

Gendered time use: Inequalities in domestic work, care, paid work, and leisure

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The First Comparative Look at British Workers' Gendered Working From Home and Well-being: Before, During, and After COVID-19

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Working from home, a crucial flexible working arrangement, has experienced significant transformations in its implications for well-being and gender inequality due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Utilising harmonised UK time use data collected before (2014 to 2016), during (2020 to 2021), and after (2023) the pandemic, this study objectively analyses British workers' home working practices through 24-hour time diaries, examining the impacts on well-being from a gendered perspective. Employing a robust combination of analytic methods, including linear and logistic regression, sequence analysis, and fixed-effect regression, this research provides multidimensional insights into the duration and patterns of home working among British workers and explores their effects on daily and instantaneous well-being. The findings reveal that the prevalence of working from home significantly increased during Covid-19 and has remained high post-pandemic. Notably, home working is more prevalent among men and childless women, particularly during and after the pandemic. Conversely, mothers report fewer opportunities to work from home, potentially due to lower levels of enjoyment experienced while working remotely. Furthermore, the study highlights a significant intersectional influence of home working, gender, and parenthood on workers' daily and instantaneous well-being. Specifically, childless men derive substantial well-being benefits from home working, whereas mothers exhibit notably lower satisfaction levels. Overall, these findings offer critical and timely evidence to support policymakers in developing innovative strategies aimed at addressing persistent gender inequalities in childcare responsibilities and employment conditions in the UK.

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The Gendered Landscape of Informal Caregiving: Cohort Effects and Socioeconomic Inequalities in England.

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This study offers the first detailed cohort analysis of the gender care gap, examining how age, individual poverty, and neighbourhood deprivation intersect to shape patterns of unpaid caregiving. Using data from the UK Household Longitudinal Study, we apply two complementary methods: (i) multilevel mixed-effects logistic regression to analyse caregiving probabilities by sex across age cohorts, accounting for the hierarchical structure of the data; and (ii) MAIHDA (Multilevel Analysis of Individual Heterogeneity and Discriminatory Accuracy) to assess whether these factors interact additively or multiplicatively.

Our findings show that individuals in later-born cohorts are generally less likely to provide informal care, with this decline being more pronounced among women. The gender care gap is most evident in the 1949–1958, 1959–1968, and 1969–1978 cohorts, particularly between the ages of 50 and 60. Both poverty and area-level deprivation significantly affect caregiving inequalities. The gender gap is wider among individuals above the poverty line and those living in more deprived areas. Visual analyses from the MAIHDA models indicate that some subgroup outcomes diverge from additive predictions, highlighting the role of intersectional, multiplicative effects.

These findings underscore that the gender care gap is not uniform but instead varies by cohort, age, income status, and geography. Policy responses must therefore move beyond one-size-fits-all approaches, recognising how gendered caregiving inequalities are shaped by overlapping social determinants.

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“Since you are home, please do laundry” Couples’ flexible working and housework division: the role of relative income and occupational status in the UK.

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The COVID-19 pandemic triggered a rapid and enduring shift in working practices, with flexible working arrangements (FWAs)—particularly working from home (WFH) and flexitime—becoming a normal practices in many workplaces. While these arrangements especially taken by the male partner may allow him to undo gender and foster gender equality in domestic labour, existing research offers mixed findings, partly due to inconsistent attention to the type of flexibility used, who uses it, and under what conditions. This study examines how couples’ use of WFH and flexitime affects the division of housework among heterosexual couples in the UK, focusing on variations by relative income, occupational class, and pandemic context.

Using rich dyadic panel data from the UK Household Longitudinal Study (2010–2024), we apply linear hybrid models to assess both within-couple changes and between-couple differences in the female partners’ share of housework. Unlike pre-pandemic research which found limited effect of men’s WFH, our results show that the male partner’s use of WFH alone is associated with a smaller domestic burden for women—but primarily in households where women earn the same or more. In traditional male-breadwinner households, the effect is negligible. Moreover, this is more pronounced in the strict lockdown period with forced stay-at-home measure compared to the pre-pandemic. We also found both men and women’s flexitime use alone can be associated with her smaller housework burdens, particularly among lower occupational couples.

Our findings underscore the importance of examining flexible working arrangements at the couple level and contextualizing their effects over time and within couple relative income and occupational dynamics. We argue that flexibility should not be framed solely as a “women’s issue.” Instead, it should be recognized as a resource that men can actively engage to foster family well-beings as well.

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Age, Period, and Cohort Effects on the Gender Division of Paid Work and Unpaid Work in East Asian and Western societies between 1980s and 2020s

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Aims: This paper investigates progress in the gender revolution in paid and unpaid work time across 10 East Asian and Western societies.

Methods: Drawing on harmonized time-use data from the Multinational Time Use Study (MTUS) and national surveys, we employ Age-Period-Cohort (APC) models to disentangle how gendered time allocations evolve across the life course, historical periods, and generational cohorts.

Results: We found time distribution patterns vary significantly across countries. As age increases, the gender gap in paid and unpaid work hours follows an inverted U-shape, peaking between the ages of 30 and 34. The gap is largest in Japan and South Korea, followed by Italy, with Finland showing the smallest disparity. While the paid work time gap remains largely unchanged in Japan, South Korea, and Italy over time, other countries show signs of convergence. In contrast, the unpaid work time gap has narrowed in nearly all surveyed countries. Over cohorts, the gaps in both paid and unpaid work time have generally narrowed across all surveyed countries. However, the trends in the closing of the gender gap in time use vary by educational groups, and the educational gradient in paid work and unpaid work time varies across age, period, and cohort.

Contributions: This study provides new insights into the gender revolution by disentangling the distinct roles of age, period, and cohort in shaping gendered time use across diverse institutional contexts, highlighting both progress toward equality and persistent disparities.

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