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**Couples' Perceptions of the Division
of Household and Child Care Tasks:
Are there Differences between
Sociodemographic Groups?**

by Kristyn Frank and Marc Frenette

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Abstract

The division of household labour has been the primary focus of researchers examining gender equality between couples. Most research indicates that women continue to assume the majority of housework and child care work. However, there has been convergence between women's and men's hours spent performing household labour. Using the 2011, 2016 and 2017 waves of the General Social Survey, this study examines opposite-sex couples' perceptions of the division of unpaid work in their household and how these perceptions vary across different sociodemographic groups. Generally, more than half of couples reported that the woman assumed primary responsibility for meal preparation and laundry tasks, while outside work was done primarily by the man. Across all child care tasks, over one-third of couples reported that the woman performed these tasks primarily, with a much smaller proportion reporting that these tasks were performed primarily by the man. However, a majority of couples reported an equal sharing of child care tasks, such as supervising children (58.8%), taking children to activities (55.2%) and performing children's bedtime activities (55.8%). Some differences were found between sociodemographic groups. Couples in which both partners had a postsecondary education were more likely to report sharing tasks equally than couples in which neither or only one partner had a postsecondary education. Couples in which both partners were Canadian-born were more likely than their immigrant counterparts to report sharing doing the dishes and gardening equally, while immigrant couples were more likely than Canadian-born couples to report sharing grocery shopping and organizing the household's social life equally. Moreover, couples with no children were less likely than couples with at least one child younger than 5 to report that the woman assumed most of the responsibility for doing the dishes and organizing the household's social activities. Lastly, the majority of men and women reported being satisfied with the division of unpaid labour in their households. However, women were less likely to report being satisfied with the division of housework than men, and women who had children younger than 15 were more likely to be dissatisfied than their counterparts with no children younger than 15.

Keywords: Child care tasks, household labour, gender, opposite-sex couples

Executive summary

The division of household labour has been the primary focus of researchers examining gender equality among couples. Most research indicates that women continue to assume the majority of housework and child care. However, there is an indication that women's and men's hours spent performing household labour have converged over time. While many studies have compared the number of hours women and men spend doing unpaid work, few have examined couples' perceptions of the division of unpaid work within their households, or how these perceptions may vary across different sociodemographic groups. This study addresses these gaps by examining whether couples' perceptions of the division of various household and child care tasks differ across different sociodemographic characteristics of couples.

This study used the 2011, 2016 and 2017 waves of the General Social Survey to examine differences in couples' perceptions of the division of several household and child care tasks to identify whether the tasks were perceived as being mostly done by the woman, mostly done by the man or shared equally between partners. The study also examined whether perceptions of couples' division of unpaid work varied by their educational attainment, immigrant status and parental status. Moreover, changes in how couples reported the division of household tasks in recent years were examined between 2011 and 2017. This study also investigated the level of satisfaction women and men had with their division of household labour in 2016.

Generally, more than half of couples reported that the woman assumed primary responsibility for meal preparation (56.4%) and laundry tasks (61.1%). However, outside work was done primarily by men (82.9%). Across all child care tasks, over one-third of couples reported that the woman mostly performed these tasks, with a much smaller proportion reporting these tasks were performed mostly by the man. However, a majority of couples reported sharing child care tasks such as supervising children (58.8%), taking children to activities (55.2%) and performing children's bedtime activities (55.8%) equally. In addition, despite the short time period studied, the proportion of couples who reported sharing their household tasks equally increased between 2011 and 2017 across most household tasks. The largest increases, ranging between 4 and 5 percentage points, were observed for meal preparation, laundry and housework.

An important contribution of this study is to provide information on how couples' perceptions of the division of unpaid labour in their household differ between sociodemographic groups. By examining the intersection of different sociodemographic characteristics within and between couples, more nuanced information about variations in couples' perceptions of the division of household and child care tasks is obtained. For example, couples in which both partners had a postsecondary education were more likely to report sharing tasks equally than couples in which neither or only one partner had a postsecondary education.

Some variations were also observed by couples' immigrant status. Both Canadian-born and immigrant couples reported that women were more likely than their male partners to assume primary responsibility for housework, laundry and grocery shopping. Canadian-born couples were more likely than immigrant couples to report sharing doing the dishes and gardening equally, while immigrant couples were more likely than Canadian-born couples to report sharing grocery shopping and organizing the household's social life equally. Few differences were found in couples' perceptions of the division of household labour between Canadian-born couples and couples in which one partner was Canadian born and the other was an immigrant.

