



**Life
Course
Centre**

**WORKING
PAPER
SERIES**

No. 2026-09

April 2026

Paid Parental Leave and Gender Gaps in Paid and Unpaid Work in Australia and the United Kingdom

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Research Summary

Why was the research done?

Our aim was to investigate whether paid parental leave entitlements affect men's and women's time on domestic, care and paid work. Parental leave policies are promoted as gender neutral initiatives to support men and women to more equally share home and work responsibilities and make choices that reduce gender inequality. We also wanted to compare results for Australia and the United Kingdom where both countries have strengthened and improved parental leave entitlements and comparable longitudinal data enable cross-national comparison. We examine time use in three domains – unpaid domestic work, care work and paid work – three years prior to and five years after, having a first child. We calculate length of time on maternity and paternity leave to see if duration of leave changes men's and women's time spent on each domain. We also examine whether results vary for high and low-income households.

What were the key findings?

We find that becoming a parent leads to diverging time for women and men in each domain. Women increase their time in domestic and care work and reduce their time in paid work. The gender gap in all domains widens measurably and remains wide even 5 years after the birth.

Women take several months of maternity leave – between 4 to 9 months. Men take an average of 2 weeks of paternity leave.

Duration of maternity and paternity leave have no consistent effects on gender gaps in domestic work, care work or paid work.

These patterns do not vary consistently in relation to household income. The results are consistent across countries.

What does this mean for policy and practice?

Paternity leave for men must be further incentivised to encourage meaningful take-up.

Current policy arrangements for parental leave do not change gender inequality in time use associated with childbirth. Future policy design must address not only the availability of leave, but also its financial generosity and normative framing, in ways that encourage more men to take leave and to take longer leave. This is important if we are serious about reshaping expectations around caregiving roles.

Citation

Li, M., Baxter, J. (2026). 'Paid Parental Leave and Gender Gaps in Paid and Unpaid Work in Australia and the United Kingdom', Life Course Centre Working Paper Series, 2026-09. Institute for Social Science Research, The University of Queensland.

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Acknowledgements/Funding Sources

We thank members of the Family Dynamics Group in the Institute for Social Science Research at The University of Queensland for comments on earlier versions of this paper and particularly Matthias Studer and Pia Schober for helpful feedback on the conceptual and methodological design. This research was supported by the ARC Centre of Excellence for Children and Families over the Life Course (CE200100025) and the ARC Kathleen Fitzpatrick Laureate Fellowship (FL230100104).

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We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work and live across Australia.
We pay our respects to Elders past and present and recognise their continued connections
to land, sea and community.

Abstract

One of the most intractable and structurally embedded forms of gender inequality is women's unequal responsibilities for unpaid domestic and care work. Gender inequality deepens at entry to parenthood with women typically reducing their paid work hours to take on increased levels of care and domestic work. Paid parental leave entitlements is one way that governments and employers have attempted to mitigate the effects of parenthood on gender inequality. But there is mixed evidence about whether such entitlements reduce gender inequality or support women to undertake both family and labour market work. We investigate the effect of paid parental leave on gender time use gaps in paid and unpaid work in Australia and the United Kingdom. We use comparable longitudinal household data from both countries to assess the association between maternal and paternal leave taking at the time of a first birth and time spent on care work, domestic work and paid work. We examine results 3 years prior to the first birth and 5 years after to examine anticipatory effects and time spent by parents as the child grows and is less dependent on mothers for breastfeeding. We also examine whether household income moderates observed effects. Our results show that women continue to take the majority of leave associated with a first birth. We find very modest and inconsistent effects of parental leave on time use at home and in paid work with no clear evidence that parental leave affects gender gaps in time spent on domestic work, care work or paid work. The patterns are largely unchanged by household income. We conclude that future policy frameworks must address not only the availability of leave, but also its structure, generosity, and normative framing, in ways that are sensitive to gender and socioeconomic disparities and capable of reshaping expectations around caregiving roles

Acknowledgements: We thank members of the Family Dynamics Group in the Institute for Social Science Research at The University of Queensland for comments on earlier versions of this paper and particularly Matthias Studer and Pia Schober for helpful feedback on the conceptual and methodological design. This research was supported by the ARC Centre of Excellence for Children and Families over the Life Course (CE200100025) and the ARC Kathleen Fitzpatrick Laureate Fellowship (FL230100104).

Introduction

One of the most intractable and structurally embedded forms of gender inequality is women's unequal responsibilities for unpaid domestic and care work, such as housework, childcare, and elder care (Altintas and Sullivan, 2016; 2017; Bianchi et al., 2012; Treas and Drobnič, 2010). Governments and employers have implemented a number of policies to support men and women to share their unpaid work and care responsibilities such as flexible work hours, reduced work hours, working remotely and parental leave time (Gornick and Meyers 2003; Haas and Hwang 2008). Public policies, particularly those targeting work-family reconciliation, are seen as key instruments in helping to promote gender equality within households.

But the effects of these policies on gender equality at home is mixed (Gonalons-Pons, 2023). Chung and Van der Lippe (2020) argue that while work flexibility can assist mothers in managing the "second shift", it may entrench traditional divisions by enabling women, not men, to absorb greater amounts of unpaid labour without altering men's contributions. Similarly, Chung and Booker (2023) show that such policies can inadvertently reinforce the ideal of the "always-available" male worker and the primary caregiving female partner, unless explicitly aimed at gender redistribution. Thus, policies that offer flexibility without addressing gender norms and broader cultural changes risk further burdening women (de Laat et al., 2023).

It is likely that some of the variation in results of previous research is due to differences in the types of policies examined, such as flexible work times compared to parental leave entitlements. Similarly, differences may emerge depending on the outcome considered, for example continued attachment for women to the labour market compared to equal sharing of care and domestic work. Country context may also be important with cultural variations in levels of support for gender equality potentially affecting take-up of work entitlements, especially for men who may feel constrained by gender stereotyping about taking time from employment for family work.

We add to evidence by investigating the effect of paid parental leave on gender gaps in paid and unpaid work in Australia and the United Kingdom. We focus on paid parental leave as supporting parents to manage employment and care for newborns is widely considered an important policy lever for reducing gender inequality in unpaid work and care, especially for men. Several international studies have shown that longer periods of paternity leave are associated with greater involvement by fathers in care of children as they grow older, although there has been less evidence from Australia (Haas and Hwang 2008; Hosking et al. 2010; Petts and Knoester 2018). Nevertheless, entry to parenthood is a period when care and domestic work increases and gender gaps in paid and unpaid work widen considerably and remain wide for many years (Baxter et al., 2008, 2015). Strengthening policies to support men to engage with children and domestic responsibilities at this crucial time are likely to be important levers for reducing gender inequality.

Both Australia and the United Kingdom have introduced paid parental leave reforms at similar times. Australia introduced universal government-funded 18 weeks of paid parental leave at the basic wage for primary carers in 2011, followed by the introduction of two weeks of non-transferable Dad and Partner Pay in 2013 (Baird et al., 2024). Subsequently, the scheme was expanded to 26 weeks of leave for either parent, with 15 days reserved for the second parent, usually fathers (Baird and Hill, 2022). In the United

Kingdom the Additional Paternity Leave scheme was introduced in 2011 enabling fathers to take up to 26 weeks of paid leave if the mother returned to work, followed by the Shared Parental Leave policy in 2015, which allowed up to 37 weeks of paid leave shared by either parent at a set rate or 90% of current earnings and up to 2 weeks of paternity leave (UK Government, 2022).

We use longitudinal household panel data from Australia and the United Kingdom to first examine gender gaps in time spent on three types of work - domestic, care and paid work - in the years before, during and after the birth of a first child. We then examine how these gaps vary in relation to mothers' and father's uptake and length of time spent on paid parental leave. We focus on leave duration as a key mechanism shaping couples' allocation, given the amount of leave taken directly determines the time available for paid work, domestic tasks and caregiving, and thus the extent of gender gaps in paid and unpaid labour following childbirth. Additional models adjust for variations in household income as we expect some variations in length of leave in relation to financial wellbeing.

Background

Gender equality and parental leave policies

Although cultural conceptions of fatherhood have expanded in recent decades from a focus on breadwinning to more active engagement in childcare and emotional bonding (Yoshida 2011), the gendered division of unpaid work and care remains remarkably resilient. Mothers, who have increasingly taken on paid work and economic responsibilities, continue to carry the primary burden of domestic and caregiving tasks (Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard 2010). Scholars have described this as a "stalled gender revolution" whereby women's roles have transformed more rapidly in the public sphere than men's roles have shifted within the home (England 2010; Sullivan et al. 2018).

