

Population Change and Lifecourse Strategic Knowledge Cluster Discussion Paper Series/ Un Réseau stratégique de connaissances Changements de population et parcours de vie Document de travail

Volume 3 | Issue 3

Article 2

March 2015

The Converging Gender Trends in Earning and Caring in Canada

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Recommended Citation

Roderic, Beaujot; Liu, Jianye; and Ravanera, Zenaida R. (2015) "The Converging Gender Trends in Earning and Caring in Canada," *Population Change and Lifecourse Strategic Knowledge Cluster Discussion Paper Series/ Un Réseau stratégique de connaissances Changements de population et parcours de vie Document de travail*: Vol. 3 : Iss. 3 , Article 2.

Available at: <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/pclc/vol3/iss3/2>

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Cover Page Footnote

Paper submitted to Patrizia Albanese and Lorne Tepperman, Editors, Reading Sociology (Oxford University Press).

The converging gender trends in earning and caring in Canada

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Dated: 30 June 201

Models of Earning and Caring

Following on *Earning and Caring in Canadian Families* (Beaujot, 2000; Beaujot et al., 2014), this article updates the data on the central family activities of earning a living and caring for each other. We consider the gender side of participation in these activities, along with alternate models of the division of earning and caring. We start with the idea that there are two components to the gender revolution: gender relations in the public sphere and gender relations in the private sphere (McDonald, 2000; Goldscheider et al., 2015).

Gender and earning

The gender changes in earning a living are especially observable in women's increased education and employment. At ages 15 and over, women's labour force participation increased from 45.7% in 1976 to 62.3% in 2011 (Table 1). In contrast, men's labour force participation declined from 77.7% in 1976 to 72.2% in 1996, with a subsequent stability to 71.5% in 2011.

	1976	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011
Degrees, diplomas and certificates granted*								
University (% female)	42.3	48.3	51.0	55.3	57.3	59.1	60.3	59.7
College (% female)	52	58.2	55.2	59.1	58.3	59.8	59.2	56.5
Employment ratio (employed as % of 15+)								
Labour force participation rate								
Men	77.7	78.4	76.9	75	72.2	72.3	72.5	71.5
Women	45.7	52	55.7	58.4	57.4	59.7	62.1	62.3
Proportion Working part-time								
Men	5.9	7.2	8.9	10.1	10.8	10.5	10.8	12.2
Women	23.6	26.1	27.6	27.9	29	27	26.1	26.8
Average hours of work for full-time workers**								
Men	39.4	39.1	39.9	40	40.8	39.8	39.4	38.8
Women	34.8	34.6	35.3	35.1	35.4	34.6	34	32.8
Managers and professionals								
Managers (% female)	20.2	–	–	33.4	37.0	34.9	36.3	–
Professionals (% female)	48.1	–	–	62.3	62.3	62.2	62.7	–
Managers and Professionals (% female)	39.5	–	–	56.7	57.2	57.3	58.0	–
Notes: *: Years are 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2001, 2006, 2011; – : not available; **: main job only.								
Source: CANSIM tables 2820002, 2820028, 2820010, 4770034; Beaujot, 2000: 58-59, 147								
Statistics Canada. CANSIM Table282-0004, 282-0016								

The proportion of annual post-secondary certifications obtained by women increased from 39.5% of the total in 1970 to 59.4% in 2011 (see also Andres and Adamuti-Trache, 2007). At ages 25-49, for every 100 women with university degrees, there were 84 men in 2006, compared to 157 in 1981 (Martin and Hou, 2010: 72). For all couples, wives were the primary breadwinners in 11% of couples in 1967 compared to 29% in 2003 (Sussman and Bonnell, 2006). In couples with children, the median income of husbands declined by 5% between 1980

and 2005, but that of wives increased by more than fivefold (Statistics Canada, 2008: 26).

