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**WORK, INEQUALITY, AND THE DUAL CAREER
HOUSEHOLD**

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Work, Inequality, and the Dual Career Household

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ABSTRACT

Dual career households have the potential to be the most egalitarian of all households. However, while paid work is increasingly distributed evenly between career men and women, household time remains a social constraint for many women. This paper considers the distribution of work among dual career households, using weekly time-use trends, reflecting on the fit of household models and the effectiveness of current work-focused policy. Descriptive analysis, random-effects probit regression, and case households provide an empirical focus on a post-industrial economy — the UK — using the 1993-2009 *British Household Panel Survey*. Long hours, especially overtime, persist in managerial and professional occupations. Meanwhile, housework burdens women with up to fourteen hours of additional work per week. Preferences for shorter hours remain greater among women, reflecting the impact of household time on paid work. The evidence presented in this paper suggests that the distribution of household labor renders dual career households less than egalitarian.

KEYWORDS

Dual career households, time-use, equality, work-time, household time

JEL Codes: J16, J22

INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the balance between employment and other aspects of time-use (including housework, caring and commuting) in a post-industrial economy — the UK — among men and women who live in dual career households. Time-use is divided into various forms of activity. Work-time is used to describe the time spent in work for an employer (working hours; paid and unpaid overtime). Commuting time is necessary work-related activity, but is distinct from work-time. Household time describes time-use in other work-related activity including housework, and caring. In dual career households, combining work and home is likely to be particularly complicated. These households have the potential to be

the most egalitarian of all households (Irene Hardill and Dan Wheatley, 2009: 239). Dual career households do not fit the traditional male-breadwinner, female-homemaker model of the household. However, combining dual careers with the home may require the (short term) prioritization of one partner's career at the expense of the other partner's career (Irene Hardill, 2002). Female partners who are mothers have a stronger attachment to the labor market after childbirth than do mothers in other households. But, greater labor market equality does not necessitate a more egalitarian distribution of tasks within the home. This raises the question of the suitability of various models of the household in describing dual career households.

This paper aims to assess the suitability of various models of the household and determine whether work and household time are distributed with relative equality in dual career households, or if conflict and inequality are present. This paper considers the range of household models/structures in order to establish a foundation for analysis of time-use and the distribution of activities in dual career households. The theoretical discussion is developed through an empirical investigation of patterns of weekly time-use among dual career households in the UK, i.e. households in which more than one member is in a managerial, professional or associate professional and technical occupation. The distribution of other elements of time-use in these households — specifically household time — is therefore especially interesting as there is no obvious lead and secondary career present. In the UK economy managers and professionals are categories of workers who work the longest hours (Dan Wheatley, Irene Hardill and Bruce Philp, 2011). This group is also important because of the growing significance of it as a category of household; the number of dual career households in the UK increased by over 300,000 from 1984-1991, totaling over 1.2 million (Irene Hardill, Anne Green and Anna Dudleston, 1997: 314), and by 2001 they

numbered 2.23 million, or 10 per cent of all households (Dan Wheatley, 2009). This increase has been driven by increasing female labor market participation — the appropriation of supplementary labor (see Karl Marx, 1976) — and polarization into work-rich-time-poor and work-poor-time-rich households (Linda McDowell, Diane Perrons, Colette Fagan, Kath Ray, and Kevin Ward, 2005).

Growth in dual career households, and the lengthy working hours found among managers and professionals are important as in recent years the UK Government has passed key legislation relating to work. The *Working Time Regulations* (WTR) were introduced in 1998. This policy offers the leave entitlements granted under the European Working Time Directive (EWTD) (Council Directive 93/104/EC), alongside a limit on weekly working hours of 48 hours per week. However, in contrast to other European nations a voluntary opt-out has been retained in the UK allowing working hours above this limit (BERR, 2008). The Work-Life Balance Campaign (WLBC), implemented in spring 2000, aimed to raise employers' awareness of the benefits to business from introducing policies and practices which help employees obtain a better balance between work and the rest of their lives (BERR, 2010).¹ Meanwhile, the *Flexible Working Regulations* (FWR), in place since 2003, offer workers the right to request flexible working (BERR, 2010). Achieving balance is critical for dual career households, who face particular difficulties in managing complex routines of paid work and household labor. The distribution of various activities — forms of time-use — is therefore of key importance in understanding the structure of dual career households, and the relative effectiveness, vis-à-vis these households, of current policy initiatives.

The empirical analysis conducted in this paper uses 17 waves of the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) between 1993 and 2009. This paper presents important findings reflecting on

time-use and the division of labor within dual career households in a post-industrial economy — the UK — thus some findings are representative of the UK case only. However, these findings have cognizance to other post-industrial societies. The analysis suggests overall reductions in working hours during the sample period. However, profound levels of dissatisfaction remain evident with the extent of work-time (although there is an overall reduction in preferences for shorter hours in some occupations where reductions in work-time are reported). Hours remain long in managerial and professional occupations, especially in terms of hours of overtime. Meanwhile, housework continues to burden women with up to 14 hours of additional work per week. Findings suggest that inequality persists relative to household responsibilities — and to a diminishing extent in terms of paid employment — resulting in significant constraint during the working lives of many women. These households are complex and dynamic. Difficult decisions are sometimes made. For example, one partner's career may be prioritized in the short term. This brings into question simple characterization of these households as egalitarian. Dual career households fall some way short of an egalitarian distribution of activities. Findings further highlight ineffectiveness in current policy, which does not directly motivate positive change in the distribution of household time.

DUAL CAREERS AND HOUSEHOLD MODELS

Within households, individuals share activities such that there are divisions in a range of economic roles (including producer, laborer, investor, and carer) that are often highly gendered, although with some measure of overlap (Irene van Staveren, 2010: 1130). Roles have different economic impacts within and outside the household and can result in conflict. Time-use among dual career households is complex, and requires some level of compromise, especially in relation to levels of paid and unpaid work-time (Lynette Harris, Carley Foster,

and Paul Whysall, 2007). Feminist economists argue that individuals are embedded in a household context and that individual choice is constrained by others. Further, models of individual choice considered the distinguishing characteristic of economics by economists including Gary Becker (1976: 5), do not reflect demand for robustness, but instead promote the continuation of gendered bias in economic modeling and analysis (Julie Nelson, 1995: 137). Nevertheless, the focus of mainstream analysis remains on 'paid' work. However, a person's ability to participate in the labor market, undertaking paid work, is dependent not only upon their own 'choice', but upon the amount of unpaid work they undertake, and their responsibilities within the household. The labor market participation of men and women is therefore distinct.

Women still undertake the bulk of unpaid work in most households (Carmen Sirianni and Cynthia Negrey, 2000: 62; McDowell et al: 2005). The classification of unpaid housework as either work or leisure represents a key area of past conflict between economists, and indeed *Census* takers (Nancy Folbre, 1991). Past research has argued that a focus on paid work, which values equality solely in regards to women's participation in the labor market, ignores important impacts of household activities such as caring (Andrea Doucet, 1995: 278-9).

Unpaid housework is now recognized by some mainstream economists as an important variable in rational choice models of labor supply. There is also an admission that housework is not a subcategory of leisure which had previously been the assertion of mainstream theory (Constance Faulkner, 1986: 56). Definitions of unpaid work have been broadened by feminist theory to include housework and, importantly, care (Susan Himmelweit, 1995).