This stalling is most apparent in the persistence of "intensive mothering" norms, cultural expectations that mothers are the primary, emotionally involved, and highly competent caregivers, regardless of employment status (Hays 1996). These ideals create pressure on mothers to excel in both paid work and caregiving, contributing to a double burden that has proven difficult to shift. They also potentially place pressure on men to constrain their level of engagement with domestic and care work and to concentrate on breadwinning as the key responsibility for good fathers.

Longitudinal data provide evidence of the intensification of the double burden for women after entry to parenthood. Yavorsky et al. (2015) found that, following the birth of a first child, new mothers in the United States increased their unpaid domestic labour by more than two hours per day, compared to just 40 minutes for fathers, despite similar paid work trajectories. Using Australian data, Baxter et al. (2008, 2015) demonstrate that even among couples who held egalitarian views before becoming parents, women took on substantially more domestic work than fathers following childbirth and became more conservative in their attitudes to gender equality, arrangements that continue for many years following the birth.

Parental leave policies have drawn considerable attention for their potential to reshape gender divisions of labour and beliefs about gendered responsibilities for caregiving and domestic work (Baird et al., 2024; O'Brien and Twamley, 2017). But empirical research

presents mixed findings on their effectiveness and whether parental leave policies lead to more egalitarian gender arrangements. On the one hand, some studies suggest that generous and well-designed leave policies, particularly those that are non-transferable, well-compensated and inclusive of fathers, can encourage greater paternal involvement in childcare (Huerta et al. 2013; Patnaik, 2019; Knoesgter, Petts and Praeg, 2019). Further some evidence exists showing that when men take longer and more meaningful leave, they are more likely to continue participating in caregiving and even expand their role in domestic responsibilities over the long term (O'Brien and Uzunalioglu, 2022; Rehel, 2014).

On the other hand, research finds that paternity leave does not increase fathers time in care work. For example, Gonalons-Pons (2023) finds that paternity leave encourages men to undertake more housework but not care work. She theorises three ways in which paid leave might change household arrangements. First paid parental leave may enable previous unrealised preferences for gender egalitarian divisions at home in care and household work. Second paid parental leave may promote greater gender specialization with women taking the bulk of leave due to lower earnings or more traditional beliefs about gender roles. Third, paid parental leave may lead to differentiated egalitarianism with men taking up more tasks in some areas such as care work and doing less in other areas such as housework. Using survey and time use data from the United States, Gonalon-Pons (2023) finds that paid paternity leave increases fathers time on housework but not in care work leading to differentiated egalitarian arrangements that reinforce mother's primary role as caregivers while supporting men to do more domestic work.

The effectiveness of leave policies is likely highly contingent on their design and implementation. Leave that is short, poorly paid, or transferable between parents may reinforce maternal caregiving norms, as women remain the default caregivers (Andersen 2018). Moreover, gendered income dynamics shape how leave decisions are made within households (Bian et al. 2024). According to Budig et al. (2016), since men often earn more than their partners, especially during the transition to parenthood, forfeiting male income for leave is seen as a greater financial sacrifice, discouraging uptake and re-entrenching traditional divisions of labour. Using Luxembourg income study (LIS) data across 22 countries, they find this economic choice is amplified by the fact that motherhood is already associated with long-term wage penalties, exacerbating gender disparities in household bargaining power (Budig et al., 2016). Recent experimental evidence from Germany demonstrates that providing information about the long-term economic penalties of extended maternal leave, the minimal career consequences for fathers who take leave, and rising trends in paternal leave uptake can shift normative beliefs toward a more equal division of parental leave between mothers and fathers (Philipp et al. 2023).

Cultural factors may also play a critical role in parental leave-taking by gender, particularly for men with evidence showing that men's take up rates and lengths of leave are typically low, despite use it or lose it mandates (Kaufman, 2018; Dobrotić et al., 2024). Thébaud and Pedulla (2022) identify the role of "flexibility stigma", the perception that using work-family benefits signals lower commitment to one's job and betrayal to your colleagues, while Baird, Hamilton and Constantin (2023) note that short secondary carer leave policies in Australia have shaped men's role as supporters rather than active primary carers. Furthermore, workplace norms that penalize men for taking leave or requesting flexibility continue to limit men's uptake of such entitlements due to the concerns about

career penalties and social disapproval. These structural and cultural barriers may result in low usage rates among fathers, regardless of the formal right to take leave.

Similarly Schober (2011) has identified the importance of normative expectations and policy incentives that encourage men to take meaningful periods of leave. Using longitudinal data from Germany and the UK, her work shows that longer periods of maternal labour market interruption are associated with persistent increases in women's housework and no corresponding increases in men's contribution. Even when controlling for pre-birth attitudes and socioeconomic status, the longer a woman remains out of paid employment, the more likely housework becomes her default responsibility. In contrast, mothers who returned to full-time employment shortly after childbirth experienced smaller increases in housework and saw modest increases in their partners' contributions.

In sum, previous studies suggest that the transition to parenthood is a critical life course juncture where normative gender roles are amplified and potentially entrenched, especially in contexts where policies and cultural norms implicitly support maternal caregiving and discourage men's leave taking. Parenthood is thus not merely a personal life course transition, but a socially structured process shaped by cultural ideals about gender norms, institutional policies and labour market arrangements. The question is to what extent public policies relating to parental leave can disrupt this process and lead to more egalitarian arrangements.

Our paper investigates this question using data from two countries. We add to previous studies by investigating the effects of parental leave on care work, domestic work and paid work. While many previous studies have investigated care work, fewer studies have examined the impact of parental leave on both care work and domestic work (exceptions including Schober 2011; Gonalons-Pons 2023). As care work and domestic work are quite distinct forms of gendered work that are likely responsive to different incentives and mechanisms it is important to consider both. Additionally, the effect of parental leave on paid work participation is also critical given the longer-term impacts of employment disruption on career progression, earnings and retirement savings. We examine both maternity and paternity leave and add to previous studies by considering how household income is associated with leave duration and gender gaps in time use. Considerations about the financial cost of leave-taking, often paid at reduced rates, may influence parental decisions about time spent on leave. Families who are unable to afford to take leave will have fewer options regardless of workplace incentives, cultural norms and personal expectations and beliefs. Finally, we examine outcomes in two countries with somewhat different contexts adding additional cases and validation of our findings.

Country Contexts

Australia and the United Kingdom present two instructive cases for investigating how policies shape gender divisions of labour. Although both countries may be characterised as liberal, market-oriented welfare states with low de-commodification and gendered familialism, their paid leave policy trajectories have diverged (Thévenon 2011; Filetti 2025). The UK has moved toward more structured statutory parental leave provisions with greater job protection and incremental increases in wage replacement, while Australia's paid leave system expanded later and with different policy designs, notably lower remuneration rates (Marian Baird and O'Brien, 2015). Both countries have historically invested less in childcare

and parental leave compared to Nordic countries but both have taken incremental steps in policy toward more shared caregiving by designing parental leave policies to increasingly support take-up by men.

Australia

Australia introduced its first national Parental Leave Paid (PLP) scheme in 2011, providing 18 weeks of leave at the minimum wage to the primary caregiver, usually the mother. This was followed by the Dad and Partner Pay (DaPP) scheme in 2013, offering two weeks of paid leave for fathers or partners. These reforms signalled a move toward more gender-inclusive leave policy, yet uptake among men remained low, reflecting persistent assumptions that caregiving is women's domain (Baird et al. 2021). In 2023, DaPP was discontinued and combined with the broader scheme. The government provided paid parental leave scheme currently enables up to 22 weeks of paid leave with 2 weeks reserved for each parent. From July 2026 the scheme was further increased to 26 weeks of leave with a total of 4 weeks reserved for each parent on a 'use it or lose it' basis. Since 2025 parents also receive a superannuation payment while on paid parental leave (12 per cent of their Paid Parental Leave payment), as a contribution to their nominated superannuation fund.

In addition to the statutory scheme, access to employer-provided paid parental leave is possible but is uneven. Where available, employer-funded leave averages around 10.8 weeks for primary carers and 2.3 weeks for secondary carers, with substantial variation by sector and firm size (WGEA, 2017). Public sector employees typically receive more generous provisions at or near full wage replacement under enterprise agreements, while private-sector arrangements are more fragmented and discretionary, contributing to unequal access to paid leave across the workforce.