The presence of children also played a role in couples' perceptions of the division of household tasks. For example, couples with no children were less likely than couples with at least one child younger than 5 to report that the woman assumed most of the responsibility for doing the dishes and organizing the household's social activities. Couples with no children were more likely to report that these tasks were shared equally. Furthermore, couples who had at least one child

younger than 5 were more likely than couples with older children to report sharing the supervision of their children equally.

Lastly, the majority of men and women reported being satisfied with the division of housework. However, women were less likely than men to report being satisfied. Women who had children younger than 15 were more likely to be dissatisfied with the division of housework than their counterparts with no children younger than 15. Furthermore, Canadian-born women who were married to either a Canadian-born or immigrant man were more likely to be dissatisfied than immigrant women who were married to immigrant men. Lastly, women who worked full time were more likely than women who did not work to be dissatisfied with the division of housework. However, the level of satisfaction of women who worked full time did not differ significantly from women who worked part time.

It is important to note that the results presented in this study reflect the gender division of household and child care tasks prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is possible that the gender gap in these types of unpaid labour may change during and after the pandemic. Monitoring these trends in the future will be important as they hold important implications for women's opportunities in the paid labour market. In fact, a recent article (Zossou 2021) has looked at the gender division of six household tasks at the aggregate level (not by socio-economic characteristics), including doing the dishes, housework, laundry, meal preparation, household finances, and grocery shopping). In each case, the proportion of members of opposite-sex couples who reported that the task was mostly done by the man increased between 2017 and 2020 (between June 15 and 21). Monitoring trends in other tasks traditionally performed by either the woman (e.g. childcare) or the man (e.g. outside work) will be important to determine the full impact of COVID-19 on work sharing within couples.

1 Introduction

Differences in women's and men's work have been at the forefront of research and policy discussions on gender equality for many years. Studies have examined differences in both women's and men's paid labour, such as the gender wage gap, as well as differences in the time that women and men spend doing unpaid work in the household. Research that has examined the gender division of unpaid labour, such as daily housework and child care, has generally found that women perform more of this type of labour than their male partners despite women's increased participation in the labour force (e.g., Marshall 2006; Moyser and Burlock 2018; Sayer 2005).

Increases in women's labour force participation and educational attainment, as well as generational shifts in gender role attitudes, have been identified as drivers of a decrease in women's and an increase in men's time spent on household labour in both Canada and the United States (e.g., Bolzendahl and Myers 2004; Leopold 2019; Moyser and Burlock 2018; Sayer 2005). However, while the gap in the hours women and men spend doing household tasks has narrowed over time, there is evidence that a traditional gender division of household labour persists among couples in Canada (Marshall 2006; Moyser and Burlock 2018).

Studies that focus on the division of household labour typically measure the gender division of tasks by examining each partner's share in the total hours of unpaid work reported. While some researchers have examined particular sociodemographic characteristics, such as educational attainment and presence of children, there is less information on subgroup differences in couples' perceptions of their division of unpaid labour, particularly within the Canadian context. By examining the intersection of various sociodemographic characteristics within and between couples, more nuanced information about variations in couples' perceptions of their division of household and child care tasks is obtained. Additionally, a more detailed examination of non-housework tasks, such as child care, is needed (Coltrane 2000; Lee and Waite 2005).

In addition, while many studies have examined the gender division of household tasks among couples, fewer have focused on women's and men's satisfaction with how household tasks are divided. Some researchers have noted that couples may be satisfied with the distribution of household labour despite an unequal division of tasks, as an unequal distribution of labour may be attributable to a number of factors specific to the couple, such as one partner investing more time in paid work or a couple's gender role attitudes, which are largely informed by societal norms (e.g., Leopold 2019).

This study employed the 2011, 2016 and 2017 waves of the General Social Survey (GSS) to address these knowledge gaps. Specifically, the following research questions were addressed:

1. Which household and child care tasks do couples report as being performed mostly by the woman, mostly by the man or shared equally?
2. Were there changes in how couples perceived their division of household labour in recent years (i.e., between 2011 and 2017)?
3. How do couples' perceptions of the division of household and child care tasks differ between sociodemographic groups?
4. Do women and men report similar levels of satisfaction with their division of household labour?

2 Previous literature

Generally, women's time spent doing household work has decreased since the 1980s, while men's time doing household work has increased (Houle, Turcotte and Wendt 2017; Marshall 2006; Moyser and Burlock 2018; Sayer 2005). While some studies have shown progression toward a more equal division of housework (e.g., Bianchi 2011; Guppy, Sakumoto and Wilkes 2019; Sayer 2005), the rate at which the gender division of household labour has changed over time has been slow (Altintas and Sullivan 2016; Cooke 2004; Sullivan 2013). Moreover, there is evidence that women continue to do more unpaid household labour than men (e.g., Moyser and Burlock 2018; Sayer 2005).