For the population aged 20-64, employment rates and mean work hours, by gender, have moved in a converging direction (Table 2). Nonetheless, important differences remain: 78.8 per cent of men and 64.1 percent of women were employed in 2011; for those working, the mean hours worked were 42.5 for men and 35.2 for women.

		2006			
		Men		Women	
		Employment rate	Mean work hours	Employment rate	Mean work hours
Mar/Coh	Total	87.0	45.2	64.1	36.2
	No Child	79.2	44.1	65.9	37.6
	Child(ren)	91.5	45.8	62.9	35.3
Other	Total	68.5	41.7	61.8	37.4
	No Child	67.2	41.5	58.7	37.3
	Child(ren)	83.2	44.0	69.5	37.7
Total	Total	81.1	44.2	63.3	36.6
	No Child	72.7	42.7	62.6	37.5
	Child(ren)	91.0	45.7	64.1	35.8
		2011			
Mar/Coh	Total	86.4	43.9	66.2	35.2
	No Child	78.1	42.6	66.3	35.8
	Child(ren)	91.0	44.6	66.1	34.8
Other	Total	61.9	39.1	59.5	35.2
	No Child	60.7	38.9	56.4	34.5
	Child(ren)	77.6	42.0	68.1	37.2
Total	Total	78.8	42.5	64.1	35.2
	No Child	68.7	40.6	61.6	35.2
	Child(ren)	90.4	44.4	66.4	35.2

Source: : Beaujot et al., 2013: 231 and authors' calculation based on General Social Survey in 2011

Table 2 further differentiates employment rates and mean work hours, both by marital status (married/cohabiting vs. other) and by parental status (not living with children vs. living with children). There is less evidence of the traditional pattern, where men's labour force involvement is highest, and women's is lowest, when they are married with children. Men still have the highest employment when they are married or cohabiting, with children at home. However, women's employment rate is no longer suppressed when they are living with children. For married or cohabiting women, the employment rates are the same for those living with and without children at home (66.1 per cent versus 66.3 per cent in 2011). For persons who are not in relationships, both women and men have higher employment rates when they are living with children.

In terms of average hours worked, men's hours are highest if there are children at home, especially if they are married or cohabiting. Married/cohabiting women have slightly higher

average work hours if they have no children, while women who are not in relationships have the highest hours if they have children.

Gender and time use in earning and caring

The link between gender and caring has not changed as rapidly (Beaujot, 2000). However, there has been some change, with men doing more housework and child care than in the past (Doucet, 2006; Ranson, 2010).

Time use surveys present useful measures to document both earning and caring activities on the basis of the same metric (see also Marshall, 2006, 2011, 2012; Turcotte, 2007; Milan et al., 2011). Table 3 divides the time-use over a 24 hour day among the following categories: paid work (including commuting to and from work, and education), unpaid work (including housework, household maintenance, child care, elder care and volunteer work), personal care (including eating and sleeping) and leisure or free time (including active and passive leisure). Tables 3 and 4 show hours per day, averaged over a seven-day week, in various activities.

Adding paid work and unpaid work shows that the average total productive activity of men and women has been very similar in each of the survey years. From 1986 to 2010, women’s paid work hours have increased and men’s unpaid work has increased. In 1986, women’s paid work plus education represented 58.9% of men’s time, compared to 74.0% in 2010. For unpaid work, men’s time in 1986 represented 46.3% of women’s time, compared to 65.9% in 2010.