However, the idea of ubiquitous 'choice' for many is still questioned. Feminist economists suggest that women's labor force participation does not simply reflect labor supply

preferences, but instead their culturally assigned role of unpaid worker in the household. Linda McDowell (2004: 151) argues that current policy does not adequately challenge the gendered role of women as primary care givers, a role which remains after centuries of reinforcement by social institutions. Inequalities remain in the home, and at work, despite increasing numbers of women participating in the labor force, and changes in the nature and occupational structures of work (Diane Perrons, Colette Fagan, Linda McDowell, Kath Ray, and Kevin Ward, 2005). Women's unpaid work functions as a social constraint to their labor force participation (van Staveren, 2010: 1130). They remain the primary care givers in many households (Irene Hardill, 2002; Inmaculada Garcia, Jose Alberto Molina and Victor Montuenga, 2011). Women, particularly those that are married/co-habiting and have dependent children, can only 'choose' between paid work outside the home and unpaid work inside the home. Where women engage in paid work this often results in a 'double-shift' (Alexandra Jones, 2003: 7). The distribution of household time within a household can consequently result in the exploitation of one partner, often the female. Martha MacDonald, Shelley Phipps and Lynn Lethbridge (2005) use Canadian data to show that this results in greater levels of stress among women as they combine paid work with lengthy hours of unpaid work. Increasing pressure is felt by households for both partners to remain in some form of paid employment. Many women's choice may thus be limited to unpaid work in the home *plus* either full-time or part-time paid work outside the home.

Households can be broadly categorized as, (1) 'traditional' illustrated by the male breadwinner, female homemaker model, (2) 'transitional' characterized by the collective model, adult-worker model family/one and a half worker model, or (3) 'egalitarian', where an egalitarian household is characterized by men and women sharing housework equally (Arlie Hochschild and Anne Machung, 1990). Mainstream economic theory does provide conditions

under which a non-self-centered approach to decision-making can be modeled using the concept of the family or household. However, the mainstream approach is characterized by unitary models of the household, such as that proposed by Becker (1976), which consider the household as a single decision-making entity, led by a male 'dictator'. Under Becker's model households maximize utility, subject to time and budget constraints. Becker assumes that intra-household dynamics are harmonious, suggesting a 'fair' distribution of activity. This results in similar average amounts of residual time, for activities including pure consumption and sleep, by gender. While Becker's model allows analysis into decision-making, it ignores the potential for exploitation and prioritization within the household. The male dictator in Becker's model only fits the male-breadwinner, female-homemaker (traditional) model of the household, severely limiting its application to contemporary analysis.² The male career takes precedence, and the prioritization of 'his' career would significantly influence household decision-making (Hochschild and Machung, 1990; McDowell, 2004). Women, in the past, often took career breaks to have children. However, this trend has decreased in recent years as more women remain committed to their careers. This trend is also driven, in part, in the UK by government employment and welfare policies which encourage employment among mothers (McDowell et al, 2005, 446). Women remain in employment by making use of both market and non-market (family based) care (Harris et al, 2007).³ However, decisions over work, care and other household activities do not reflect self-interest among women as per the rational choice model (Himmelweit, 2002). The increasing fluidity of work (and relationships) and rising household working hours, indicate the male-breadwinner, female-homemaker model, is increasingly incompatible with social reality (Gosta Esping-Anderson, 1999; Jane Lewis, 2001). This raises the question of how to characterize the modern household, particularly dual career households where both partners engage in demanding paid employment.

The limitations of the ‘traditional’ model have led to reinterpretation, into the collective model, which regards households as consisting of several individuals with their own rational preferences. According to this model decisions made within households result in Pareto efficient outcomes (Frederic Vermeulen, 2002; Garcia et al, 2011).⁴ Dual career households may also follow more closely the ‘adult-worker model family’ as defined by Lewis (2001: 154). This model is characterized by all adults within a household being engaged in the labor market. However, much of the discussion in Lewis (2001) is concerned with ‘one and a half worker’ (or dual earner) households where one partner is engaged in full-time paid employment while the other, often the female, is engaged in part-time work for at least some of their careers (Lewis, 2001: 155). Dual career households differ in this respect as both partners more often remain engaged in full-time employment, hence there is no obvious lead career. Women in these households most closely represent ‘work-centered’ women, as defined in Catherine Hakim’s (2000) preference theory. Even within this group of women, though, there are nuanced variations, and sometimes contradictions, which render Hakim’s simple categorization unsuitable (Jane Lewis and Mary Campbell, 2008).

Dual career households are arguably the most egalitarian, or potentially so, as both partners have invested in cultural and symbolic capital (of which education is a significant component), as well as having a deep commitment to the labor market, as articulated through the pursuit of a career (Hardill and Wheatley, 2009: 239). These households are perhaps the most closely representative of the ‘communist’ households defined by Harriet Fraad, Stephen Resnick, and Richard Wolff (1994:38). Decisions within these households may be made collectively, and household activities distributed evenly as per the ‘communist’ household. However, while decisions over paid work follow a more egalitarian model, the tasks of social

reproduction remain a largely female preserve. Importantly, commitment to the labor market does not substantially alter the number of household tasks women perform. Nor does it result in a significant redistribution of household labor between men and women commensurate with their paid labor (Sirianni and Negrey, 2000: 62). The unequal allocation of household tasks only reinforces the 'traditional' fundamental inequalities in economic power between male and female partners (Irene Hardill and Robert Watson, 2004: 21). Empirical evidence suggests that even within dual career households conflict and gender inequality in decision-making and time-use remain present (McDowell et al, 2005; Wheatley, 2009). Some degree of both conflict, and compromise, are present in dual career households.

Having considered a range of household models/structures it appears that dual career households may fall some way short of egalitarian. This is not to suggest they follow the traditional model, but that simple categorization is unsuitable given the complex and dynamic nature of these households. Labeling dual career households as egalitarian ignores inequality which may be present in these households. Decisions are made that facilitate equality, especially in regards to decisions made directly relating to paid work. However, sometimes difficult decisions may be made which actively constrain and limit one household member for the overall perceived benefit of the household (as per the collective model). These can include decisions relating to the provision of care (McDowell, 2004), the short or long term prioritization of one partner's career at the expense of the other (Hardill, 2002), and spatial mobility (Lynn Dobbs, 2007: 95). Whether these decisions are rational and result in a positive outcome or act to preserve gender exploitation and inequality is, however, a subject for debate and investigation. The extent to which decisions have further knock-on effects for paid employment is also a key concern, as are the links between trends in paid and unpaid work and current policy initiatives, such as the WLBC and FWR. This paper seeks to unravel

some of these issues by exploring patterns of time-use among dual career households. The analysis attempts to ascertain whether dual career households can be considered as egalitarian in their distribution of time-use and activities, and whether policy changes during the last 17 years have stimulated positive change in the distribution of time-use within dual career households in the UK.

METHODOLOGY

Time-use among men and women in dual career households is explored using a three stage analysis of the *British Household Panel Survey* (BHPS), 1993-2009 (17 waves).⁵ The BHPS provides a sample of between 716 (1993) and 1,312 (2009) workers in dual career households, where dual career households are defined as households where more than one individual is employed in a managerial, professional, or associate professional occupation. Using this data allows analysis of a range of elements of weekly time-use, namely: work-time (hours worked per week and hours of overtime per week (paid and unpaid)); commuting hours per week; and household time (housework hours per week, and caring hours per week (for the ill or elderly)).⁶ The number of hours spent caring for dependent children is not, however, collected as part of the BHPS. Residual time i.e. that not spent in work, will include time spent caring for children as well as pure leisure/consumption time, and sleep. The analysis allows longitudinal exploration of time-use, and importantly includes dates prior to and after key policy change in the UK.

Descriptive analysis is developed using regression techniques to explore preferences for shorter hours, considered here to represent inherent dissatisfaction with work-time (and other elements of time-use), using the BHPS panel, 1993-2009. Application of regression analysis to the exploration of time-use is consistent with that of other recent work exploring time-use

patterns, such as Garcia et al (2011), who use regression analysis of panel data in their exploration of caring within households, and Philp and Wheatley (2011) which uses logistic regression to explore preferences for shorter hours using cross-sectional data extracted from the BHPS. For limited dependent variable models, we only have two choices, logit and probit models which generate similar results. The linear probability model is inappropriate. Random-effects probit regression is used in this paper, with separate regressions performed for men and women, and for full-time and part-time workers. The models consider working individuals aged 16-65.