High childcare costs, the fourth highest in the OECD, further exacerbate gender inequalities in Australia by discouraging second earners, typically mothers, from return to work (Jenkins, 2021). Families likely find that the financial disincentive reinforces the logic of maternal caregiving and paternal breadwinning. The limited availability of affordable childcare and cultural expectations of "good mothering" combine to make unpaid domestic and care work a central feature of women's lives post-parenthood (Craig and Mullan, 2010).

The United Kingdom

The United Kingdom has a long history of statutory parental leave, but its design has been relatively weak in promoting gender-equal caregiving. Statutory paid maternity leave has been available to all employed mothers since 1993, and a parental leave framework introduced in 1999 granted both parents the right to take up to 13 weeks of unpaid leave within the first five years of a child's life (Hall, 1999). Statutory paternity leave, providing two weeks' paid leave for eligible fathers, was introduced in 2003, with pay set at the lower of 90% of average weekly earnings or a flat rate (approximately £184.03 per week in 2025). This equates to approximately 46% of the National Living Wage for a 35-hour work week. This represents a weak income replacement mechanism meaning that parental leave pay rates remain low for most middle- and high-income households, particularly for fathers eligible for shared parental leave.

The Additional Paternity Leave scheme, introduced in 2011, allowed fathers to take unused maternity leave if the mother returned to work early. Yet take-up was minimal:

fewer than 1% of eligible fathers used the leave in its first year, possibly due to low-income replacement rates and persistent workplace stigma (O'Brien and Twamley, 2017). In 2015, Shared Parental Leave was introduced, enabling parents to share up to 50 weeks of leave (with 39 weeks paid). Despite its progressive aims, uptake among fathers has remained extremely low at just 2 - 4% of those eligible (Department of Business & Trade, 2023; Clifton-Sprigg et al., 2025). Barriers include financial disincentives, lack of awareness, and employer discretion in approval processes (Koslowski and Kadar-Satat, 2019).

As in Australia, employer-provided enhanced parental pay can supplement statutory provisions and encourage greater leave uptake. Occupational Maternity Pay for mothers is common, but eligibility conditions such as continuous employment and earnings thresholds limit access, and fathers in lower-paid or insecure work are less likely to benefit from enhanced paternity arrangements.

There is a care gap of approximately three years between the end of statutory parental leave and the start of universal early childhood education and care. The United Kingdom provided 15 hours of free part-time childcare per week for all 3- and 4-year-olds in 2010, which was expanded to 30 hours for eligible working parents in 2017 (Lewis and West, 2017). More recently, from April 2024, free childcare has been extended to children aged 9 months to 2 years for eligible working parents in England, with the full 30-hour provision expected by September 2025, substantially narrowing the post parental leave care gap (UK Government, 2024). However, as these reforms were introduced after the end of the observation window for our data (2000 - 2023), their effects are not captured in the current analyses.

Data and Measures

Analytical Sample

We examine data from two large-scale national household longitudinal studies: the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey and the combined British Household Panel Study (BHPS) and UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS; University of Essex, 2009, 2024; Knies, 2014). The HILDA Survey spans 23 waves (2001 to 2023) and follows over 17,000 individuals annually. For the United Kingdom, we use the final nine waves of the BHPS (2000 to 2008) and fourteen waves of the UKHLS (2009 to 2022), covering approximately 40,000 households. Both datasets provide detailed longitudinal measures on individual time use, paid parental leave use, parenthood, socioeconomic circumstances, and demographic characteristics.

The analytical sample is restricted to person-year observations of co-residing heterosexual dual-earner couples within the typical childbearing age range (18 - 50 for women and 18 - 60 for men). To align with the event-study design, we further restrict the sample to couples who experience a transition to first birth during the observation period. The timing of first birth is identified using changes in the number of children within the couple, and observations are retained for a window spanning three years prior to and five years following the birth.

The initial HILDA sample of couples experiencing a first birth includes 1,871 couples contributing 14,558 couple-year observations. Couples observed only once are excluded, as they do not contribute to within-couple variation required for fixed-effects estimation. In

addition, observations with missing values on key time-varying variables, specifically time-use and women's share of household income, are dropped. In total, around 3,287 observations (22.6%) are excluded due to missing data. After restricting the sample to dual-earner households, the final HILDA analytical sample comprises 1,571 couples contributing 8,149 couple-year observations, corresponding to an average of 5.2 observations per couple.

For the United Kingdom, around 2,412 observations (24.5%) are excluded due to missing data. The final UKHLS analytical sample comprises 1,332 couples contributing 7,443 couple-year observations, corresponding to an average of 5.6 observations per couple. As discussed below, differences in data availability across surveys imply that not all outcome measures are observed in both countries, leading to slight variation in sample sizes across models. Model-specific Ns are reported in the appendix table notes.

Dependent variables

We examine gender gaps in weekly hours normally spent in three domains: (1) domestic labour, (2) caregiving and (3) paid labour. All measures are based on self-reported stylised questions collected at each wave and are treated as continuous variables, top-coded at 70 hours per week to exclude implausible observations. In the UK, information on housework hours is collected biennially, resulting in observations being available every second wave. Domestic labour captures time spent on routine housework in both countries; in Australia this additionally includes household errands and outdoor tasks, reflecting differences in survey design. Paid labour is measured as usual weekly working hours. Unpaid caregiving includes time spent caring for one's own children, relatives or others' children.

A key cross-national difference concerns the measurement of unpaid caregiving. While the HILDA Survey provides consistent longitudinal information on caregiving time, comparable measures are not available across all waves in the UK data. As a result, analyses of caregiving time are restricted to the Australian sample, whereas domestic labour and paid labour are examined in both countries.

Rather than modelling men's and women's outcomes separately, we construct couple-level difference scores by subtracting men's reported hours from women's reported hours for each domain. These continuous variables capture the weekly gender gap in time use, where positive values indicate women spend more time than their partners and negative values indicate that men spend more time than their partners.

Independent variables

The primary independent variable is a set of time indicators centred on the birth of the first child (time = 0), capturing annual person-year observations from three years before (-3) to five years after (+5) childbirth. The reference category (-3) also includes dual-earner childless couples who do not have children in the next three years or more. Only first births are included in the analysis; multiple births (e.g., twins) are treated as a single birth event if they represent the couple's first transition to parenthood. Because outcome measures are not uniformly available across all observations and domains, the number of observations varies slightly across models.

Moderators

We assess two key moderating factors that may be associated with changes in gendered time use gaps during the transition to parenthood: (1) Parental leave take-up, and (2) household income level.

Parental leave is measured using information on paid maternity, paternity, or parental leave in each dataset. In Australia leave-taking is derived from the question: “How many days of paid maternity/paternity/parental/bereavement, family, or carers leave did you take in the past 12 months?” As this measure includes multiple types of paid leave, we restrict it to leave taken in close proximity to childbirth. Specifically, we retain leave reported in the year of birth and the subsequent year, and construct an individual-level measure of leave duration by summing the number of leave days reported across this period. This approach is intended to capture leave most likely to be related to the birth event. To exclude implausible values and ensure comparability, leave duration is restricted to values between 1 and 365 days.

In the United Kingdom leave-taking is constructed from reported start and end dates of maternity, paternity, or parental leave spells. These questions are asked of respondents who reported a recent birth and were in employment since the previous interview. Leave duration is calculated as the number of days between the reported start and end dates. When only month and year are available, the day is imputed as the midpoint of the month. Leave spells spanning interview waves are reconstructed by linking start and end dates across waves within individuals. As in Australia, leave duration is restricted to values between 1 and 365 days to exclude implausible values and ensure comparability across contexts.

Among employed parents with valid leave information, fathers take relatively short periods of leave in both countries. In Australia, fathers take on average 15.9 days (SD = 17.3; N = 4,237), whereas mothers take substantially longer leave, averaging 112.5 days (SD = 76.5; N = 5,230). In the United Kingdom, fathers take on average 22 days (SD = 40.85; N=5,836), while mothers average 267 days (SD = 83.74; N=2375).

In addition to parental leave, we examine whether patterns in time-use gaps vary by household income. Household income is measured using equivalised disposable household income based on the modified OECD scale (Hagenaars et al. 1994), which adjusts for household size and composition by assigning a weight of 1 to the first adult, 0.5 to each additional adult, and 0.3 to each child under age 15. Total household income is divided by this weighted household size to facilitate comparisons across households. We construct a wave-specific binary indicator distinguishing households below and at or above the national median income. As neither dataset directly provides official median thresholds, we draw on external sources, using annual medians from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) for Australia and Eurostat for the United Kingdom. This classification follows a relative income approach and enables comparison between lower- and higher-income households in their responses to parental leave and adjustments in time use following the transition to parenthood.