	1986		1998		2010	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Population 15+						
Total productive activity	7.5	7.4	8.0	8.0	7.9	8.1
Paid work and education	5.6	3.3	5.2	3.5	5.0	3.7
Unpaid work	1.9	4.1	2.8	4.5	2.9	4.4
Personal care	10.8	11.2	10.3	10.6	10.6	11.0
Leisure/free time	5.7	5.3	5.7	5.3	5.5	4.9
Total	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0
Employed persons						
Total productive activity	9.0	9.2	9.5	9.7	9.6	9.7
Paid work and education	7.2	6.0	6.9	5.8	6.9	6.1
Unpaid work	1.8	3.2	2.6	3.9	2.6	3.6
Personal care	10.2	10.6	9.8	10.1	10.0	10.4
Leisure/free time	4.8	4.2	4.7	4.2	4.4	3.9
Total	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0

Source: Beaujot et al, 2008: Table 1 and authors' calculation based on General Social Survey in 2010

Based on time-use surveys Marshall (2011) showed a converging trend in gender roles by comparing the division of work across three generations: late baby boomers (born 1957-1966), Generation X (1969-1978) and Generation Y (1981-1990). She found increasing gender

similarity in the involvement in paid work and housework from the earlier to the later generation. For young adults (aged 20-29) in dual-earner couples, she found that women increased their hours of paid work and men increased their share of household work. However, even for the younger generations, the presence of children reduced the woman's total paid work time, and increased her time in housework.

Table 4 further differentiates the time-use patterns in two broad age groups of men and women (15-44 and 45-64), and in two categories of marital status (married or cohabiting vs. not in relationship), and two categories of parental status (living with children vs not living with children).

	1986							
	Men				Women			
	Total	Paid	Unpaid	N	Total	Paid	Unpaid	N
15-44								
Unmarried no children	7.3	6.1	1.2	1381	8.0	6.2	1.8	1029
Married no children	8.2	6.3	1.9	473	8.4	5.1	3.3	469
Married parents	9.3	6.8	2.5	1236	8.9	2.9	6.0	1367
Lone parents	9.4	7.4	2.0	36	8.4	3.6	4.8	230
45-64								
Unmarried no children	7.1	4.7	2.4	188	7.3	3.0	4.3	276
Married no children	7.1	4.7	2.4	625	7.0	1.9	5.1	704
Married parents	8.4	5.8	2.6	383	8.3	2.7	5.6	237
Lone parents	-	-	-	6	8.4	3.1	5.2	25
Total	8.0	6.0	2.0	4328	8.2	3.8	4.4	4338
1998								
15-44								
Unmarried no children	7.5	5.9	1.6	1470	7.8	5.7	2.2	1023
Married no children	9.2	7.0	2.3	448	9.0	5.6	3.4	496
Married parents	10.2	6.7	3.5	1139	9.9	3.5	6.3	1261
Lone parents	9.2	5.2	4.1	49	9.6	3.8	5.8	272
45-64								
Unmarried no children	7.0	4.2	2.8	242	7.7	3.3	4.4	350
Married no children	7.8	4.6	3.2	808	7.7	2.8	4.9	838
Married parents	9.7	6.4	3.3	418	9.6	4.3	5.3	263
Lone parents	9.2	7.2	2.0	21	9.2	4.9	4.3	48
Total	8.6	6.0	2.7	4596	8.7	4.2	4.5	4551
2010								
15-44								
Unmarried no children	6.9	5.4	1.4	1152	7.7	5.8	1.9	1044
Married no children	9.2	6.8	2.4	377	9.0	5.6	3.4	449
Married parents	10.5	6.5	4.0	968	10.2	3.7	6.5	1317
Lone parents	10.0	6.4	3.7	56	10.3	4.5	5.8	107
45-64								
Unmarried no children	7.1	4.3	2.8	755	8.0	4.1	3.9	1105
Married no children	8.0	4.8	3.2	1347	8.1	3.7	4.5	1729
Married parents	9.7	6.5	3.2	478	9.5	4.3	5.1	390
Lone parents	8.7	4.6	4.1	51	9.5	3.9	5.6	125
Total	8.4	5.7	2.7	5184	8.8	4.5	4.3	6542

Source: Beaujot et al, 2008: Table 4 and authors' calculation based on General Social Survey in 2010

Once again, the average total time per day in productive activities is very similar between women and men in each of the survey years (see the bottom of each panel). While the time in productive activities is very similar, the averages also show men spending more time in paid work and women in unpaid work.

