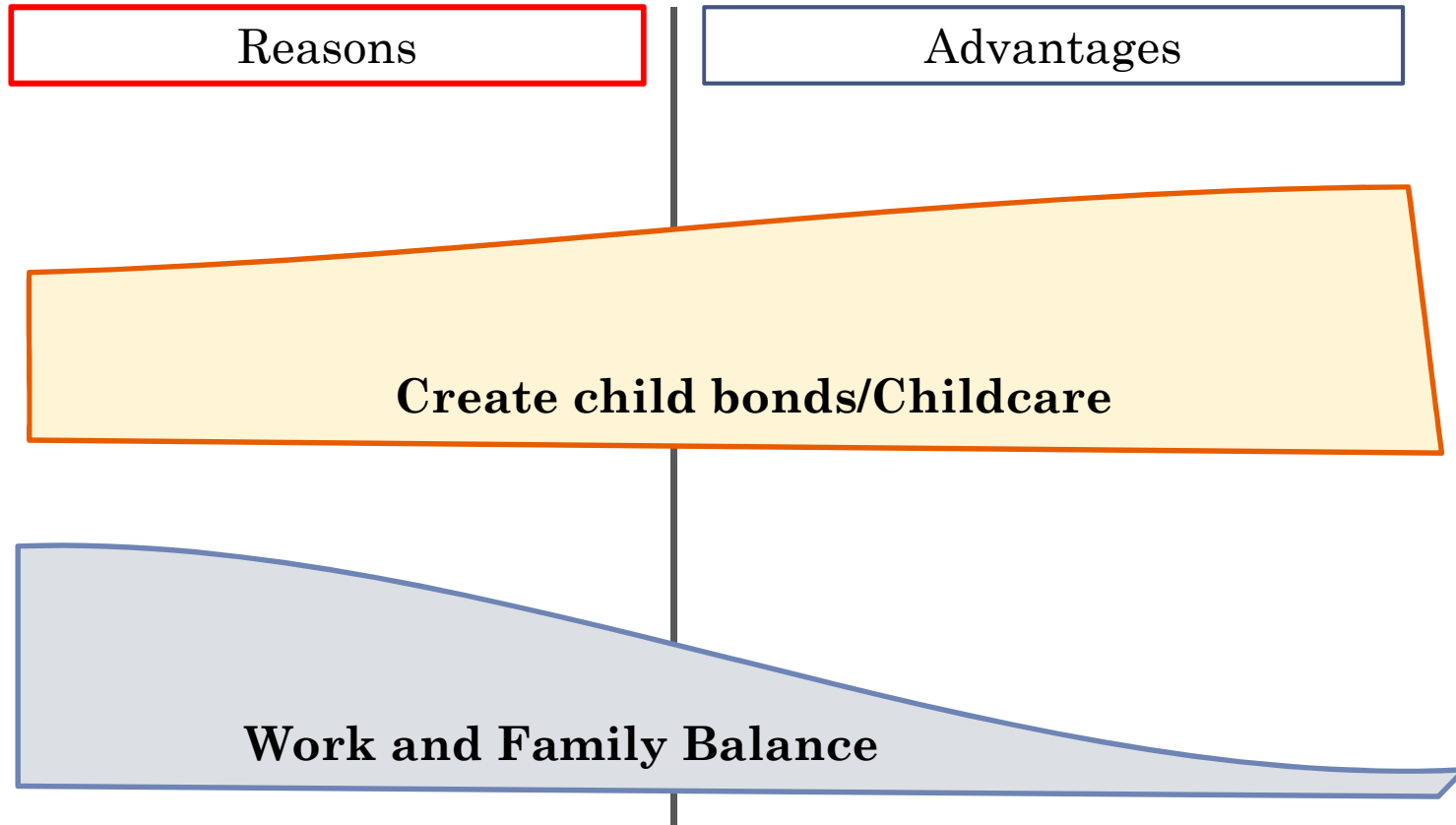
Social Environment Reactions

Necessity to explain their decision: Pioneering fathers (all kind of leaves)





Take a Leave Alone *Reasons Vs Advantages*



- Spanish regulation, although it facilitates men's use of leaves, does not promote fathers to use a leave alone
- Using a leave alone is extremely rare and only for fathers who want to establish a strategy of caring alone
- Ideological barriers do not seem to be very solid. We have observed that when there are incentives (bonus), even in traditional and highly masculinized environments, fathers use a leave alone without negative reactions. So it seems that when bonuses are set, the ideological barriers can be broken.
(i.e.: 4 weeks of breastfeeding break for civil servant men instead of 2 weeks for employee mothers)
- Discourses with elements of child bonds appears mostly among the advantages while work and family balance elements are in almost all the cases, the main reason to take a leave alone. Thus, it seems that motivations are less fathers' role related than the outcomes.