

# Gender norms and income misreporting within households

Anja Roth<sup>†</sup> and Michaela Slotwinski<sup>‡</sup>

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## Abstract

We revisit the prominent finding that women's incomes are disproportionately often observed just below the income of their partner. So far, this bunching has been explained by couple formation or couples' labor market decisions. We propose an additional mechanism: income misreporting in surveys. Drawing on survey and administrative data, we show that income misreporting accounts for the discontinuity in the distribution of women's relative incomes just below the point where a woman outearns her partner. This misreporting is best explained by the role of gender norms in individuals' self-portrayals and self-perception.

*Keywords:* gender norms, women's relative income shares, combination survey and administrative data

*JEL classifications:* D10, J01, J16

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<sup>†</sup>University of Basel, Faculty of Business and Economics, Peter Merian-Weg 6, 4002 Basel, Switzerland. Phone: +41 (0)61 207 33 14, email: anja.roth@unibas.ch.

<sup>‡</sup>University of Basel, Faculty of Business and Economics, Peter Merian-Weg 6, 4002 Basel, Switzerland. Phone: +41 (0)61 207 33 75, email: michaela.slotwinski@unibas.ch.

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