In 1986, younger married/cohabiting parents had complementary patterns of time use: men did an average of 6.8 hours of paid work and 2.5 hours of unpaid work, women did an average of 2.9 hours of paid work and 6.0 hours of unpaid work (Table 4). In 2010, for the younger married/cohabiting parents, men did an average of 6.5 hours of paid work and 4.0 hours of unpaid work, while women did an average of 3.7 hours of paid work and 6.5 hours of unpaid work. That is, for these younger married/cohabiting parents, the gender differences in paid and unpaid work have declined compared to 25 years earlier.

In 2010, in both age groups, for both men and women, the total time in productive activities increases from persons who are not in relationships with no children, to those married/cohabiting without children, to the married/cohabiting parents.¹ On average, lone parents spend slightly less total time in productive activities than married/cohabiting parents (Table 4).

The converging trend in gender roles is also seen in the time spent in productive activities by employment status for the population aged 25-54 in 2010 (Table 5). The average total productive hours are again very similar, at 9.3 hours for men and 9.4 hours for women. As average paid hours are reduced over the categories of full-time, part-time, and not employed, the average unpaid hours increase over these same categories, for both men and women. Nonetheless, for both men and women, the average total hours are lowest for those who are not employed, and are highest for those working full-time.

Table 5. Average daily hours of paid work and unpaid work, ages 25-54, by gender and labor force status, Canada, 2010

	Male					Female				
	Paid work	Child care	Other Unpaid	All unpaid	Total paid and unpaid	Paid work	Child care	Other Unpaid	All unpaid	Total paid and unpaid
Total	6.2	0.6	2.4	3.0	9.3	4.5	1.2	3.7	4.9	9.4
Full-time	7.0	0.6	2.3	2.9	9.9	5.9	0.8	3.2	4.1	10.0
Part-time	4.2	0.6	2.7	3.3	7.5	3.5	1.6	4.0	5.6	9.1
Not employed	2.6	0.7	3.0	3.7	6.3	1.5	2.0	4.7	6.8	8.3

Source: 2010 GSS (data are weighted)

Looking at time spent in child care, men’s average hours are quite similar over the three categories of employment (Table 5). For women, however, the average hours of child care increase from those working full-time, to part-time, to not employed. Thus, it is among persons working full-time that the average hours of child care are lowest, and most similar for men and

¹ As elsewhere in the article, the married category includes cohabiting, while the unmarried category is neither married nor cohabiting.

women. Other analyses confirm that men’s participation in child care has increased (see for example, Beaujot and Wang, 2010: 422).

Models of the division of earning and caring at the couple level

Another way of measuring the variability in earning and caring is at the couple level. By comparing spouses, we can determine whether a given person does more, the same amount or less of each of paid and unpaid work (Table 6). For the couples where neither is a full-time student and neither is retired, we have combined these patterns into five models of the division of paid and unpaid work².

The most predominant model is the complementary-traditional where he does more paid work and she does more unpaid work, however it has declined from 43.5% of couples in 1992 to 33.4% in 2010. The women’s double burden, where she does more unpaid work and at least as much paid work, has been constant at some 26 to 27% of couples. The shared role model, where they do about the same amount of unpaid work, has increased the most, from 22.6% in 1992 to 28.8% in 2010. Men’s double burden, where he does more unpaid work and at least as much paid work, has increased from 5.8% to 8.8%. The complementary-gender-reversed model is the least common, but it has increased from 1.7% to 3.2% of couples between 1992 and 2010.