Household income is expected to shape leave-taking behaviour and subsequent household arrangements during the transition to parenthood. In Australia, the government-funded Paid Parental Leave scheme provides flat-rate payments at the national minimum wage, implying a higher income replacement rate for lower-income households. In contrast, higher-income earners face greater opportunity costs of leave-taking, which may limit

uptake or reduce leave duration. Although the institutional design differs in the United Kingdom, where payments are capped and partially earnings-related, both systems generate income gradients in the financial incentives to take leave.

Control variables

The main models include women’s share of household income as a time-varying control, measured as the proportion of total household income contributed by the female partner. This variable captures within-couple changes in relative economic resources over time. Details are provided in Appendix Table A1.

Other characteristics, such as age, education and gender role attitudes, are not included in the main fixed-effects specifications. These factors exhibit limited within-couple variation over the observation window and, in the case of attitudes, are measured intermittently across waves, which would substantially reduce the analytical sample. Observations following higher-order births are not included, as the number of such cases is limited. Robustness checks including these variables yield substantively similar results (results not shown but available on request).

Method

Time use and fixed effects event-study design

We estimate couple-level event-study fixed effects models to examine how the transition to parenthood affects gender gaps in time use. This approach accounts for all time-invariant characteristics - such as stable gender beliefs, personality traits, or career orientations - that could confound associations between parenthood and division of labour (Allison, 2009). This strengthens causal inference by removing bias from factors that do not change over time, although anticipatory changes in employment or other unmeasured time-varying factors may still pose limitations.

Time is centred on the year of first birth (time=0), with indicators for each year from three years prior (-3) to five years after (+5) childbirth. This specification captures both anticipatory adjustments and longer-term postnatal adaptations, consistent with prior event-study approaches examining heterogeneity around life course transitions (e.g., Leopold et al. 2018)

The fixed effects regression model is specified as:

$$Y_{it} = \beta_0 + \sum_{k=-3}^{+5} \beta_k * D_{kit} + \gamma' * X_{it} + \alpha_i + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

Where Y_{it} is the time-use gap between partners i in year t , D_{kit} are categorical discrete-time variable for first-time parenthood with values from - 3 (reference category) to + 5, X_{it} represents all time-dependent control variables, α_i is the couple fixed effect, and ε_{it} it is the error term. Standard errors are clustered at the couple level.

The main models include women’s share of household income as a time-varying control. Time-invariant characteristics, such as education and gender attitudes, are not

included, as they are absorbed by the couple fixed effects and exhibit limited within-couple variation and intermittent measurement across waves.

Moderation by parental leave and income

To assess heterogeneity in time-use dynamics relating to leave taking and household income, we extend the baseline specification by incorporating interaction terms between event time and parental leave duration (measured continuously in months), with models estimated separately for mothers' and fathers' leave-taking. This allows the association between leave duration and gender gaps in time use to vary across the transition to parenthood. We further estimate three-way interaction models that include household income, distinguishing between households below and at or above the national equivalised median. This specification assesses whether the relationship between leave duration and time use gaps differs by income group. In fixed-effects models, time-invariant variables are identified through their interactions with time-varying factors (Giesselmann and Schmidt-Catran 2020).

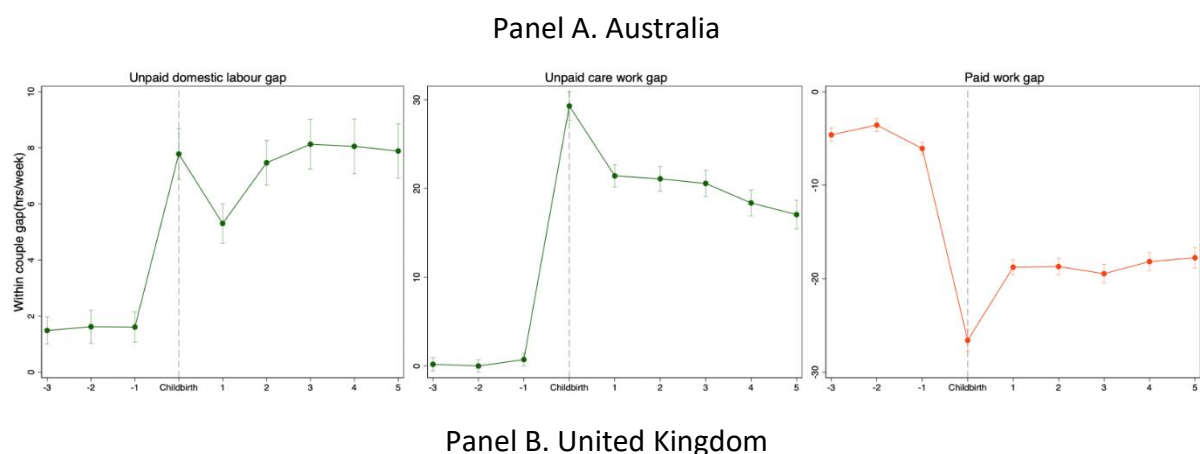
These moderation analyses are restricted to leave-eligible parents and to waves 11–23, corresponding with the introduction of the national Paid Parental Leave scheme in Australia. This restriction reflects both the availability of leave measures and the relevant policy context. Given this restriction and the focus on interaction effects, these models are estimated without additional time-varying controls.

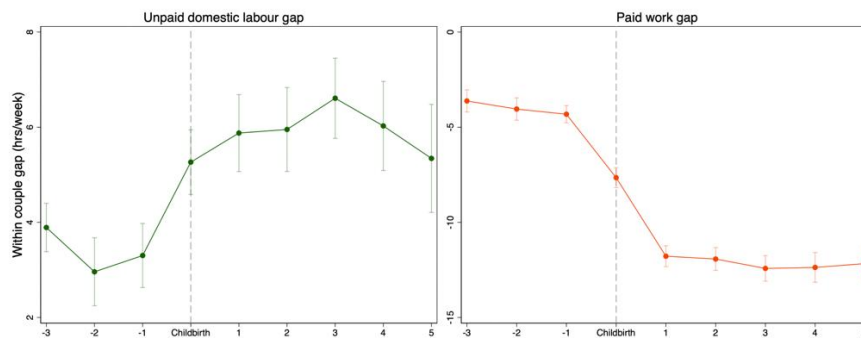
Results

Gender gaps in time use around the transition to parenthood

Figure 1 presents predicted within-couple gender gaps in domestic labour, unpaid care work, and paid work hours from three years before to five years after the birth of the first child, separately for Australia (Panel A) and for domestic labour and paid work in the United Kingdom (Panel B). Estimates are derived from fixed-effects models for heterosexual dual-earner couples, with positive values indicating greater time use by women relative to their male partners and negative values indicating the reverse. Full results are shown in Appendix A2.

Figure 1: Gender gaps in time use of dual-earner couples before and after birth of first child





Sources: HILDA, waves 1–24; BHPS, waves 10–18; UKHLS, waves 1–14.

Notes: Estimates are based on fixed-effects linear models with 95% confidence intervals. The sample includes heterosexual dual-earner couples experiencing the transition to parenthood, observed from three years before to five years after the birth of their first child. Models adjust for the wife's household income share. Positive values indicate that women perform more hours than their partners (green line); negative values indicate the reverse (red line).

Before the transition to parenthood, gender differences in time use are relatively stable in both countries. In Australia, housework gaps are modest at around 3 hours per week, care gaps are minimal, and paid work differences are small. A similar pattern is observed in the United Kingdom, where housework gaps are slightly larger (around 3 - 4 hours), while paid work gaps remain relatively stable, suggesting no strong anticipatory divergence in either context.

At the transition to parenthood, gender inequalities widen sharply in both countries. In Australia, the housework gap increases by approximately 6 hours per week ($\beta \approx 6.3$), while the unpaid care gap rises dramatically to around 30 hours ($\beta \approx 29.1$). At the same time, the paid work gap shifts in the opposite direction, with women reducing paid work relative to their partners by approximately 25 hours per week ($\beta \approx -23.8$). In the United Kingdom, the transition to parenthood also leads to a widening of gender gaps, but the changes are more moderate. The housework gap increases by approximately 2 - 3 hours per week ($\beta \approx 2.0$), while the paid work gap reaches around -8 to -12 hours in subsequent years ($\beta \approx -8.2$), all statistically significant at the 1% level.

Following childbirth, gender gaps in both countries partially reduce but remain substantial. In Australia the housework gap stabilises at around 10 - 11 hours per week, and the unpaid care gap declines from its peak but remains elevated at approximately 18 - 23 hours. The paid work gap narrows slightly after the first year but persists at roughly 23 hours per week. In the United Kingdom the housework gap increases gradually over time, reaching around 5 - 7 hours per week, while the paid work gap remains persistently negative at approximately 11 - 12 hours per week.