Preferences for shorter hours (P) is the dichotomous dependent variable in each model, where yes = 1, and no = 0. The relevant question in the BHPS is, '*Thinking about the hours you work, assuming that you would be paid the same amount per hour, would you prefer to work fewer hours than you do now?*'.⁷ This variable is regressed against a range of time-use, employment, and household characteristics. Time-use includes working hours excluding overtime ($HOURS$), overtime hours ($OVER$), commuting time ($COMMUTE$), housework hours ($HSWRK$), caring hours 5-19 ($CARE5-19$), and caring hours 20+ ($CARE20$). Employment characteristics include managerial occupation (MAN), professional occupation ($PROF$), employed in the public sector ($PUBLIC$), and gross annual labor income ($INCOME$). Household characteristics considered are age (AGE), number of dependent children ($DEPCH$), higher degree education ($EDUCHD$), first degree education ($EDUCFD$), other higher education ($EDUCH$), 'A' level education ($EDUCA$), and GCSE/'O' level education ($EDUCO$). Associate professional and technical occupation, caring hours 0-4, and no qualifications are reference categories. Using these variables the following estimation equation can be derived for full-time and part-time men and women respectively:

$$\begin{aligned}
P_{it} = & \alpha_0 + \beta_1 HOURS_{it} + \beta_2 OVER_{it} + \beta_3 COMMUTE_{it} + \beta_4 HSWRK_{it} + \beta_5 CARE5-19_{it} \\
& + \beta_6 CARE20_{it} + \beta_7 MAN_{it} + \beta_8 PROF_{it} + \beta_9 PUBLIC_{it} + \beta_{10} INCOME_{it} \\
& + \beta_{11} AGE_{it} + \beta_{12} DEPCH_{it} + \beta_{13} EDUCHD_{it} + \beta_{14} EDUCFD_{it} + \beta_{15} EDUCH_{it} \\
& + \beta_{16} EDUCA_{it} + \beta_{17} EDUCO_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}
\end{aligned}$$

The final stage of analysis explores within-household time-use patterns, drawing on specific cases of dual career households from the BHPS. Use of specific cases does generate questions over generalizability. However, cases have been selected in order to provide a representative sample from the BHPS. Households have been chosen based on conforming to the dual career definition, in respect to occupation, during the sample period. Further, cases have been selected based on successive response from the beginning to the end of the sample period (although some are missing values for individual years).⁸ The combination of descriptive and regression analysis techniques and in-depth cases represents an innovative use of the BHPS, allowing triangulation of research findings following other research into dual career households (for example Hardill and Watson, 2004; Wheatley, 2009).

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS: BRITISH HOUSEHOLD PANEL SURVEY 1993-2009

Descriptive Analysis

The data extracted from the BHPS suggests that, overall during the sample period, work-time declined among members of dual career households. This is evident in Figures 1 and 2, which present the distribution of time-use activities during the sample period by gender and occupation.⁹ The reduction in work-time suggests some success arising from the WTR (and to a lesser extent the WLBC/FWR). For example, men working full-time in private sector managerial roles report a decline from around 43 hours per week to around 41 hours per week, with patterns during the sample period supporting a general decline in hours among other occupation groups. This is similarly evident among female private sector managers

(four hour per week decrease). However, hours remain long among careerists, consistent with the findings of other research (see Wheatley et al, 2011). Moreover, work-time (hours including overtime) in certain occupation groups (private sector managers in particular) continues to exceed the WTR maximum. There are also some important exceptions to the trend of declining hours. In associate professional roles, full-time male private sector workers' hours' remained relatively static between 1993 and 2009 at around 39 hours per week. This in itself represents an important finding as some occupation groups actually report very little change.

FIGURE 1 and 2 HERE (SIZE APPROX: 1 page each)

In respect to gender differences, employer-related time-use is longer, overall, among men. Full-time working hours, and hours of overtime, are lengthier among men in managerial and professional occupations (see Figures 1 and 2). However, there remain some notable exceptions. For example, the hours of overtime reported among public sector professional women are particularly long, and are the longest of any occupation group, varying between seven and nine hours per week, on average, during the sample period. Women's work-time in these occupations is therefore similar to their male counterparts. Commutes act as an important additional time constraint, especially for men, as they are longer among men in all occupation groups (averaging approximately 5.4 hours per week). However, it should be noted that commutes do not vary greatly, on average, between men and women (who commute, on average, 4.8 hours per week). Further, the commute does not represent as significant a constraint for men as household time does for women.

Women's household time is distinctly greater, suggesting a less than egalitarian division of household labor. Hours of housework average 9.8 hours per week among full-time women in dual career households, almost double that of men (5.3 hours). Meanwhile, the reported hours of care (for the ill or elderly) among women are also longer on average than for their male counterparts, with male public sector managers offering the only exception (see Figure 1). Lengthy household time is particularly severe for female professionals (and associate professionals). On average during the 17 year sample period, women working full-time in public sector professional occupations, although reporting shorter working hours (37.6 hours per week) than their male counterparts (39.5 hours per week), report lengthy hours of overtime (8.5 hours), housework (9.9 hours), and some of the longest average reported hours of care (1.2 hours). Of course this reported time-use does not include the additional burden of hours spent caring for dependent children, which would have an additional impact on the time-use of these women. Child care responsibilities are sometimes divided between partners, but often are not (Hardill, 2002). Also important among these women is that overall time-use has remained relatively static and lengthy during the sample period.

This is a particular concern as some women — notably public sector professionals — are those whose patterns of time-use render current policy ineffective in directly influencing and driving change. Where work-time is shorter this may seem acceptable. However, other aspects of time-use create particular constraint for some members of dual career households, notably female public sector professionals. These women report an average drop in working hours of around two hours per week. However, they report very little change in overall time-use, which remained around 60 hours per week during the whole sample period. This is due to lengthier hours of housework, longer commutes, and greater reported caring responsibilities (for the ill and elderly). For these women overall time-use has remained

almost static for 17 years. Current policy (WTR) is limited in that it cannot impact the work-time of those working under 48 hours, on average, per week. More importantly, though, it is household hours — especially housework which accounts for anywhere up to 14.1 hours per week during the sample period — which are particularly lengthy and act to create and sustain constraint among women.

The BHPS explicitly asks individuals about their preferences for reduced work-time.

Preferences for reductions in hours are greater among women. This finding is consistent over the sample period and between occupation groups, although some short term variations are found. On average, during the 17 year sample period, the proportions of respondents reporting preferences for shorter hours were greatest among full-time public sector professional (56.0%) and private sector managerial women (56.8%). These preferences are considerably higher than the 41.7% of male public sector professionals, and the 49.9% of male private sector managers.¹⁰ Moreover, the proportions of professional women reporting preferences for shorter hours remained relatively static before and after key policy change. Given the relatively shorter hours of work-time among women, on average, this suggests that other aspects of time-use may be driving this dissatisfaction.

Regression Analysis

The regression analysis explores this apparent dissatisfaction in more detail. The results of the regression analysis, summarized in Figure 3, suggest important distinctions in the drivers of preferences for shorter hours between men and women. Housework and the presence of children within the household are key factors influencing women's dissatisfaction with their work-time (also likely reflecting broader dissatisfaction with their patterns of time-use). This corresponds with the descriptive analysis. Importantly, only among full-time women is

housework a driver of preferences for reduction in hours. Housework and the presence of children are negatively correlated with men stating preferences for shorter hours. This is perhaps indicative of men taking on the lead career when children are present in the household, possibly feeling financial compunction to work longer hours as they take the role of breadwinner. This corresponds with the findings of previous work in this area (see Philp and Wheatley, 2011). These findings further highlight the gendered norms which remain present within the household, even among careerists, and result in inequality in the distribution of household activities, reflected in dissatisfaction with time-use.