Since the 1980s, an increase in men's and a slight decrease in women's time spent doing housework has been observed in Canada, coinciding with an increase in women's participation in the labour force. Women spent an average of 3.5 hours per day doing housework in 1986, decreasing to about 2.8 hours by 2015. In contrast, the average number of hours men spent doing housework increased from 1.5 hours per day in 1986 to 1.9 hours in 2015 (Moyser and Burlock 2018). Despite increases in men's contribution to household labour,¹ there is evidence that household tasks remain highly gendered, with women primarily taking on more routine tasks, such as meal preparation, cleaning and laundry (Houle, Turcotte and Wendt 2017; Marshall 2006; Moyser and Burlock 2018), while men tended to do more non-routine tasks such as household repairs and car maintenance (Barnett and Shen 1997; Coltrane 2000; Houle, Turcotte and Wendt 2017; Moyser and Burlock 2018).

Canadian research has found the time that both men and women spent doing child care tasks increased between 1986 and 2015, despite decreases in the average number of children in a family (Guppy, Sakumoto and Wilkes 2019; Moyser and Burlock 2018). This is likely attributable to a shift to more intensive parenting techniques, particularly among middle-class families (Guppy, Sakumoto and Wilkes 2019; Moyser and Burlock 2018). However, although men have become more actively involved in doing child care tasks than in the past, women still assume the majority of the child care work in opposite-sex couples (Craig 2006; Guppy, Sakumoto and Wilkes 2019).

Studies that compare the unpaid work hours of women and men typically examine the share of time each partner spends doing household tasks. Some of these studies employ data that

1. Canadian research indicates that this increase is attributable primarily to men spending more time performing two specific tasks—meal preparation and indoor housecleaning (Guppy, Sakumoto and Wilkes 2019; Moyser and Burlock 2018). Increases in men's time spent doing household labour has been attributed to a "real need for increased participation" (Bianchi et al. 2014, 219), as women's increased time doing paid labour has become more of a necessity to support their household in more recent years (Guppy, Sakumoto and Wilkes 2018). Changes in gender role attitudes may have also contributed to this shift, with certain tasks (e.g., meal preparation) becoming more socially "acceptable" for men to perform (Bianchi et al. 2014, 219).

measure household labour broadly, which can result in inconsistencies because of differences in respondents' perceptions of what is considered a core household task (Achen and Stafford 2005). For example, the 2006 Canadian census long-form questionnaire asked respondents to report the hours they spent during the previous week doing unpaid housework, yard work or home maintenance for members of their household or others (Statistics Canada 2006). In this case, a broad range of tasks were identified as housework, limiting the extent to which researchers could measure the distribution of specific tasks between couples. Another limitation is that respondents tend to overestimate the number of hours that they have spent doing housework (Achen and Shafford 2005; Lee and Waite 2005).

Other researchers have employed data in which respondents' information is captured by time-use diaries. In these cases, more detailed information about the time respondents spend doing specific tasks can be examined. However, because researchers tend to focus on the gender dynamic of couples, an analysis of differences in their other characteristics is often absent (Doan and Quadlin 2019). Examining other sociodemographic differences both between and within couples can provide important insights into variations in how couples distribute their household labour. Some research has examined differences by partners' education level and immigrant status, as well as how parenthood affects couples' division of household tasks (e.g., Davis and Greenstein 2004; Frank and Hou 2015; Sullivan 2010).

Educational attainment has been identified as a particularly influential factor in couples' division of household labour (Sullivan 2010). Generally, men with higher levels of education contribute more to couples' housework than those with lower levels of education. Some researchers postulate that this may be attributable to the effects of education on attitudes toward egalitarianism (e.g., Leopold, Skopek and Schulz 2018; Thompson 1991). Additionally, women with higher levels of education spend less time on housework than those with lower levels of education (Sullivan 2010). Davis and Greenstein (2004) also found a more equitable division of household labour in couples in which the woman had a higher level of education than the man.² However, there is evidence that men with lower levels of education have increased the amount of time spent doing housework in more recent years (Sullivan 2013).

The persistence of cultural gender roles in immigrant couples' work decisions in the host country has also been examined. Generally, researchers have found that the traditional gender role attitudes of immigrants' source countries largely persisted after migration with respect to women's participation in the labour market (Antecol 2000; Fernandez and Fogli 2005) and the division of housework (Ting, Perales and Baxter 2016). Canadian research has also found that women who migrated from a country with a high female labour force participation rate performed a smaller share of the housework than women who migrated from countries with lower rates of female labour force participation (Frank and Hou 2015).