Overall, the transition to parenthood marks a critical life course juncture at which gender inequalities in time use are not only activated but substantially amplified. Across both countries, childbirth is associated with large and persistent increases in gender gaps in unpaid labour, alongside widening disparities in paid work. These effects are considerably larger in Australia, particularly for unpaid care and paid work, indicating strong gender specialisation following childbirth. Despite some post-birth adjustment, gender gaps remain markedly above pre-birth levels up to five years after childbirth.

The role of parental leave

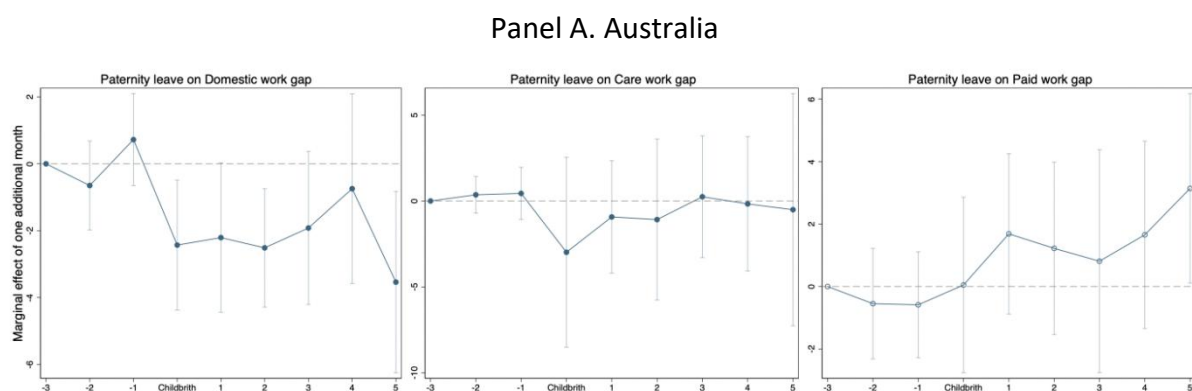
We next assess whether the association between the transition to parenthood and gender gaps in time use varies by parental leave duration, estimating separate interaction models for fathers' and mothers' leave-taking. Overall, the evidence for moderation is limited and not consistently significant across time points or work types.

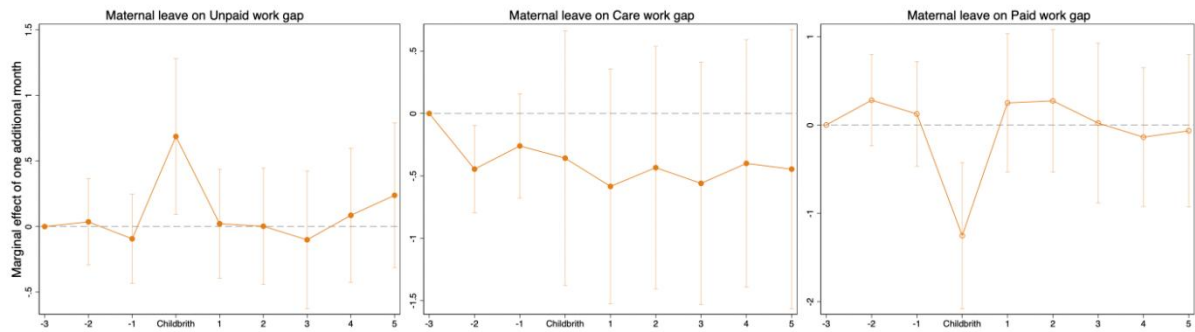
Figure 2 presents the marginal effects of one additional month of parental leave on gender gaps in time use across the transition to first birth. Full results are shown in Appendix A3. In Australia, fathers' leave duration is most clearly associated with domestic labour. Longer paternity leave is linked to smaller housework gaps at several points around and after childbirth, including the birth year ($\beta = -2.43$, $p = .014$), two years after birth ($\beta = -2.52$, $p = .006$), and five years after birth ($\beta = -3.54$, $p = .011$). However, estimates are not significant at every post-birth year, indicating that the equalising association is present but not fully consistent over time. Fathers' leave duration is not significantly associated with care-work gaps, and associations with paid work are limited, with only one significant estimate five years after birth ($\beta = 3.14$, $p = .042$).

For mothers in Australia, leave duration shows a different pattern. Longer maternity leave is associated with a larger domestic labour gap in the birth year ($\beta = 0.69$, $p = .024$) and a more negative paid-work gap at the same point ($\beta = -1.25$, $p = .003$), consistent with mothers' greater withdrawal from paid work during the immediate birth period. These associations do not persist in later years. There is little evidence that maternity leave duration systematically moderates care-work gaps after childbirth.

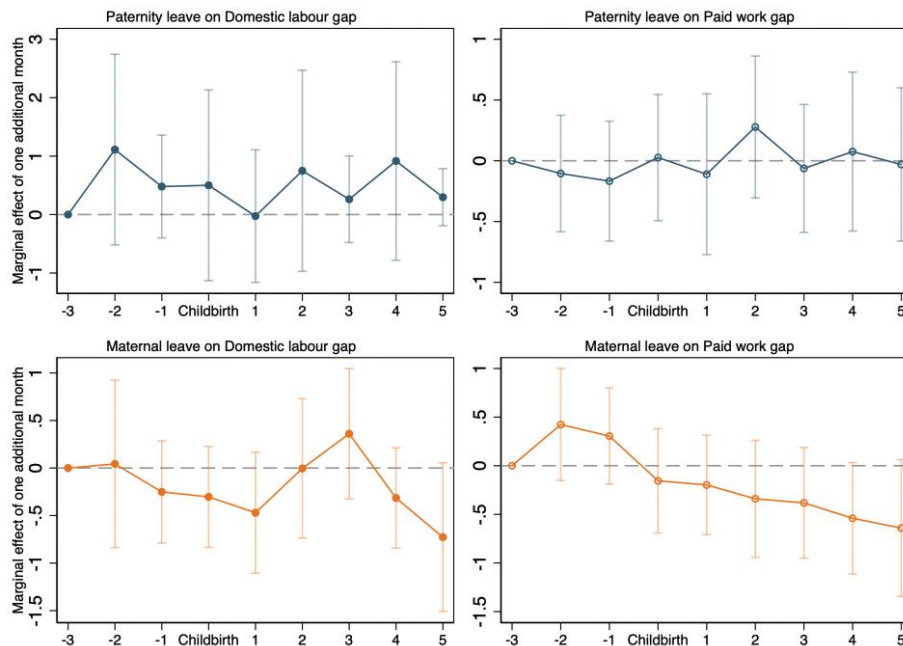
In the United Kingdom, there is little evidence that parental leave duration moderates gender differences in time use. For fathers, additional months of leave are not systematically associated with either unpaid domestic labour or paid work gaps. Marginal effects are small, statistically insignificant across all event-time periods, and do not display a consistent pattern over the transition to parenthood. Similarly, maternal leave duration shows no robust association with within-couple gender time use gaps. Estimates for unpaid domestic labour are statistically insignificant, while those for paid work suggest only weak and inconsistent negative associations in later years ($p \approx .06 - .08$).

Figure 2: Marginal effects of parental leave duration on within-couple gender gaps in time use





Panel B. United Kingdom



Sources: HILDA, waves 11–23. UKHLS, waves 1–14.

Notes: The figure plots the marginal effect of one additional month of parental leave on within-couple gender gaps in unpaid domestic labour, unpaid care, and paid work across the event-time window surrounding first birth. Estimates are derived from couple fixed-effects models interacting leave duration with event time, estimated separately for mothers' and fathers' leave. Points represent marginal effects and vertical bars indicate 95% confidence intervals. Gender gaps are defined as women's hours minus men's hours. Positive marginal effects indicate that the gap becomes more positive; negative values indicate that the gap becomes more negative. Care-work models are estimated for Australia only because comparable UK measures are not available.

Overall, the results suggest that parental leave duration is not a strong or consistent predictor of gendered time-use trajectories. The clearest evidence is in Australia, where fathers' longer leave is associated with modest reductions in housework inequality at selected post-birth points. By contrast, mothers' leave duration primarily reflects short-term withdrawal from paid work around childbirth, and United Kingdom estimates provide no or little evidence of systematic moderation.