Models of Division of Work (%)	Persons in couples			
	1992	1998	2005	2010
Complementary-traditional	43.5	39.1	32.9	33.4
Complementary-gender-reversed	1.7	2.7	3.0	3.2
Women's double burden	26.5	26.8	26.8	25.9
Men's double burden	5.8	7.6	10.7	8.8
Shared roles	22.6	23.8	26.5	28.8

Note: calculated for couples where neither is a full-time student and neither is retired.
Sources: Beaujot et al., 2008: Table 7 and authors' calculation based on General Social Survey in 2010

Other analyses indicate that the models where women do more unpaid work (complementary-traditional or women’s double burden) are more common when there are young children

² These models are based on questions regarding time use in the previous week, relating to the respondent and the respondent’s spouse. Combining the paid and unpaid work hours for the couple, we first divided each of paid and unpaid work hours of respondent and spouse into three categories: respondent does more (over 60% of the total), respondent does less (under 40% of the total), and they do the same (40-60% of the total). From the nine models in terms of a given partner doing more, the same or less of each of paid and unpaid work, we derived the five models as specified in the table. The 2010 questionnaire used categories rather than specific number of hours, for spouse’s time use over the week. Based on the respondents of given sexes and presence of children, we established point estimates from these categories.

present, while the models where men do a more equal share of unpaid work are more likely when women have more education and other resources (Ravanera et al., 2009). Furthermore, average household incomes in 2005 and 2010 are highest in the shared roles model, intermediate in the models involving the double burden, and lowest in the complementary roles model (Beaujot et al., 2014: 11). This is contrary to the proposition of Becker (1981) that that gender specialization presents more efficiency in total household production.

Discussion

The trends in earning and caring have moved in the direction of reduced gender inequalities, especially a greater sharing of paid work, and some change toward men's greater participation in unpaid work. However, the differences remain large, and the inequalities are accentuated by the presence of young children.

As a report for the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe proposes: "transforming gender norms is vital to the success of family policies" (United Nations 2013: 11). In particular, the two-income model should be promoted at the expense of the breadwinner model. This necessitates further changes both in the public and private spheres.

In the past, family policy followed the breadwinner model, with an emphasis on men's family wage and associated pension and health benefits, along with widowhood and orphanhood provisions in the case of the premature death of breadwinners. The focus of family policy was on dealing with the loss of a breadwinner and supporting the elderly who were beyond working age.

As we move toward a two-income model, we should discuss putting aside widowhood benefits, tax deductions for dependent spouses, pension splitting and income splitting for taxation purposes. These provisions, based on a breadwinner model, can promote dependency, especially for women. If the aim is to reduce inequality across all families, then policies should take the form of the Child Tax Credit, the Working Income Tax Credit, and the Guaranteed Income Supplement, where the strongest transfers occur for those who have the lowest incomes (see Heisz and Murphy, 2015).

Even with the significant gains in income of older female lone parents from 1980 to 2000 (Myles and colleagues, 2007; Richards, 2010), across family types, lone parents continue to be disadvantaged. The widowhood and orphanhood provisions are clearly inadequate when the death of the breadwinner is infrequently the reason for lone parenthood.

Thus, policies promoting the employment of the lone parent are important, as are the child tax benefits and child care subsidies tailored to families with lower income. There is also an "equivalent to spouse tax credit" that counts the first child of a lone-parent family as equivalent to a dependent spouse, for tax purposes. We propose that tax deductions for dependent spouses should be abolished and replaced with a tax deduction for the first dependent child, for all families. That would leave room for an alternative like that used in

Norway, such as doubling the child tax benefit for the first child of a lone-parent family.

Both lone parent and two parent families would benefit from promoting a more egalitarian type of family that includes greater common ground between women and men in family activities. Just as policy has promoted the de-gendering of earning, we should discuss the types of social policy that would further modernize the family in the direction of co-providing and co-parenting. Key questions here include parental leave and child care. Parental leave supports the continuing earning roles of parents, and public support for child care reduces the costs for working parents. The Quebec model for parental leave, including greater flexibility and a dedicated leave for fathers, has promoted the greater participation of men in parental leave (Beaujot et al. 2013). The higher Quebec support for child care has also promoted women's earning activities.

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