Parenthood also affects the division of unpaid labour among couples. Generally, parenthood increases the time women spend on housework and decreases their paid work hours after the birth of a child. However, parenthood has a smaller impact on men's schedules both at work and home (e.g., Frenette 2011; Sanchez and Thomson 1997). Researchers have found that, while there tends to be a shift toward a more traditional division of labour after the birth of the first child, the chance of this occurring is reduced among couples who have higher wages and more egalitarian gender role attitudes prior to having children (Schober 2013).

2. Davis and Greenstein (2004) attributed this result to the relative resources hypothesis, which posits that the individual with greater resources, such as income or education, can negotiate a more favourable division of labour.

3 Data and methodology

This study used the 2011, 2016 and 2017 waves of Statistics Canada's General Social Survey (GSS). The GSS surveys individuals aged 15 and older in Canada, excluding residents of Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut and full-time residents of institutions. The response rates were 65.8% in 2011, 50.8% in 2016 and 52.4% in 2017. To increase the representativeness of the samples, survey weights that accounted for non-response according to sex, age and province of residence (Statistics Canada 2017a) were used to produce all estimates in this study.³

The 2011 and 2017 waves of the GSS were both family cycles, which contain a series of the same questions about household tasks.⁴ Therefore, comparisons between couples' division of household tasks can be made, allowing for an examination of changes over this time period. Previous family waves of the GSS did not ask similar questions about couples' perceptions of the division of household tasks. Therefore, this study examines only recent changes (i.e., between 2011 and 2017). The 2016 wave of the GSS was the Canadians at work and home cycle, which asked specific questions about the division of child care tasks among couples.

The analytical sample was restricted to opposite-sex couples⁵ who were in married or common-law relationships and resided in the same household. These restrictions resulted in sample sizes of 12,787 (2011), 10,596 (2016) and 11,275 (2017). While the term "couples" is used throughout this paper, the results were based on individual-level data. Couple-level characteristics were determined using the information provided by respondents on both themselves and their partners.

In this study, specific household and child care tasks were examined to determine whether couples reported that each task was done primarily by the man or the woman in the couple, or whether the task was shared equally. This measure differs from most research on this topic, which typically uses time-use data that estimate the number of hours each partner spends doing different household tasks. While time-use data provide information on the number of hours male and female respondents spend doing specific household tasks, information about their spouses is estimated by the respondents (Marshall 2006). Furthermore, several tasks are often grouped together. For example, the housework question asks, "Last week did [your spouse/partner] spend any time doing housework including cooking, cleaning, grocery shopping and laundry for your household?" Therefore, couple-level information on the division of specific household or child care tasks in time-use data can be limited.⁶

In the 2011, 2016 and 2017 cycles of the GSS, respondents were asked to provide information on the division of several specific household tasks between themselves and their partner, including preparing daily meals, doing housework (e.g., vacuuming), doing dishes (including automatic dishwasher tasks), doing the laundry, grocery shopping, gardening, doing outside work (e.g., repairs) and organizing the household's social life (e.g., sending invitations for family social occasions, organizing outings and keeping contacts). Respondents in the 2016 GSS who had children younger than 15 were asked about the division of certain child care tasks between themselves and their partner, including supervising children, taking the children to activities,

3. In addition to the survey weights, 500 bootstrap weights were used to estimate the sampling variability for the estimates. The bootstrap weighting procedure produces robust standard errors that account for the complex survey design of the GSS (i.e., the stratification of the survey by geographic areas such as province, census metropolitan area [CMAs] and non-CMA). Consequently, bootstrap weights were used in all tests of statistical significance.

4. Questions about the division of financial tasks are also available in the GSS. These tasks were not addressed in the current study, but were examined by Kevins. Moyser, and Drolet in a forthcoming Statistics Canada article.

5. Although it is possible to identify same-sex couples in the data, these couples were excluded from the analysis because the sample was too small.

6. In time-use studies, differences in the number of hours that men and women spend doing specific household tasks, such as cooking or laundry, are typically determined by comparing the average number of hours for female respondents with the average number of hours for male respondents.

performing children's bedtime activities⁷ (e.g., bathing, hygiene, preparing for bed) and helping the children with homework.⁸

For each task, respondents were asked, "Who in your household mainly takes care of [household/child care task]?" The response options for the household tasks included mostly you, mostly your spouse/partner, shared equally or neither. The response options for the child care tasks included mostly you, mostly your spouse/partner, mostly another household member, shared equally, someone outside the household or task is not done in the household. Because the main objective of this study is to determine the division of unpaid labour among couples, only those who responded mostly you, mostly your spouse/partner or shared equally were included in the analysis. Therefore, the sample sizes for each task may vary depending on whether the task was performed by the couple.