The role of income – 3-way interaction

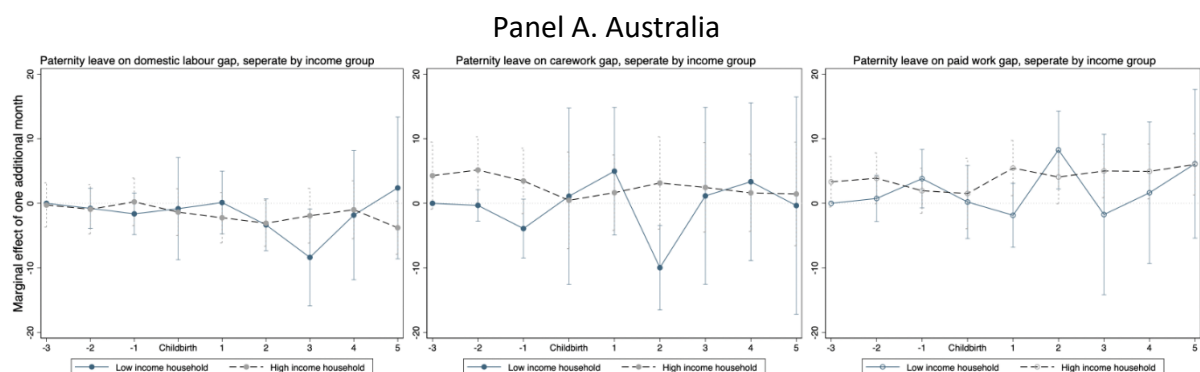
We further examined whether the association between parental leave duration and gendered time-use gaps differs by household income to assess the impact of financial considerations, as shown in Figure 3. In the United Kingdom, three-way interaction models provide little evidence of systematic income heterogeneity (full model results available on request). For fathers, the marginal effects of leave duration on domestic labour and paid

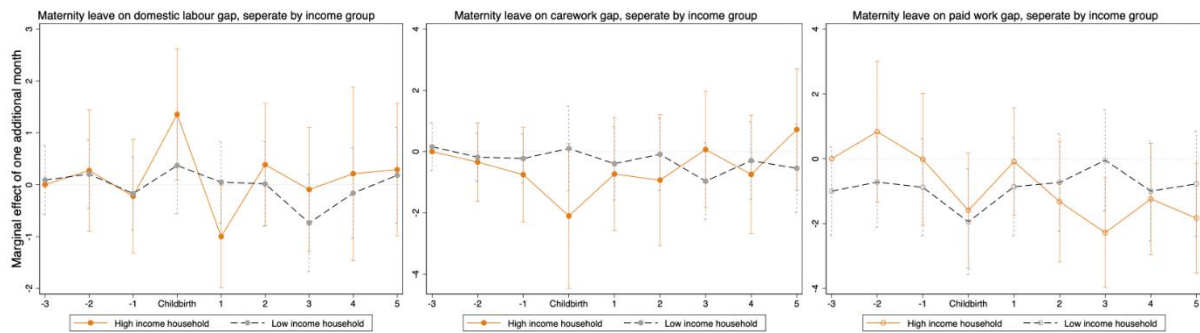
work gaps fluctuate across event time and are generally not statistically significant across income groups. For mothers, longer leave is associated with somewhat larger domestic labour gaps at selected post-birth points, but these estimates do not show a consistent income gradient. Effects for paid work are similarly weak and statistically insignificant in most periods. Overall, the United Kingdom results suggest that household income does not strongly condition the relationship between parental leave duration and within-couple time-use gaps.

In Australia the results show slightly more variation but remain inconsistent overall. For domestic labour, longer paternity leave is associated with a reduction in the housework gap among lower-income couples at some post-birth points (e.g., year 3: $\beta \approx -8.36$, $p = .029$), but this effect is not persistent and is not evident among higher-income couples. For care work, there is little systematic evidence of income differences, with most estimates imprecisely estimated, although a temporary positive effect for higher-income couples appears at year 2 ($\beta \approx 5.17$, $p = 0.048$). The clearest heterogeneity emerges for paid work: among higher-income couples, longer paternity leave is associated with a larger paid-work gap at several post-birth points (e.g., year 5: $\beta \approx 5.46$, $p = 0.012$; year 7: $\beta \approx 5.01$, $p = 0.018$; year 9: $\beta \approx 6.02$, $p = 0.013$), whereas effects for lower-income couples are generally smaller and less precisely estimated. For maternity leave, income differences are weaker and less consistent. There is some evidence that longer leave increases the domestic labour gap at childbirth ($\beta \approx 1.35$, $p = 0.037$) and reduces it shortly after ($\beta \approx -1.00$, $p = 0.047$) among lower-income couples, but these effects do not persist. For paid work, longer maternity leave is associated with more negative paid-work gaps at later post-birth points for lower-income couples (e.g., year 7: $\beta \approx -2.28$, $p = 0.008$; year 9: $\beta \approx -1.83$, $p = 0.034$), while evidence for higher-income couples is mixed (e.g., year 4: $\beta \approx -1.95$, $p = 0.019$).

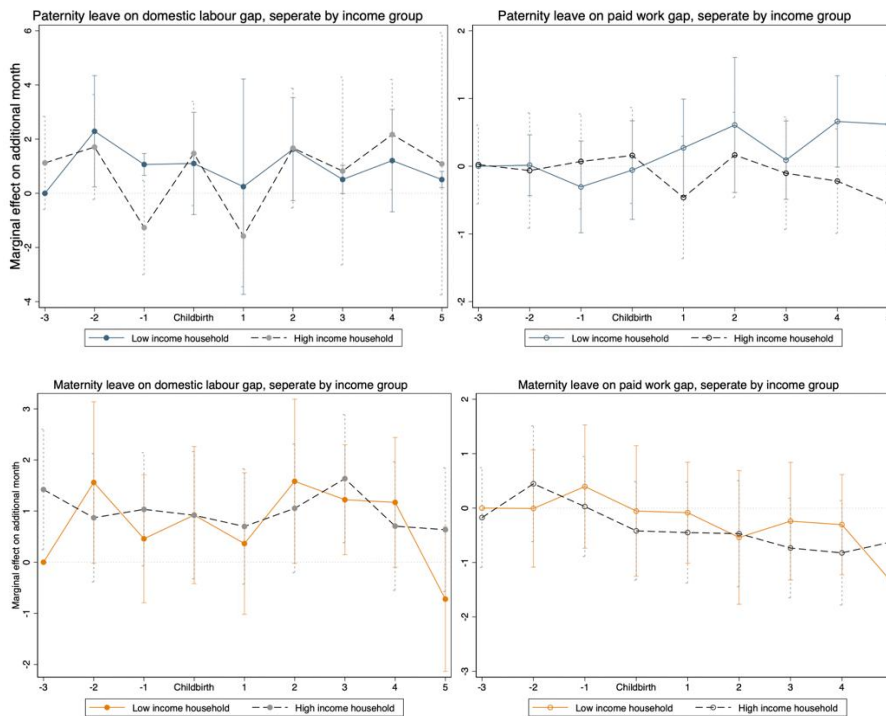
Taken together, the cross-country comparison suggests that household income plays a limited and inconsistent moderating role. Parental leave duration does not systematically reduce gender inequality in time use and, in some cases, is associated with greater paid-work specialisation among higher-income couples.

Figure 3: Predicted parental leave on within-couple gender gaps in time use by household income level





Panel B. United Kingdom



Source: HILDA release 23; UKLHS wave 1-14

Note: Notes: Predicted margins are derived from fixed-effects linear models with 95% confidence intervals, showing the effect of one additional parental leave on within-couple gender gaps in unpaid domestic labour, unpaid care work, and paid work hours by household income group (above vs. below the national median equivalised disposable household income). The sample includes heterosexual dual-earner couples transitioning to parenthood. Models adjust for the women's income share. Household Income level is measured using wave-specific national medians and equivalised using the modified OECD scale. Positive marginal effects indicate that the gap becomes more positive; negative values indicate that the gap becomes more negative. Care-work models are estimated for Australia only because comparable UK measures are not available.

Discussion

This study examines how gender gaps in paid and unpaid care and labour evolve across the transition to parenthood in Australia and the United Kingdom, with a focus on dual-earner heterosexual couples. Drawing on longitudinal panel data and a within-couple fixed-effects design, we trace time-use trajectories over an extended period - three years before and five years after the birth - of the first child. Consistent with prior research, we find that parenthood represents a key turning point in the intensification of gender inequality in the home (Baxter et al. 2008, 2015; Craig and Mullan, 2010; Chao, 2022). At entry to parenthood, women's unpaid work increases substantially and remains elevated throughout

the early parenting years, while men's contributions increase only marginally, resulting in widening gender gaps. Although we could not examine time on care work in the United Kingdom with our data we expect that similar patterns will occur there. Conversely, gender gaps in paid labour move in the opposite direction: mothers' paid hours decline sharply after birth, while fathers' hours remain steady or increase slightly. These divergent trajectories reflect a persistent motherhood penalty in time allocation that is not mirrored by a corresponding transformation in the time use of fathers.

