young women = „risky business“?
the maybe baby effect in the early career phase
draw from multiple sources, data (supply- & demand-side)
explain theory
present results
propose practical implications

*provide **NEW** insights*
“No self-respecting small businessman with a brain in the right place would ever employ a lady of child-bearing age.”

- Godfrey Bloom, British Politician & Member of the European Parliament (2004-2014)
“The problem is that (early career women) are likely to take time off at a number of times to have children… My wife has covered for maternity leave 7 times now…”

- Study Participant

Gloor (2014), Assistant Professor Exit Survey
women face employment disadvantages relative to men (Heilman, 2012; Koch, D’Mello, & Sackett, 2014)

not all women equally affected: mothers face greater employment obstacles (Benard & Correll, 2010; Correll, Benard, & Paik, 2007; Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2004; Fuegen, Biernat, Haines, & Deux, 2004; Heilman & Okimoto, 2008; Okimoto & Heilman, 2012)

**BUT** even childless women may experience motherhood penalties

intersection of age, gender, & parenthood: childbearing chance → risk
maybe baby
occupational disadvantages often stem from gender-based stereotypes

gender bias & motherhood:
parent status exemplifies stereotypically communal traits for women (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2004; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007)
lack of fit  (Heilman, 1983; 2001; 2012)

attributes & behaviors associated with effective leadership ≠ stereotypically female

women = poor fit for masculine settings, roles
(Heilman et al., 1989; Powell, Butterfield, & Parent, 2002)

social role theory  (Eagly, 1987)

historical sex distributions (breadwinners & homemakers) → genuine & perceived diffs

incongruity between gender stereotypes & leader attributes  (Eagly & Karau, 2002)
somewhat outdated, less relevant once professional roles achieved 

more women & mothers in workforce than ever before (OECD, 2004; She Figures, 2012; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014)

asymmetrical & changing parental leave policies „blurs“ lines „perceived risk“ distinct mechanism from previously studied
“maybe baby” effect

**risk:** “the multidimensional probability distribution of realizing losses on a range of dimensions” (Conchar, Zinkhan, Peters, & Olavarrieta, 2004)

**gender** triggers stereotypes of congruence

**age** cues the salience, potential fulfilment of these expectations

**decision-makers avoid risk** (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979)
why early career?

early career overlaps with childbearing years
(Adamo, 2013)

e.g., age of 1st child = 30, AP by 35
(ETH Faculty Affairs, 2013; Swiss Federal Statistical Office, 2013)

women maintain lion share of „unpaid work“
(OECD, 2009; Swiss Federal Statistical Office, 2014)
professional desire = clear (self-selected “in”) departure point for widening gender gap most research on leaders (barriers every step)

why assistant professors?

overview of experiments

perceived risk of hiring young women:
1. contingent on *believed* desire to have children
2. *compared* to young childless men, mothers, and fathers

contexts of asymmetrical parental leave
risk hypotheses

1. want children > don’t want children

2. childless women > childless men
   (childless women = mothers)
study 1

sample: 31 Executive MBAs in Switzerland

3 conditions: desire, no desire, control

risk (Cabrera, 2008)
“...risk you perceive in hiring the candidate.”
7-point scale ("no risk" – "extremely risky")

commitment (Heilman & Okimoto, 2008)
“...be committed; make work priority.”
7-point scale ("strongly disagree" – "strongly agree")
Travelers now, travelers always!
We could never do this with kids...
study 1: perceived risk
maybe baby
even very subtle interest in kids triggers risk evidence that risk diverges from commitment

study 2

replicate with between-subjects design compare with men, fathers, mothers
study 2

72 professors in Switzerland (12 Universities)
randomized, double-blind, between-subjects
study 2: stimuli

Participant ID: #149
Name: Stephanie
Gender: Female
Civil Status: Married, no children
Degree: PhD, obtained October 2010 from
Current position: Senior Research Associate

Education:
- M.A. in Business & Economics (2007)
- Ph.D. in Business Administration (2010)