FIGURE 3 HERE (SIZE APPROX: 1/2 PAGE)

Other factors are more consistent between genders. Overtime appears to be a key driver among both men and women. Working hours reveal further gender divisions, however, as lengthier hours drive dissatisfaction among women, but not men. Lengthier commutes are likely to increase dissatisfaction with working hours among full-timers. Meanwhile being married, having a higher annual labor income, and caring responsibilities are all correlated with greater preferences for shorter hours. Higher levels of education are likely to increase preferences for shorter hours among full-timers, while the opposite is found among part-timers. Analyzing preferences by age the models suggest a non-linear age relationship (reflected in conflicting age and age²/100 coefficients). Dissatisfaction grows with age, but decreases beyond a point. This is likely to again reflect the impact of dependent children during the middle part of an individual's life. Managers are more likely to state preferences for reductions in hours, while full-time female professionals are particularly more likely than associate professionals to report dissatisfaction. This corresponds with the descriptive findings and may reflect the lengthier hours of overtime worked by professionals, creating

dissatisfaction with work-time. Interestingly, those in the public sector are less likely to state preferences for reductions in hours, even though professional women in this sector report high levels of overtime. This perhaps reflects the greater availability of flexible working arrangements in this sector, suggesting some success derived from current work-life balance and flexible working policy.

The analysis reveals that household time, including housework, caring, and the presence of children, creates greater dissatisfaction with hours of work among women, especially those working full-time. Women remain more heavily constrained by household activities (Sirianni and Negrey, 2000: 62; McDowell, 2005). The descriptive analysis revealed that these activities (housework and care) take up substantial time — up to 19.6 hours per week excluding caring for dependent children — and create difficulties for women who attempt to combine complex routines of paid employment with the household, effectively resulting in the double shift (Jones, 2003: 7). Returning to Figure 2, this is clearly evident in the time-use of women in dual career households. A substantial proportion of their time is spent performing housework in particular. This is in stark contrast to the distribution of time-use reported among men in Figure 1. The regression analysis has further identified household factors as central in driving dissatisfaction among women. Household time can therefore be considered a key source of inequality, contradicting any assertion of egalitarianism among dual career households.

Household Case Studies

Developing the descriptive and regression analyses four cases are now presented of within-household time-use patterns among dual career households derived from the BHPS. The cases presented here detail the time-use patterns of a managerial-professional household

(household one), an all professional household (household two), an all managerial household (household three), and a professional-associate professional household (household four).

Household one, Irene (aged 46 at date of interview in 2009) and Ian (aged 47), are employed in public sector professional and private sector managerial occupations respectively. Within this household some important changes have occurred in time-use. For example, Ian's household contribution has risen over time. However, he still performs 3-4 hours per week less housework than Irene who reports, on average, 11 hours per week of housework (see Figure 4). Also, important to note is that Ian's increased contribution does not seem to have resulted in a substantial reduction in Irene's hours of housework. Irene's commitment to the labor has not resulted in a redistribution of household labor commensurate with her paid labor (Sirianni and Negrey, 2000: 62). As Juliet Schor argued, reflecting on her study of the US, changes in technology create new household tasks (while reducing the burden of others), and higher standards within the household environment (1993: 86-8). The most dramatic change to Ian's time-use is his commutes which have trebled in length since 2006 (now 15 hours per week). Interestingly, within this household Ian was promoted by his employer (since 1995), from a private sector associate professional role, to be a private sector office manager in manufacturing in 2002. Both partners have since earned similar annual incomes, approximately £40,000 in 2009. The commutes could be a lagged impact of Ian's change in role with his employer, reflecting greater mobility in his role, which requires Ian to travel to work by car for the added flexibility this offers (Hardill and Wheatley, 2009). Irene, employed in education, consistently reports working hours shorter than Ian. However, overall work-time is similar due to the long hours of overtime reported by Irene which average 15.2 hours per week during the 17 year sample period. These patterns are consistent with the descriptive findings among female public sector professionals summarized in Figure 2.

Overall, this household reflects relative equality in terms of work-time, and some improvement is evident in Ian's contribution to household time. Even so, Irene remains burdened with the majority of household responsibilities.

FIGURE 4 HERE (SIZE APPROX: 1/3 PAGE)

Household two is comprised of Chris and Amber (both aged 48 in 2009), who are both employed in public sector professional occupations. The key story in this household relates to the impact of Amber's career break (to have and care for their two children) and subsequent return to work. Between 1993 and 1998 Amber was not employed. During this time Amber, in addition to the time spent caring for their children, reported significant time-use associated with both housework (averaging 20 hours per week), and caring for an ill or elderly relative (averaging 14.9 hours per week). Following a return to work in higher education in 1999, there is a noticeable adjustment period during which Amber continued to perform extensive household responsibilities, although with some reduction in housework, *in addition* to paid work. Amber's time-use during this period peaked at a staggering 90 hours per week in 2000 and 2002. Amber interestingly does not report preferences for shorter hours. This may present evidence of Amber sacrificing her work-life balance, at least in the short term, in the pursuit of a career (Jane Sturges and David Guest, 2004: 17). Amber's hours of housework and time spent caring have since diminished. Within this household Chris's time-use is much more focused on work-time, with little household input, suggesting a less than egalitarian division of household labor. Housework has remained a female preserve, maintaining inequality in the home (Perrons et al, 2005). Chris (£35,000 in 2009), employed in secondary education, earns more than Amber (£23,000), as Amber works reduced hours (30 hours per week). This may act as one driver of the prioritization of Chris's career. The major variations

in his time relate to peaks in overtime. Interestingly there was a substantial reduction in Chris's overtime around 1998, perhaps influenced by the WTR policy. However, this had little long term effect. Overtime hours again increased, with the highest levels of overtime reported during 2008 (32 hours per week).

FIGURE 5 HERE (SIZE APPROX: 1/3 PAGE)

Household three are Sarah and Alan (both aged 47 in 2009), who are both employed as private sector managers in Marketing and ICT respectively, and have been for the entire duration of the BHPS sample (note that Sarah was not interviewed prior to 1997 as Alan was a sole respondent living alone). In this household both partners report working hours of around 40 hours per week during the entire sample period. With the addition of overtime this household provides evidence of the relative ineffectiveness of current policy in addressing problems of overwork among certain occupations. These managers both report hours well over the WTR maximum working week as a result of high levels of overtime, perhaps indicating they may have both opted-out of the WTR. Both partners consistently report preferences for shorter hours (other than when Alan lived alone). The decision over working hours therefore could reflect a trade-off in order to achieve a desired income, as both partners report substantial annual earnings of £78,000 (Sarah) and £150,000 (Alan) in 2009. This corresponds with the findings of other research which investigated preferences for shorter hours among managerial and professional workers (Wheatley et al, 2011).

The key change evident in the time-use of this household is Sarah's increasing contribution. Since 1997 Sarah's overall time-use has increased from around 70 hours per week to around 90 hours, and a reported 113 hours in 2009. This leaves Sarah with less than eight hours per

day for consumption/leisure, sleep, and caring for their children, contra Becker's (1976) assertion of similar average amounts of residual time. The increase in Sarah's time-use is predominantly a result of increasing levels of overtime since a change of employer in 2004, but also long and increasing hours of housework (15 hours or above per week). Sarah and Alan have two children. Sarah is likely to undertake the greater bulk of childcare responsibilities (Perrons et al, 2005; Garcia et al, 2011). The time Sarah uses to care for their children will only add to the problems of overwork facing this partner within this household. Alan's time-use fluctuates in the short term with changes in levels of overtime, but from 2004 onwards Alan has consistently reported shorter overall time-use, with little household input. This household provides evidence of the influence of gender norms in determining the distribution of household activities, and further suggests a less than 'communist' or egalitarian decision-making process in place within some dual career households (Hardill and Watson, 2004: 21). Sarah is burdened with lengthy hours of household time even though work-time remains comparable (and extensive) between partners.