Importantly, this study examines two key moderators, parental leave duration and household income, to assess whether policy entitlements and economic factors condition gendered time use responses to parenthood. Government policy reforms strengthening paid parental leave have occurred in both Australia and the United Kingdom over the last decade and a half with the aim of supporting parents of newborns to more easily combine care and paid work around childbirth and to give parents greater choice in how they manage these commitments. Ostensibly the reforms have been gender-neutral but as our data and many others have shown, women continue to take the majority of leave associated with the birth of a child. Our data show that fathers take approximately 2 weeks of parental leave around childbirth in both countries and mothers take between 4 to 9 months. These patterns reflect continuing gendered effects of parenthood on work and family patterns.

Our models examining the effect of leave taking duration on gender time use gaps show very little evidence that leave taking changes the gender division of labour at home or at work. In Australia there is some evidence that fathers who take longer leave participate more in domestic work than their counterparts, but the effects are not consistent over time. At the same time, our results show that mothers who take longer leave spend more time on domestic labour and less time in paid work. But again the effects are not consistent over time. There is no evidence of marked changes in gender gaps in care work associated with leave taking. Similarly in the United Kingdom the effects of leave taking on gender time use gaps are modest and not statistically significant with no clear associations with either domestic work or paid work.

We undertook further analyses to investigate whether household income moderates these associations. The opportunity costs of taking leave in terms of household financial wellbeing is expected to be higher for men and higher for high income households as parental leave is often paid at minimum rates suggesting that higher earning employees may have more to lose with longer periods of leave, although they may have more savings and wealth resources to mitigate these impacts. However, our results show no differences in observed patterns across high and low-income households. There is some evidence in Australia that longer paternity leave is associated with a larger paid-work gap at several post-birth points for higher income households. This suggests that mothers in higher income households are able to withdraw from paid work longer than women in lower-income households, an effect that may deepen gender divisions.

Overall, our findings show minimal effects of leave taking on gender time use gaps in domestic work, care work and paid work in both countries. This may be due to the continuing gender divide in who takes leaves and the duration of leave. If men are only taking about 2 weeks of leave on average it is unsurprising that paternity leave duration is not substantially altering gender time use arrangements. This suggests that parenting is still

largely viewed as women's responsibility and that other policy designs will need to be developed to alter current arrangements.

Policy implications

The findings of this study raise important questions about the design and effectiveness of contemporary parental leave policies in promoting gender equity in paid and unpaid work. While paid parental leave is often framed as a key policy lever for supporting gender equality in dual-earner, dual-carer families, our results indicate that its current configurations in both Australia and the UK fall short of delivering on this promise. In Australia the government funded paid parental leave scheme, with its flat-rate payment and predominantly maternal orientation, may inadvertently entrench traditional caregiving roles by failing to meaningfully support or incentivize fathers' participation. Although fathers' leave uptake may be associated with increased involvement in domestic work, the observed effects are minor, inconsistent and not long-term. Uptake of shared parental leave remains limited in the United Kingdom, perhaps in part due to the persistence of workplace cultures that stigmatize paternal leave-taking with no significant impacts for gender equality of time use.

Our findings point to a broader tension in family policy: expanding access to parental leave may be a necessary but insufficient condition for transforming gendered divisions of labour. Without structural features that actively promote equal sharing, such as individual non-transferable quotas, longer periods of meaningful paid leave, higher wage replacement rates, and organisational support for paternal leave, policies risk reinforcing rather than challenging prevailing norms around maternal responsibility. Moreover, the moderation effects by household income highlight the intersection of policy with structural inequality. The enabling role of material resources may facilitate more inequitable adaptations to parenthood by supporting women to reduce their paid work involvement for longer periods of time, an effect that is counter to the stated aims of government strategy in Australia to increase women's economic security.

Overall, these insights call for a shift in policy thinking from universal access toward equity-oriented design, recognising that the capacity to realise work-care balance is not equally distributed across households and parental leave for men must be further incentivised to encourage meaningful take-up. To effectively disrupt the reproduction of gendered time use patterns during the transition to parenthood, future policy frameworks must address not only the availability of leave, but also its structure, generosity, and normative framing, in ways that are sensitive to gender and socioeconomic disparities and capable of reshaping expectations around caregiving roles. While paid parental leave is an essential workplace entitlement that supports parenting of newborns and values the important contribution of parenting to society and the economy, the current design has minimal impact on addressing who does care and unpaid work. If governments are serious about developing strategies for gender equality, they must strengthen efforts to change men's involvement in parenthood through new policy designs that enable a revisioning of fathering.

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Appendix A1 Descriptive statistics for the analytical sample

	AUSTRALIA					UNITED KINGDOM				
	N	Mean/ Proportion	Standard deviation	Min	Max	N	Mean/ Proportion	Standard deviation	Min	Max
Housework hours										
3 years to birth	1774	1.42	10.43	-55	67	643	2.00	6.36	-19	45
2 years to birth	980	1.24	11.45	-67	62	440	1.53	5.98	-18	23
1 years to birth	1179	1.42	10.84	-55	58	602	2.74	6.28	-22	32
Birth	739	7.48	15.20	-55	60	602	5.03	9.34	-20	70
1 years after birth	881	5.47	14.16	-50	62	454	4.78	8.39	-33	38
2 years after birth	759	7.55	14.89	-66	64	418	5.16	9.08	-26	60
3 years after birth	689	8.48	15.70	-34	68	362	6.25	8.31	-16	62
4 years after birth	636	8.15	15.76	-42	68	331	5.67	9.44	-19	55
5 years after birth	576	8.89	15.03	-45	61	275	5.08	9.32	-28	42
Total	8213	4.58	13.58	-67	68	4127	4.00	8.13	-33	70
Caring hours										
3 years to birth	1514	0.14	3.40	-50	68					
2 years to birth	849	0.31	3.63	-38	40					
1 years to birth	1020	0.41	6.04	-70	70					
Birth	654	28.30	23.67	-42	70					
1 years after birth	791	21.86	21.78	-48	68					
2 years after birth	670	20.92	21.83	-50	67					
3 years after birth	598	20.39	22.45	-50	69					
4 years after birth	551	18.76	21.54	-42	68					
5 years after birth	499	17.74	21.52	-55	70					
Total	7146	11.49	19.67	-70	70					
Working hours										
3 years to birth	2031	-5.54	16.71	-70	70	1412	-3.72	10.03	-58	45

2 years to birth	1138	-5.93	16.77	-70	48	881	-4.29	10.50	-50	45
1 years to birth	1491	-10.31	18.89	-70	56	1283	-4.54	10.57	-62	35
Birth	1506	-30.40	21.03	-70	60	1100	-7.49	11.54	-60	54
1 years after birth	1352	-23.48	21.58	-70	70	1007	-11.87	12.90	-66	40
2 years after birth	1236	-23.84	21.95	-70	60	866	-11.83	12.73	-60	38
3 years after birth	1137	-25.04	22.13	-70	70	726	-12.43	13.37	-62	36
4 years after birth	1018	-23.91	21.95	-70	60	613	-12.88	13.36	-67	35.5
5 years after birth	912	-24.46	21.38	-70	60	559	-12.32	13.00	-67	35
Total	11821	-18.23	22.12	-70	70	8447	-8.18	12.35	-67	54
Her share of household income (%) (wave 11-23)	9790	0.41	0.16	0	1	8284	0.42	0.19	0	1
Her paid leave days	5230	112.48	76.53	1	365	2,375	266.72	83.74	1	365
His paid leave days	4237	17.21	19.03	1	165	5,836	21.99	40.85	1	365
High household income	9,870	0.83	0.3	0	1	7,444	0.81	0.39	0	1

Appendix A2 Couple-level event-study fixed effects models for changes in gender gaps in unpaid domestic work, care work and paid work.