Information about the sex of the respondent and the sex of the respondent's partner makes it possible to determine whether the responses indicated that it was primarily the man or primarily the woman in the couple who performed the task in question.⁹ Therefore, each task was identified as being performed primarily by the man, primarily by the woman or shared equally.¹⁰

Additional information on the respondent's partner makes it possible to examine some aspects of the couple's sociodemographic characteristics.¹¹ While employment characteristics are likely important to the division of labour between partners, information about the partner's work schedule was not available in the 2017 GSS. In addition, information about partners' relative share of the family income could not be studied because the family income variable is based on the census family. Therefore, it is unknown whether it is only the couple that contributes to the family income or whether additional members of the household (e.g., teenaged or adult children) also contribute to the family income.

In this study, differences in the division of household and child care tasks were examined by the postsecondary education status of the couple (both have a postsecondary education, the man has a postsecondary education and the woman does not, the woman has a postsecondary education and the man does not, or neither has a postsecondary education), the presence of children younger than 15 (no children younger than 15, youngest child younger than 5, youngest

7. This specific child care task may apply only to individuals with younger children. However, the question was asked of all individuals with children younger than 15. Not applicable responses were excluded from the analysis.

8. The GSS data do not include an exhaustive list of household tasks. Therefore, other household tasks that might be performed primarily by women, such as providing emotional support to children (Milkie, Bianchi, Mattingly and Robinson 2002), or performed primarily by men, such as doing car maintenance and other outside work (Coltrane 2000), were not examined in this study.

9. The results presented in this study are based on the sex of the respondent and their partner rather than on their gender identity. In some cases, the sex of an individual may differ from their gender identity. However, because of data limitations, discussion of the "gendered" division of labour was based on the sex data available in the GSS.

10. There is some evidence that the sex of the respondent who answers questions about the division of housework within a couple may affect the accuracy of the information. Researchers have found that, when reporting core housework, such as cooking, cleaning and laundry, men generally reported spending a greater number of hours on this type of work than when their female partner reported this information (Achen and Stafford 2005). However, women were also found to overreport the time they spent doing housework. To examine potential differences in the data used for this study, Appendix Chart A.1 shows the differences in how respondents answered questions about household tasks by the sex of the respondent. Generally, male respondents were more likely to report that household tasks were done primarily by the man, while female respondents were more likely to report that household tasks were done primarily by the woman. Because there was a similar proportion of men and women in the sample (see Appendix Table 1 for descriptive information of the samples) and respondents were randomly selected within the household (Statistics Canada 2019), this should not bias the results.

11. Preliminary analysis also examined age differences between couples. However, because it is difficult to disentangle cohort effects from age effects, these results are not presented in this paper. Additionally, although the previous literature has suggested that women who live with their partner in a common-law relationship report doing less housework than their married counterparts (e.g., Davis, Greenstein and Marks 2007; Bianchi, Lesnard, Nazio and Raley 2014), preliminary analysis by marital status (i.e., legally married or in a common-law relationship) did not indicate significant differences among Canadian couples. Therefore, these results are not presented in this paper, but are available upon request.

child aged between 5 and 14) and immigrant status (both are immigrants, both are Canadian born, one partner is Canadian born and the other is an immigrant).¹²

This study employs descriptive analysis to answer the first three research questions posed in the introduction. First, information on couples' division of household tasks in 2017 and child care tasks in 2016 are presented. These results address the question of whether certain tasks were done primarily by the man, done primarily by the woman or shared equally. Second, changes in couples' division of household tasks between 2011 and 2017 are shown by examining whether the division of tasks has become shared more equally over time.¹³ Although this is a short time period over which to examine these types of changes, any changes observed will be important to note. Third, evidence on the differences in the division of household and child care tasks among couples from different sociodemographic groups are also presented.

Lastly, the final research question is addressed, which asks whether women and men report similar levels of satisfaction with the division of household labour. These results are based on a question from the 2016 GSS, which asks, "How satisfied are you with the way chores are divided in your household?" Responses were aggregated into three groups—very satisfied or satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Multivariate regression models were also used to examine whether various sociodemographic and employment characteristics were associated with a higher likelihood of women and men reporting being dissatisfied with their division of household labour.

4 Results

4.1 Which household and child care tasks are reported as being performed primarily by women, performed primarily by men or shared equally?

Among couples¹⁴ in Canada, most household tasks were more likely to be performed primarily by the woman than by the man (Chart 1).¹⁵ However, about half of couples reported sharing certain household tasks equally, e.g., doing the dishes (51.5%), organizing the household's social life (50.2%), and grocery shopping (48.9%).