FIGURE 6 HERE (SIZE APPROX: 1/3 PAGE)

Within household four, Jatinder (aged 37 in 2009) and Dhaljit (aged 43) work in public sector associate professional and professional/associate professional occupations respectively (prior to 1995 Dhaljit was not Jatinder's partner and thus was not interviewed). This household for much of the sample period represent a relatively egalitarian example among the dual career households in the BHPS. It further provides evidence of household decision making resulting from a change in Dhaljit's employment in 2006. Prior to this date both partners worked in associate professional occupations and reported similar work-time of around 35-38 hours per week, with little or no overtime (Figure 7). However, following Dhaljit's change in

employment he began working significant amounts of overtime (10-30 hours per week). Subsequently Jatinder, a midwife, has taken on the burden of household tasks, accounting for some 14 hours per week. She has since reported strong preferences for reduction in hours. This change is representative of the dynamic nature of dual career households. Difficult decisions made within households, and may reflect a compromise in the allocation of certain activities (Harris et al, 2007). Dhaljit's career has taken precedence with his move from careers advisor to professional employment in secondary education. Interestingly, Dhaljit remains the lower earner within this household, earning around £28,000 annually, compared to Jatinder's £40,000 per year. This is particularly surprising given that since Dhaljit's change in employment, Jatinder has taken on the burden of household tasks, which were previously shared much more evenly between partners. However, these decisions may have been made by these careerists to off-set Dhaljit's increased overtime, with a reduction in his household input. This redistribution could, however, limit the possibilities of Jatinder similarly enhancing her career, and has created significant dissatisfaction with time-use.

FIGURE 7 HERE (SIZE APPROX: 1/3 PAGE)

The four case households present interesting and important findings reflecting on the time-use of dual career households in the UK between 1993 and 2009. Within these households work-time is increasingly divided between partners with relative equality as both pursue their career. However, household time, and in particular housework remains a particular burden on women's time-use resulting in extensive overall hours, evidenced at up to 90-113 hours per week. The additional burden of housework on women's time may act as a social constraint on their careers (van Staveren, 2010: 1130). Evidence emphasizes the dynamic nature of these households. Work-life balance is sometimes sacrificed in the pursuit of a career, or desired

level of income. Meanwhile, some households make the decision to prioritize one partner's career, or redistribute time-use between partners, following changes in household structure or employment (household four). Some improvements are also evident in the contribution of men to household tasks (household one). However, in other cases household time reflects the continuation of gender norms (household two and three), compounding the descriptive findings. These findings suggest that many dual career households are less than egalitarian.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has explored the balance between employment and other aspects of time-use (including housework, caring and commuting) among men and women who live in dual career households in a post-industrial economy — the UK — to ascertain whether categorization of these households as egalitarian is appropriate. Time-use has been explored empirically using the *British Household Panel Survey* (BHPS), 1993-2009. This data allows longitudinal exploration of patterns in time-use, and importantly includes dates prior to and after key policy change in the UK. Initial descriptive analysis has been developed through random-effects probit regression, and the exploration of four case households drawn from the BHPS.

Dual career households do not fit the traditional male-breadwinner, female-homemaker model of the household (Hochschild and Machung, 1990). They have the potential to be the most egalitarian of household types. However, it may be inappropriate to attempt to provide a simple categorization of these households, as they are both complex and dynamic in structure. Decisions are made within these household that facilitate equality, particularly in relation to paid work. However, difficult decisions are made which may act to constrain and limit one household member for the overall perceived benefit of the household. These can

include decisions relating to the provision of care (McDowell, 2004), the prioritization of one partner's career at the expense of the other (Hardill, 2002), and spatial mobility (Dobbs, 2007: 95). These decisions may be rational and result in a positive outcome, but can result in inequality within the household.

Descriptive analysis of the BHPS data suggests overall reductions in working hours during the sample period. However, profound levels of dissatisfaction remain evident with the extent of work-time. Hours remain long in managerial and professional occupations, especially in terms of hours of overtime. Work-time (hours including overtime) in certain occupation groups continues to exceed the WTR maximum. These trends are present among full-time men in private sector managerial occupations, but also women, especially in professional occupations. Meanwhile, housework continues to burden women with up to fourteen hours of additional work per day. Preferences for shorter hours remain greater among women, reflecting the impact of household time on paid work. These findings are compounded by the regression analysis which identifies household factors, including housework, caring, and the presence of dependent children as key drivers of dissatisfaction among full-time career women. These findings suggest that inequality vis-à-vis a 'double shift' (Jones, 2003: 7) persists relative to household responsibilities resulting in continued constraint during the working lives of many women. These findings, further, highlight the ineffectiveness of current policy which does not directly motivate positive change in the distribution of household time.

The four case households present important additional findings, as well as compounding a number of findings from the descriptive and regression analysis. Within these households work-time is increasingly divided between partners with relative equality as both pursue a

career. Evidence suggests that current policy has not, though, had the desired effect of eroding long hours and overwork among certain groups, notably private sector managers and public sector professionals. Perhaps of more concern, however, is that current policy does not actively promote improvements in the distribution of household time. Household time, and in particular housework, remains a particular burden on women's time-use, resulting in extensive overall hours of work evidenced at up to 113 hours per week. The additional burden of housework on women's time may act to constrain their careers, suggesting significant inequality is present among careerists. Dual career households are complex and dynamic contradicting simple characterization. The distribution of household time, often, reflects the continuation of gender norms. The evidence presented in this paper suggests that the distribution of household labor renders dual career households less than egalitarian.

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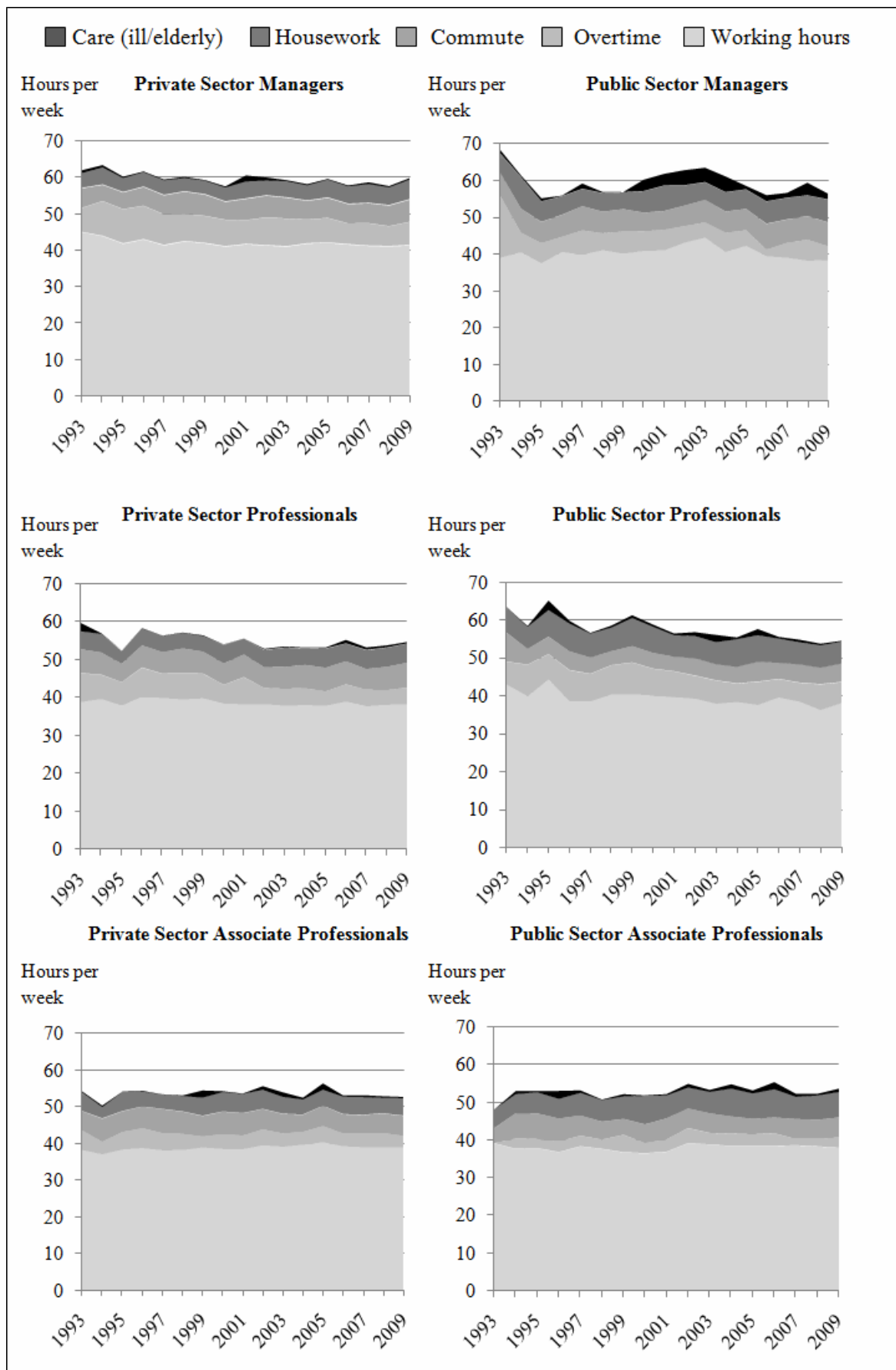