A2-1 Australia						
	Unpaid Domestic work		Care work		Paid work	
	Coef.	SE	Coef.	SE	Coef.	SE
Time around birth						
3 years to birth	Ref.		Ref.		Ref.	
2 years to birth	0.133	0.354	-0.184	0.301	1.044*	0.454
1 years to birth	0.121	0.347	0.535	0.391	-1.461**	0.496
Birth	6.291***	0.562	29.112***	0.984	-21.975***	0.782
1 years after birth	3.814***	0.484	21.237***	0.849	-14.158***	0.625
2 years after birth	5.978***	0.535	20.904***	0.917	-14.088***	0.680
3 years after birth	6.638***	0.583	20.385***	0.970	-14.846***	0.729
4 years after birth	6.563***	0.619	18.188***	0.951	-13.555***	0.732
5 years after birth	6.398***	0.604	16.873***	1.009	-13.147***	0.761
Her share of household income	-7.563***	1.291	-11.004***	2.007		
R-square	0.030		0.323		0.065	
Person-year observations	8,149		7,088		8,497	
Number of individuals	1,576		1,553		1,593	

***p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.10

Source: HILDA release 23, wave 1-23

A2-2 UK				
	Unpaid Domestic work		Paid work	
	Coef.	SE	Coef.	SE
Time around birth				
3 years to birth	Ref.		Ref.	
2 years to birth	-0.878*	0.417	-0.404	0.363
1 years to birth	-0.115	0.388	-0.693	0.375
Birth	1.830***	0.490	-3.916	0.420
1 years after birth	1.929***	0.482	-8.196	0.474
2 years after birth	1.514**	0.523	-8.316	0.492
3 years after birth	3.085***	0.524	-8.780	0.518
4 years after birth	2.228***	0.586	-8.553	0.573
5 years after birth	1.784**	0.661	-8.390	0.607
Her share of household income	-2.240*	1.041		
R-square	0.061		0.041	
Person-year observations	4105		7,660	
Number of individuals	1491		1559	

***p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.10

Source: BHPS, wave 10-18; UKHLS wave 1-14

Appendix A3 Fixed effects linear regression models predicting changes in gender time use gap around birth across parental leave taken (one extra month)

A3-1 Australia -Paternity leave						
	Unpaid Domestic work		Care work		Paid work	
	Coef.	SE	Coef.	SE	Coef.	SE
Time around birth						
3 years to birth	Ref.		Ref.		Ref.	
2 years to birth	-0.587	0.483	-0.428	0.488	1.471*	0.680
1 years to birth	-0.690	0.495	-0.407	0.632	-0.742	0.720
Birth	6.046***	0.814	29.911***	1.403	-22.273***	1.206
1 years after birth	3.579***	0.660	20.953***	1.278	-12.671***	0.926
2 years after birth	4.711***	0.685	19.782***	1.359	-12.248***	0.997
3 years after birth	5.170***	0.828	18.966***	1.417	-12.603***	1.039
4 years after birth	5.196***	0.853	17.249***	1.395	-10.771***	1.007
5 years after birth	5.072***	0.879	15.229***	1.648	-10.174***	1.134
Year * Her leave taken						
Year - 2 * Her leave taken	-0.650	0.678	0.362	0.544	-0.551	0.904
Year - 1 * Her leave taken	0.723	0.702	0.443	0.774	-0.586	0.867
Birth * Her leave taken	-2.431*	0.991	-2.983	2.822	0.048	1.434
Year 1* Her leave taken	-2.208+	1.140	-0.927	1.671	1.686	1.309
Year 2* Her leave taken	-2.516**	0.904	-1.083	2.392	1.222	1.408
Year 3* Her leave taken	-1.920	1.168	0.247	1.808	0.810	1.821
Year 4* Her leave taken	-0.745	1.446	-0.167	1.998	1.655	1.530
Year 5* Her leave taken	-3.539*	1.383	-0.506	3.449	3.142*	1.549
Her share of household income (%)	-3.532+	1.830	-10.376**	3.513		
R-square	0.071		0.185		0.109	
Person-year observations	3,676		3,328		3,799	
Number of individuals	728		717		736	

A3-2 Australia - Maternity leave						
	Unpaid Domestic work		Care work		Paid work	
	Coef.	SE	Coef.	SE	Coef.	SE
Time around birth						

3 years to birth	Ref.		Ref.		Ref.	
2 years to birth	-0.326	0.758	0.895	0.640	0.297	1.021
1 years to birth	-0.319	0.697	0.901	0.867	-1.489	1.173
Birth	2.992*	1.183	30.347***	2.113	-17.400***	1.541
1 years after birth	2.397*	0.934	22.429***	1.932	-13.231***	1.495
2 years after birth	4.490***	1.034	21.871***	2.134	-14.192***	1.584
3 years after birth	4.891***	1.172	20.526***	2.213	-12.685***	1.739
4 years after birth	4.503***	1.157	18.721***	2.129	-11.426***	1.505
5 years after birth	3.994**	1.240	17.737***	2.508	-11.245***	1.533
Year * His leave taken						
Year - 2 * His leave taken	0.036	0.168	-0.445*	0.178	0.281	0.263
Year - 1 * His leave taken	-0.094	0.174	-0.260	0.213	0.124	0.302
Birth * His leave taken	0.686*	0.303	-0.358	0.520	-1.253**	0.422
Year 1* His leave taken	0.021	0.212	-0.585	0.480	0.250	0.400
Year 2* His leave taken	0.002	0.226	-0.434	0.496	0.273	0.411
Year 3* His leave taken	-0.101	0.268	-0.560	0.495	0.021	0.462
Year 4* His leave taken	0.085	0.260	-0.400	0.506	-0.138	0.401
Year 5* His leave taken	0.238	0.281	-0.446	0.570	-0.066	0.440
Her share of household income (%)	-5.508**	1.759	-12.486***	3.132		
R-square	0.066		0.198		0.115	
Person-year observations	4,428		3,970		4,577	
Number of individuals	873		850		885	

***p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.10

Source: HILDA release 23, wave 11-23; UKHLS wave 1-14

A4-3 UK - Paternity leave taking				
	Unpaid Domestic work		Paid work	
	Coef.	SE	Coef.	SE
Time around birth				
3 years to birth	Ref.		Ref.	
2 years to birth	-0.721	0.530	-0.399	0.426
1 years to birth	-0.075	0.462	-0.401	0.426
Birth	1.845*	0.601	-3.570***	0.496
1 years after birth	1.783*	0.573	-8.360***	0.534
2 years after birth	1.311*	0.648	-8.628***	0.582
3 years after birth	2.839***	0.607	-9.209***	0.592
4 years after birth	2.475***	0.691	-9.092***	0.644
5 years after birth	1.550+	0.789	-9.114***	0.700
Year * His leave taken				
Year - 2 * His leave taken	1.112	0.832	-0.105	0.245

Year - 1 * His leave taken	0.480	0.449	-0.167	0.252
Birth * His leave taken	0.501	0.832	0.027	0.265
Year 1* His leave taken	-0.026	0.578	-0.111	0.338
Year 2* His leave taken	0.749	0.878	0.278	0.298
Year 3* His leave taken	0.262	0.378	-0.063	0.269
Year 4* His leave taken	0.916	0.867	0.076	0.334
Year 5* His leave taken	0.297	0.249	-0.030	0.322
Her share of household income (%)	-3.474*	1.595		
R-square	0.034		0.048	
Person-year observations	2,331		4,397	
Number of individuals	742		761	

A4-3 UK - Maternity leave taking				
	Unpaid Domestic work		Paid work	
	Coef.	SE	Coef.	SE
Time around birth				
3 years to birth	Ref.		Ref.	
2 years to birth	-2.288**	0.859	-0.411	0.754
1 years to birth	-0.168	0.775	-0.261	0.720
Birth	-0.200	0.865	-4.321***	0.849
1 years after birth	1.538	0.937	-7.401***	0.759
2 years after birth	-1.098	0.916	-7.679***	0.861
3 years after birth	3.705	1.029	-8.562***	0.950
4 years after birth	0.265	0.961	-8.986***	0.969
5 years after birth	2.526+	1.307	-8.998***	0.989
Year * Her leave taken				
Year - 2 * Her leave taken	0.044	0.449	0.424	0.294
Year - 1 * Her leave taken	-0.251	0.275	0.305	0.252
Birth * Her leave taken	-0.303	0.271	-0.155	0.274
Year 1* Her leave taken	-0.470	0.325	-0.197	0.261
Year 2* Her leave taken	-0.004	0.374	-0.340	0.307
Year 3* Her leave taken	0.361	0.350	-0.382	0.290
Year 4* Her leave taken	-0.315	0.269	-0.540+	0.292
Year 5* Her leave taken	-0.727+	0.399	-0.520+	0.362
Her share of household income (%)	-4.676	3.133		
R-square	0.028		0.010	
Person-year observations	957		1,858	
Number of individuals	301		305	

***p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.10

Source: HILDA release 23, wave 11-23; UKHLS wave 1-14