Research experience:
- 2 articles published in B-level journals
- 2 refereed articles under review (1 A- and 1 B-level journal)
- 6 international and European academic conference paper presentations

Teaching experience:
- Teaching Assistant, Business Administration (assessment level)
- Lecturer, master’s level course in research methods
- Coach for 8 bachelor’s and 5 master’s students

Service activities:
- Referee for 2 C-level Business/Management journals
- Organizing committee member for summer methods workshop

Awards and Grants:
- Recipient of 3 previous conference travel grants
- Best conference paper for division (finalist)

Research stays:
- Visiting scholar in the United States for 1 term (6 months)

Languages:
- German (native), English (fluent), and French (intermediate)

Referees:
- 3 references from academic faculty/former research collaborators; all supportive

Research statement (excerpt): Conducting rigorous and relevant studies that not only inform the scientific literature, but also have concrete managerial implications, are key aims of my research. I strive to conduct studies that change how we conceptualize business strategy as well as everyday practices. Specifically, my main areas...

Teaching statement (excerpt): Being an effective and engaging teacher is my main aspiration, which I take special attention and make additional effort to achieve. For example, criticisms that arise in my teaching evaluations do not often reappear from one year to the next. Although I have several years of experience teaching at the bachelor’s and master’s level, my teaching skills continue to improve because I regularly engage in the meta-processes of teaching: reviewing comments and critiques from my students and colleagues, which, in addition to self-reflection, helps me grow as an educator.
study 2: perceived risk

![Bar chart showing perceived risk for Childless Woman and Man]
maybe baby
1 line on a CV = enough to increase risk
cildless women riskier than childless men
(yet equally risky as mothers)
multi-wave field research

559 (51% women) early career scholars
39.9% Swiss

data collected 1 year apart (2014, 2015)

gender, family & career

incivility: subtle disrespect from colleagues
career satisfaction, career withdrawal (turnover), career identity
are women targeted with >disrespect?
are mothers especially targeted?
how does this affect career identity?
- no differences in initial career identity
- BUT, women experience more incivility (especially childless women)
- affects career identity, career satisfaction, and career turnover
discussion

demand-side
young childless women = risky business
“maybe baby” from expected interruption

supply-side
women-especially childless-face incivility
negative consequences for career satisfaction, career withdrawal, career identity
practical implications

tracking
not (just) gender, but also parenthood status
don’t (just) compare childless women & mothers, also childless men & fathers
practical implications

selection

women-especially childless-greater hiring risk

gatekeepers = risk averse (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979)
practical implications

withdrawal

incivility $\rightarrow$ turnover; career identity $\rightarrow$ effort

(Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Cortina et al., 2013; Ibarra et al., 2013; Lobel & St. Clair, 1992; Lim et al., 2008; Lim & Lee, 2011)
practical implications

demand-side

decision-makers: awareness; tools (Kühberger, 1998; Thaler & Sunstein, 2008)

reframe employers’ conceptions of having children (i.e., > employee commitment, Aven, Parker & McEvoy, 1993; King, 2008; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; “population growth”)

practical implications

supply-side

proactively highlight inaccurate risk perceptions clarify involvement, desire to advance (King, 2008) surrounding pregnancy (Peus & Traut-Mattausch, 2008) job insecurity/econ. uncertainty (Proudfoot et al., 2015) cumulative effects (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Hoobler et al., 2014)
“...extensive laws originally designed to make it easier for women to combine work and family can actually have negative consequences for women and thus result in hurting the very persons they were designed to help.“

Peus & Traut-Mattausch (2008)
bias-free hiring = fair chances for qualified, educated, individual & societal investment ($)

implications for professoriate, students (Bettinger & Long, 2005; Carrell, Page & West, 2009; Neumark & Gardecki 1997; Johnson, 2014)

strive for teacher diversity = student diversity
The time for playing it safe
and a time for...

Risky Business
thank you.

Professor Bruno Staffelbach, Dr. Anja Feierabend

Professors Tyler Okimoto & Sandy Lim, Xinxin Li
Tanja Neve-Seyfarth, Dr. Karin Gilland-Lutz
UZH Gender Equality Office