Figure 1: Male time-use, 1993-2009 (BHPS)

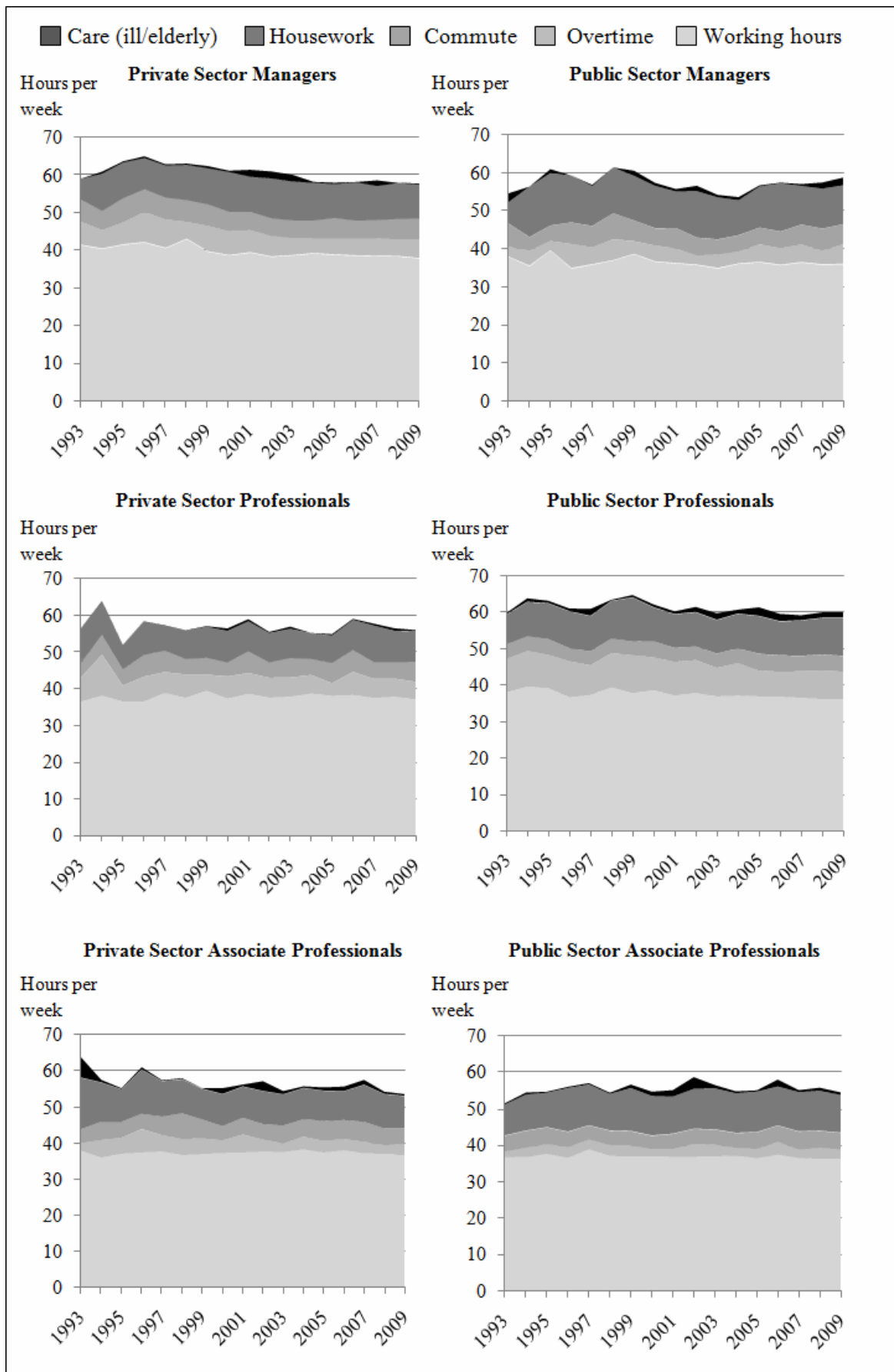


Figure 2: Female time-use, 1993-2009 (BHPS)

Random-effects probit regression models								
Dependent: preferences for shorter hours								
Parameter Estimates								
	Women				Men			
	Part-time		Full-time		Part-time		Full-time	
	β	S.E.	β	S.E.	β	S.E.	β	S.E.
Constant	-1.555***	.519	-3.486***	.248	-4.540***	1.004	-3.118***	.212
Working hours	.007	.004	.007***	.001	-.016*	.009	-.001	.001
Overtime hours	.026*	.015	.039***	.002	.061**	.026	.036	.002
Commute	.004**	.002	.002***	.001	.006*	.003	.002***	.001
Housework hours	-.002	.004	.006**	.002	-.048***	.015	-.002***	.003
<i>Caring hours: reference is 0-4 hours</i>								
Caring hours 5-19	.058	.134	-.016	.065	-.251	.369	.113*	.068
Caring hours 20+	.008	.209	.134	.120	.109	.598	.227	.147
<i>Major occupation group: reference is associate professional and technical</i>								
Managers	.148	.099	.187***	.042	.629***	.190	.281***	.036
Professionals	-.023	.099	.104**	.047	-.142	.207	.023	.041
Public sector	-.005	.085	-.079	.040	.076	.213	-.169***	.045
Annual income	.022***	.004	.003***	.001	.005	.004	.004***	.001
Age	-.024	.027	.096***	.013	.159***	.050	.087***	.011
Age ² /100	.026	.032	-.091***	.016	-.185***	.058	-.085***	.013
Married	.272***	.096	.235***	.038	.110	.187	.118***	.039
Number of children	.042	.044	.011	.022	.029	.090	-.076***	.017
<i>Level of education: reference is no qualifications</i>								
Higher degree	-.145	.202	.446***	.094	-.033	.297	.271***	.081
First degree	.027	.123	.476***	.060	-.069	.244	.403***	.059
Other higher	-.087	.101	.225***	.045	.186	.196	.233***	.042
A level	.125	.123	.332***	.059	-.359	.234	.176***	.053
GCSE/'O' level	-.098	.125	.303***	.058	-.477*	.247	.361***	.056
Model Diagnostics:	Log likelihood =		Log likelihood =		Log likelihood =		Log likelihood =	
	-1596.824		-8692.098		-439.427		-11757.808	
	$\chi^2 = 69.08$, p-value		$\chi^2 = 730.11$, p-		$\chi^2 = 62.25$, p-value		$\chi^2 = 897.00$, p-	
	0.000		value 0.000		0.000		value 0.000	
	Observ. = 4,239		Observ. = 14,651		Observ. = 1,228		Observ. = 20,817	
	Indiv. = 1,536		Indiv. = 3,549		Indiv. = 656		Indiv. = 4,163	
	Obs. per indiv.,		Obs. per indiv.,		Obs. per indiv.,		Obs. per indiv.,	
	min = 1, avg. 2.8,		min = 1, avg. 4.1,		min = 1, avg. 1.9,		min = 1, avg. 5.0,	
	max = 16		max = 16		max = 15		max = 16	

Source: British household panel survey, 1993-2009.