Two routine household tasks were done primarily by women. Over half of couples reported that the woman was mostly responsible for preparing daily meals (56.4%) and doing laundry (61.1%). The results also indicated that more than 4 in 10 couples shared the housework equally (45.2%), while a similar proportion reported that the housework was done primarily by the woman (46.2%).¹⁶

Only one household task—doing outside work—was done primarily by men. Over 8 in 10 couples (82.9%) reported that outside work (e.g., repairs) was done primarily by the male partner. In addition, gardening was not a gender-specific task among couples, as similar proportions of

12. Initially, results were produced that accounted for the sex of the immigrant partner when one partner was an immigrant and the other was Canadian born. However, for some tasks, the number of cases were very low, resulting in unreliable estimates. Therefore, the results presented in this study grouped together all couples in which one partner was an immigrant and the other was Canadian born.

13. Because information on child care tasks was available only in 2016, changes in the division of these tasks over time could not be assessed.

14. While the term "couple" is used throughout this paper, the results are based on individual-level data provided by respondents about themselves and their partners.

15. All differences discussed in the results section are statistically significant at $p < 0.05$, unless stated otherwise.

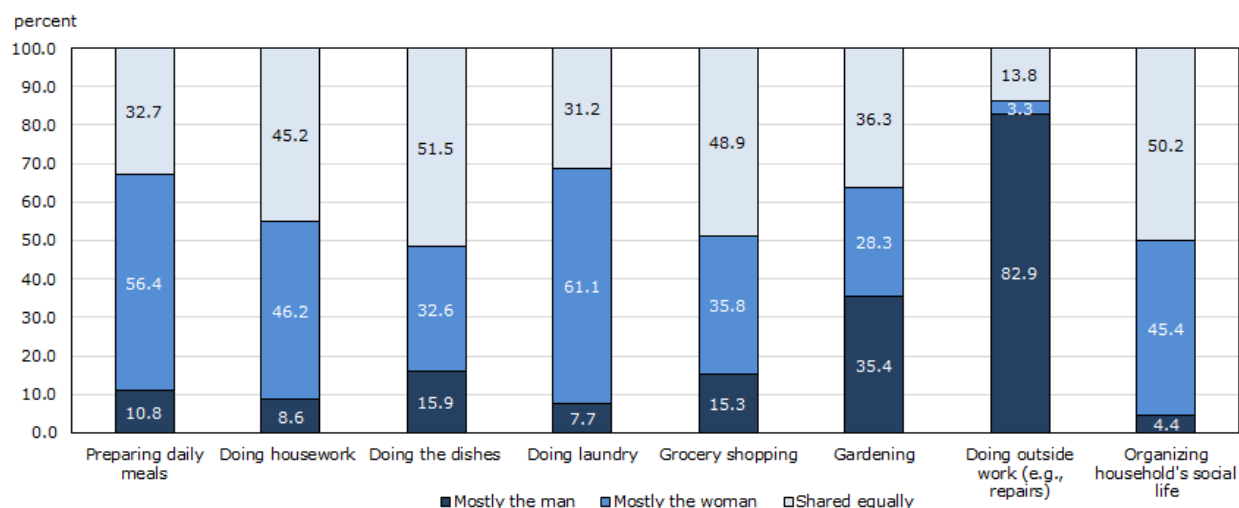
16. This difference was not statistically significant.

couples reported that this task was done primarily by the man, done primarily by the woman or shared equally (35.4%, 28.3% and 36.3%, respectively).¹⁷

Previous studies have indicated that child care tasks, such as caring for young children and organizing children’s social and learning activities, are performed primarily by women (Damaske 2013; Doan and Quadlin 2019). However, there is Canadian evidence that the gender gap in tasks that involve child development and engagement, such as reading and playing, is narrower than the gender gap in more routine tasks, such as feeding children (Moyser and Burlock 2018).

Over one-third of couples reported that the woman mostly performed the child care tasks, with just over 4 in 10 reporting that the woman assumed primary responsibility for helping the children with their homework (42.1%, Chart 2). In contrast, about 1 in 10 men took primary responsibility for helping children with homework (10.0%) and taking children to their activities (11.5%). Smaller proportions reported that the man was primarily responsible for supervising the children (3.0%) or performing bedtime activities (5.2%). The majority of couples reported that child care tasks, such as supervising children (58.8%), taking children to activities (55.2%) and performing children’s bedtime activities (55.8%), were shared equally. However, among couples in which child care tasks were not shared equally, the work was done primarily by the woman.

