

## Abstract

The first chapter examines how household living conditions are related to alternative allocations of control over decision-making in the household. This study has three main findings. First, more equally shared decision-making in a household is closely connected to better household living conditions. Second, while predominant decision-control accrued to any of partners is correlated with worse living conditions, this is more pronounced for women rather than men. Finally, the distribution of the mode of decision-making in households does not strongly predict the regime of family finances.

The second chapter contributes to the body of research indicating the presence of a parental preference for a particular gender of children. The main objective of this paper is to test between the two main explanations for the existence of such preference, namely differences in the costs of raising sons and daughters versus the gender bias (corresponding to parental utility derived from a child's gender or from characteristics exclusive to that gender). Our evidence corroborates the cost difference explanation in countries exhibiting daughter preference.

In the third chapter, I obtain three findings regarding the impact of the first-born child's gender on family stability. First, couples who have a first-born daughter aged 6-18 are more likely to divorce than those who have a son of that age. Second, single mothers with first-born daughters are less likely to marry. Third, couples who have a first-born daughter aged 0-5 are less likely to divorce than those who have a son of that age.