Notes: ***, **, * respectively refer to p-values less than 1 percent, 5 percent and 10 percent. Data is for working individuals aged 16-65 in managerial, professional, and associate professional occupations (SOC).

Figure 3: Random-effects probit regression models: preferences for shorter hours, 1993-2009
(BHPS)

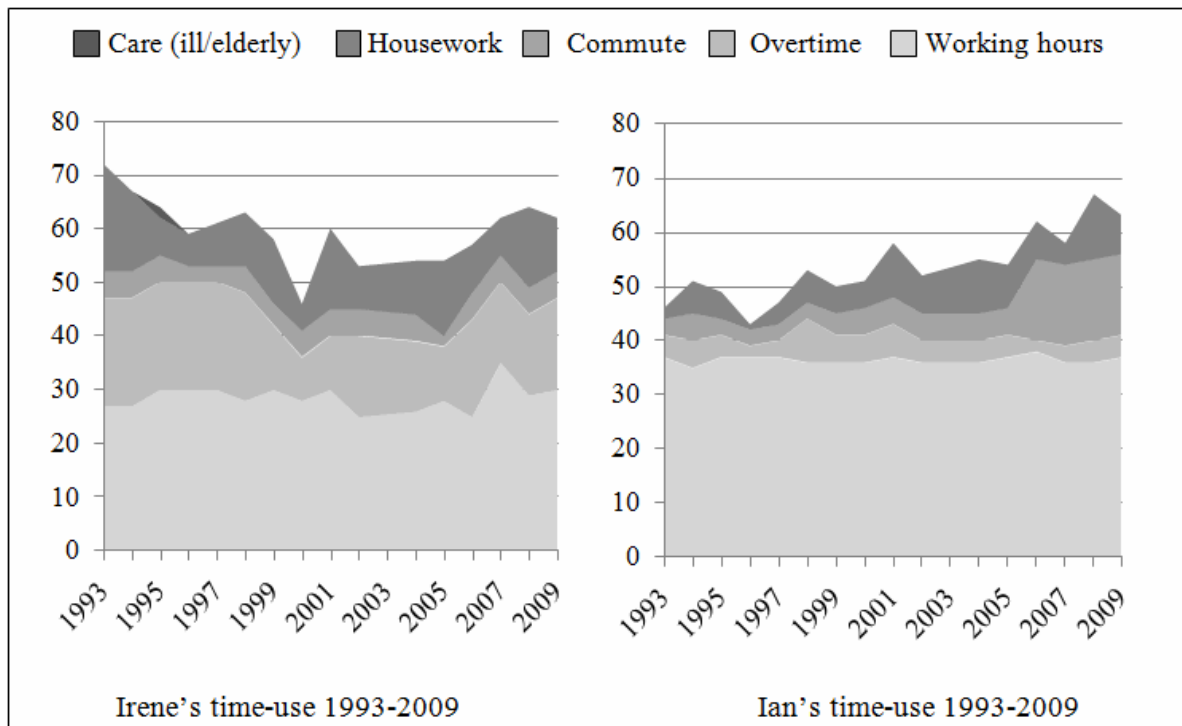


Figure 4: Irene and Ian, 1993-2009 (BHPS)

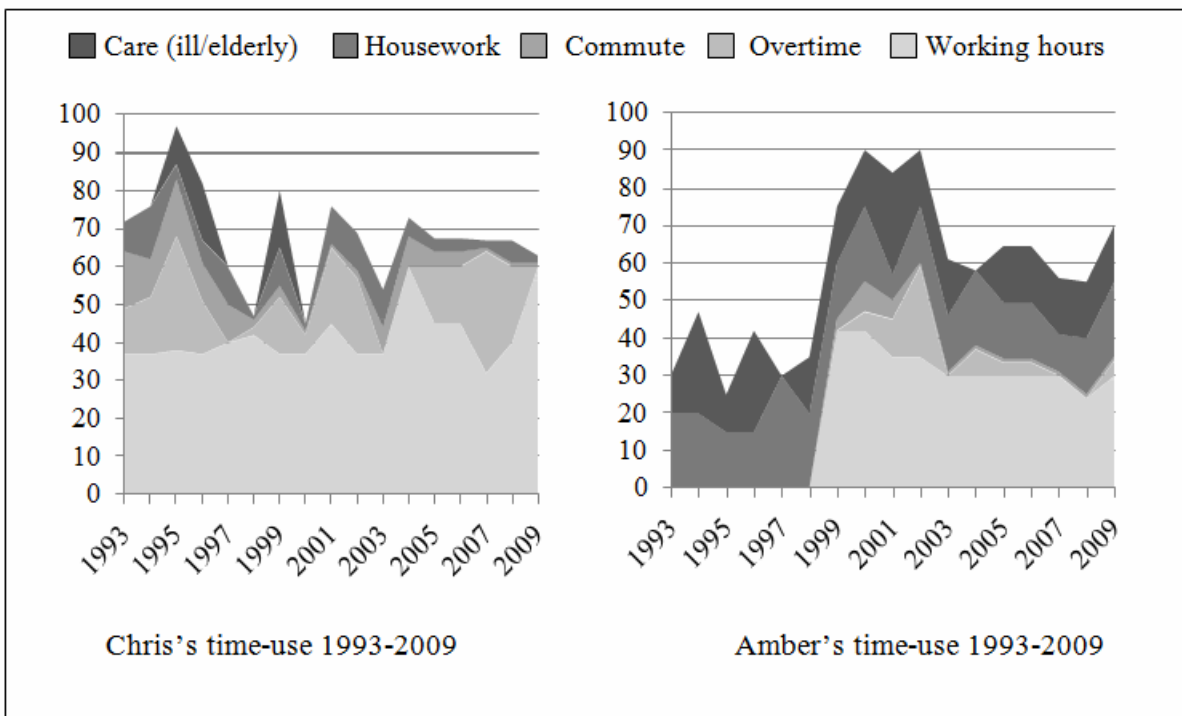


Figure 5: Chris and Amber, 1993-2009 (BHPS)

