**MLE Research Design**  
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**What Drives Women’s Trade Preferences?**

Economists and political scientists have observed that women tend to be more protectionist than men regarding trade. However, the factors driving this protectionist tendency among women have not been extensively explored. Most research focuses on the economic interests behind trade preferences while neglecting psychological and societal factors. This study aims to address these gaps by examining women’s trade preferences and exploring how two specific factors—family burden and job insecurity (induced by immigration)—affect female protectionism, which are rarely tested in the existing trade opinion literature.

**Hypotheses:**

1. Women are more likely to oppose free trade when they are burdened by family responsibilities, such as household and childcare tasks.
2. Women are more likely to oppose free trade when they perceive their job security to be threatened by foreign immigrants.

These hypotheses suggest correlations rather than causal relationships. The first hypothesis is based on the idea that family responsibilities may limit women's ability to fully participate in the labor market, leading to greater opposition to free trade. The second hypothesis posits that women might perceive immigrants as a threat to job security, thereby increasing their opposition to free trade.

**Constructing/Recategorizing Variables:**

**Dependent Variable (DV):**  
The dependent variable is “female trade attitudes,” measured by individual responses to the question “V133: Import goods or strictly limit foreign goods” in the 1995-1998 third wave of the World Values Survey (WVS). Responses are categorized into six options: “1. Import goods,” “2. Limit imports,” “3. Other answers,” “-2. NA,” “-1. DK,” and “-4. Not asked.” Most studies use “Import goods” and “Limit imports” to construct a binary DV (pro-trade or anti-trade). However, this approach may introduce bias by ignoring options like “Other answers” and “DK,” which are more frequently selected by women who may be less confident about their economic knowledge. Therefore, I construct the DV as a multi-categorical variable: “support,” “limit,” and “other” (including “other answers” and “DK”). I use “support” as the base level to simplify interpretation, particularly focusing on “limit” (female protectionism).

**Independent Variables (IVs):**  
The main independent variables are family burden and job insecurity, measured using the WVS. To capture family burden, I use the following indicators: “V89 Marital status,” “V90 Number of children,” “V13 Parental responsibilities,” and “V220 Employment status” (housewife). “V89 Marital status” includes nine options, which I recategorize into two groups: “1” for married (including “Married” and “Living together as married”) and “0” for other marital statuses (including “Divorced,” “Separated,” “Widowed,” and “Single”). I treat “-2. NA,” “-1. DK,” and “-4. Not asked” as missing values.

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For job insecurity, I use “V63 Jobs for our nationality” and “V134 Immigration policy” to measure perceptions of job security threatened by immigration.

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**Control Variables:**  
I include eight control variables validated by previous research: age, class, education, occupation, union membership, religion, and national pride, all available in the WVS.

**Model:**  
Given the multi-categorical nature of the DV, I employ a multinomial logit model to analyze the data.

**Results:**

* **Main IVs:**
  + **Statistically Significant:**
    - Positive coefficients: Parental responsibilities (0), Housewife (0).
    - Negative coefficients: Jobs for nationality (0), Immigration policy (0).
  + **Not Significant:** Marital status (0.945), Number of children (0.054).
* **Control Variables:**
  + Except for education (0.106) and occupation (0.18), other control variables are statistically significant: age, class, union membership, party affiliation, religion, and national pride.

**Interpretation:**

Compared to “support trade”:

1. Women who place a higher value on parental responsibilities are more likely to oppose free trade.
2. Women who are housewives are more likely to oppose free trade.
3. Women who believe that jobs should be reserved for nationals are more likely to oppose free trade.
4. Women who believe that immigration should be restricted to protect jobs are more likely to oppose free trade.

These findings partially confirm the first hypothesis and fully support the second hypothesis.