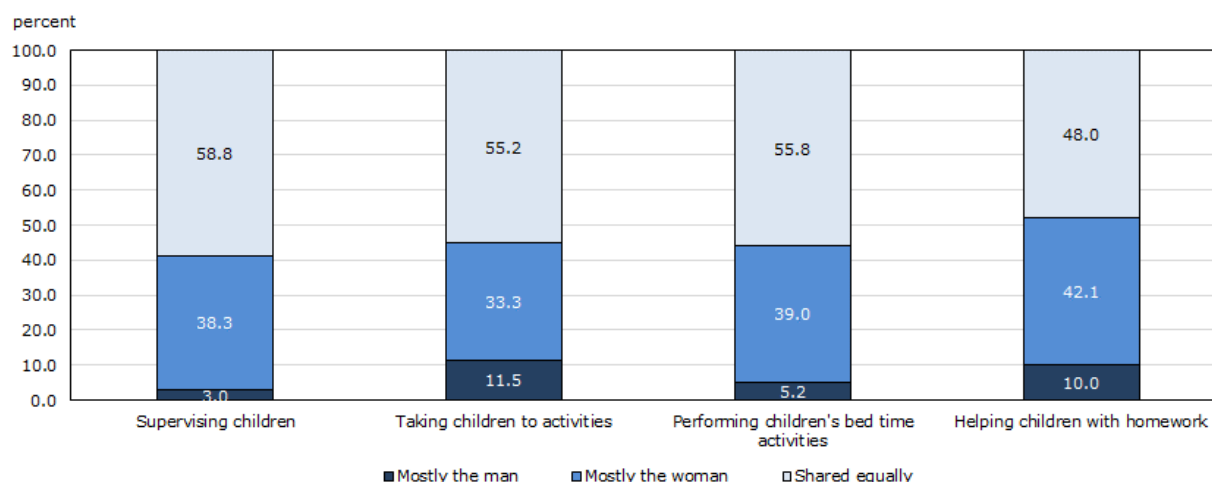
Chart 1
Couples' division of household tasks, 2017



Note: The sample was made up of opposite-sex couples (either married or common law) who resided in the same household.
Source: Statistics Canada, 2017 General Social Survey – Family (Cycle 31).

17. However, couples were more likely to identify this task as being done primarily by the man than being done primarily by the woman (statistically significant difference at $p < 0.001$).

Chart 2
Couples' division of child care tasks, 2016



Note: The sample was made up of opposite-sex couples (either married or common law) who resided in the same household and had children aged 14 or younger.

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2016 General Social Survey – Canadians at Work and Home (Cycle 30).

4.2 Have couples' perceptions of their division of household tasks changed in recent years?

Generally, changes in the gender division of labour have been slow, showing gradual progression toward equality over several decades (e.g., Marshall 2006; Moyser and Burlock 2018). Studies showing this change over time primarily examined differences in the average number of hours that women and men spent doing housework. While this information is useful for understanding differences in the time spent on household tasks, changes in couples' perceptions of this division of labour can also provide important information about whether the division of household tasks has evolved. This part of the study examines whether there was an increase in the proportion of couples that perceived household tasks as being shared equally between 2011 and 2017. Although this is a very short time period over which to examine this type of change, any significant changes in the division of tasks are likely to be noteworthy.

Overall, increases in the proportion of couples who reported sharing household tasks equally were observed for 6 of the 8 tasks that could be examined (Chart 3). The largest increases were observed for preparing daily meals (4.9 percentage points), doing laundry (4.6 percentage points) and doing housework (4.0 percentage points). However, the proportion of couples who shared the tasks of gardening and organizing the household's social life equally were not statistically different between 2011 and 2017.

Increases in sharing household tasks equally were driven in large part by decreases in these tasks being performed primarily by women. In particular, the proportion of couples who reported that women were primarily responsible for preparing daily meals, doing housework, doing the dishes, doing the laundry or grocery shopping decreased between 2011 and 2017.¹⁸