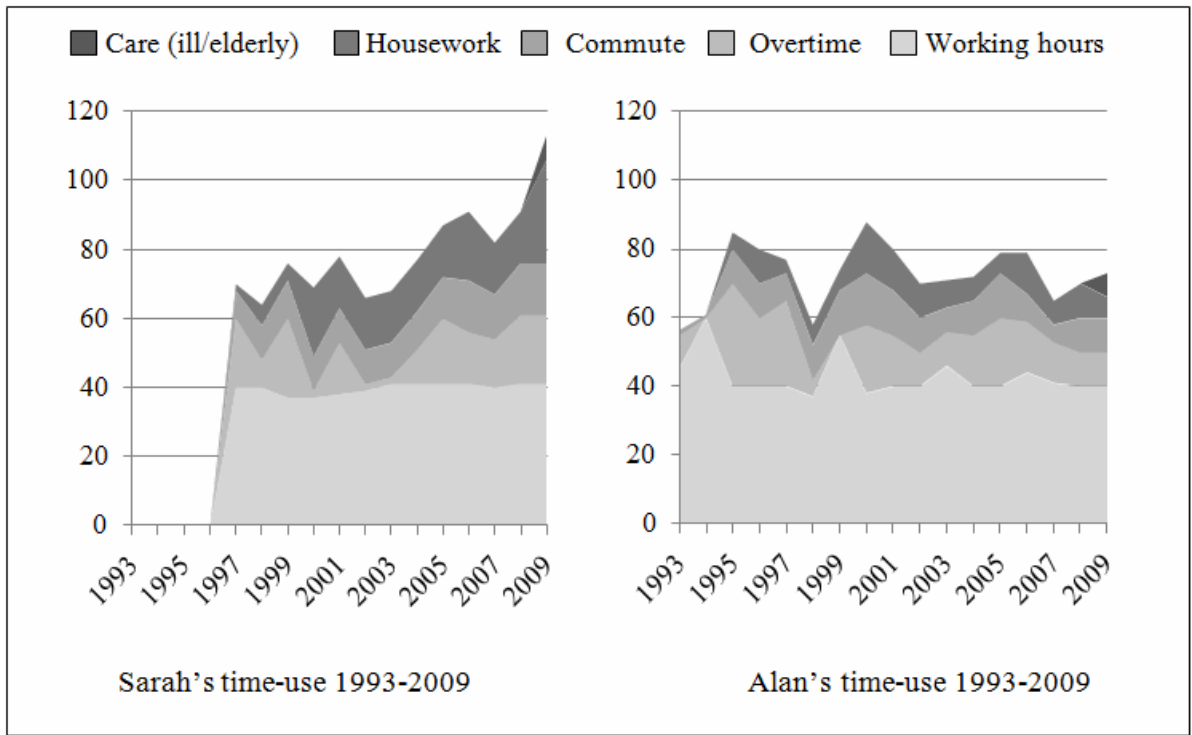


Figure 6: Sarah and Alan, 1993-2009 (BHPS)

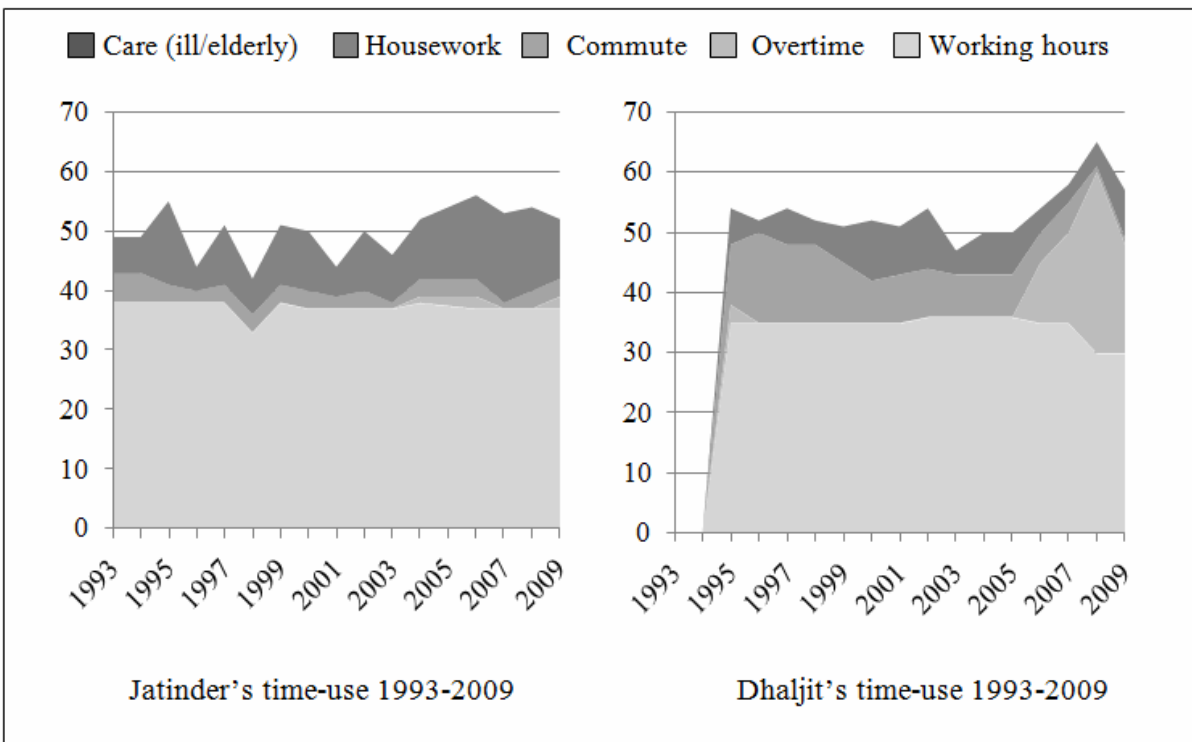


Figure 7: Jatinder and Dhaljit, 1993-2009 (BHPS)

¹ Note that ‘work’ is contrasted with ‘life’, as opposed to ‘family’. Lewis and Campbell (2008) suggest this may be because of a desire to present such conflicts in gender-neutral terms.

² Lewis argues that a pure male breadwinner model never existed; women always engaged in the labour market (Lewis, 2001: 153).

³ Research, such as Nicky Gregson and Michelle Lowe (1995), suggests that, some, wealthier dual earner couples exchange household labour for marketized labour as they can afford to make such substitutions. However, it is this exchange that is responsible for the reduction in the female partner's burden of unpaid housework, rather than the male partner doing more unpaid work.

⁴ Game theoretic models have also attempted to explain decision-making within households (van Staveren, 2010: 1129). These include both bargaining models and consensual models (see Janet Seiz, 1995: 610). These models acknowledge that households are multi-person and that decisions are made by individuals with their own preferences and constraints (Shoshana Grossbard, 2010). A commonality among these models is that they all suppose a degree of ‘jointness’ in the decision-making of household members. These approaches, however, cannot easily explain the wide variety of contradicting gender norms that influence households. For example, in many households’ men control the income and wealth of both partners. Secondly women’s role as care givers means that their behavior does not perfectly reflect any assumption of self-interest (van Staveren, 2010: 1129). Decisions are not made unilaterally, but instead reflect consideration for other household members.

⁵ The data (and tabulations) used in this (publication) were made available through the ESDS Data Archive. The data were originally collected by the ESDS Research Centre on Micro-Social Change at the University of Essex (now incorporated within the Institute for Social and Economic Research). Neither the original collectors of the data, nor the Archive, bear any responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.

⁶ The BHPS was designed as an annual survey of each adult member (aged 16 years and over) of a nationally representative sample of over 5,000 households, representing around 10,000 individual interviews. The same individuals have been successively re-interviewed in subsequent waves and, if they leave their original households, all adult members of their new households are interviewed. Children are also interviewed once they reach 16 years of age (BHPS, 2009). Commuting hours is derived from responses to the question, ‘About how much time does it usually take for you to get to work each day, door to door?’ Responses are multiplied by the number of journeys per week. Housework hours were not collected in 1992; thus only data from 1993 until 2009 is included.

⁷ This question is derived from a set of possible responses, ‘work shorter hours than you do now’, work more hours than you do now’, and ‘carry on working the same number of hours’.

⁸ Households are followed through successive waves of the BHPS survey between 1993 and 2009. Missing values are present in the data in some instances as households do not always provide responses year-on-year (one in six households change in structure each year (BHPS, 2009). Some households are therefore not included or interviewed every year). Where individual missing values are present proxy values have been generated using the average of previous and subsequent responses.

⁹ ANOVA tests confirm that the patterns among men and women by occupation group (interaction) observed in the annual means in Figure 1 and 2 — mean working hours ($F = 2.77$, S.E. = 1.510, p-value 0.019), overtime hours ($F = 5.33$, S. E. = 1.367, p-value 0.000), commuting hours ($F = 2.50$, S.E. = 0.611, p-value 0.032), housework hours ($F = 4.21$, S.E. = 1.125, p-value 0.001), and caring hours ($F = 4.41$, S.E. = 0.825, p-value 0.001) —are statistically significant, and as such are representative of the wider population.

¹⁰ An ANOVA test confirms the differences in preferences for shorter hours between genders are statistically significant ($F = 7.66$, S.E. = 9.489, p-value 0.006).

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