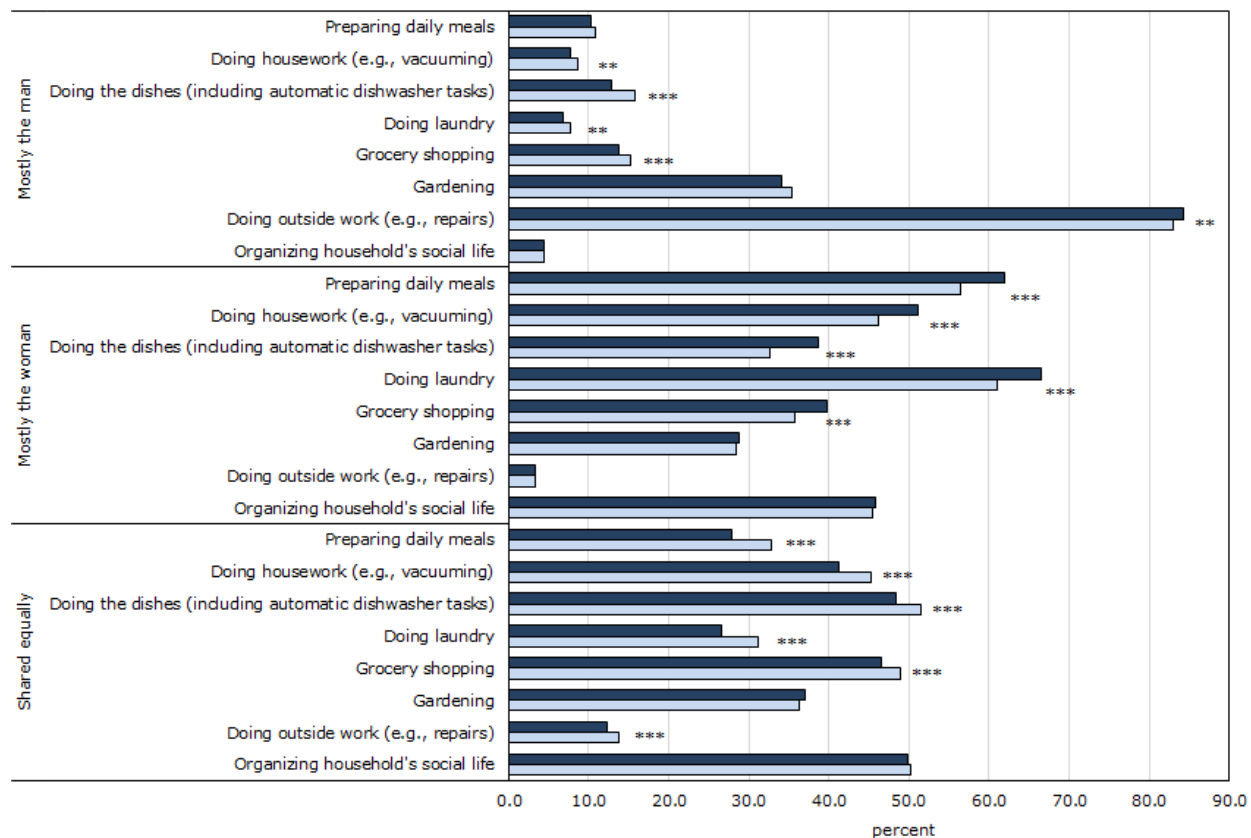
Moreover, increases were observed in the proportion of couples who reported that the man was primarily responsible for performing some of the household tasks. Notably, the proportion of couples who reported that the man assumed primary responsibility for doing the dishes rose from 12.8% in 2011 to 15.3% in 2017. There were smaller increases in the proportion of couples who reported that the man was primarily responsible for doing the housework, laundry and grocery shopping.¹⁹

18. These decreases ranged from 4 to 6 percentage points.

19. These increases ranged from 0.9 (doing the laundry) to 1.6 percentage points (grocery shopping).

These results are largely consistent with studies that identified changes in daily household tasks such as meal preparation, housework and laundry over a longer period of time (Marshall 2006; Moyser and Burlock 2018). They also support these findings by indicating that the proportion of women who were the primary contributor to these activities decreased between 2011 and 2017, while the proportion of couples sharing these tasks equally increased.

**Chart 3
Couples' division of household tasks, 2011 and 2017**



* significantly different between 2011 and 2017 (p < 0.05)
 ** significantly different between 2011 and 2017 (p < 0.01)
 *** significantly different between 2011 and 2017 (p < 0.001)
 † significantly different between 2011 and 2017 (p < 0.10)

Note: The sample was made up of opposite-sex couples (either married or common law) who resided in the same household.
Sources: Statistics Canada, 2011 General Social Survey - Family (Cycle 25) and 2017 General Social Survey - Family (Cycle 31).

4.3 How do couples' perceptions of the division of unpaid labour differ between sociodemographic groups?

While the results in Chart 1 and Chart 2 indicated that couples reported only a small number of household tasks as being done primarily by the man or primarily by the woman, the gender division of these tasks may vary across different types of couples, based on such characteristics as education level, immigrant status and the presence of children.

Differences in the division of unpaid labour by education level

Educational attainment is one of the strongest socioeconomic predictors of couples' division of household labour (Sullivan 2010). This is primarily attributable to the relationship between education and gender role attitudes, as more highly educated individuals tend to hold less traditional gender role attitudes. The results indicate that couples' educational attainment plays a role in the division of household tasks among couples in Canada. The largest differences

observed were between couples in which both partners had a postsecondary education and those in which neither partner had a postsecondary education (Chart 4).

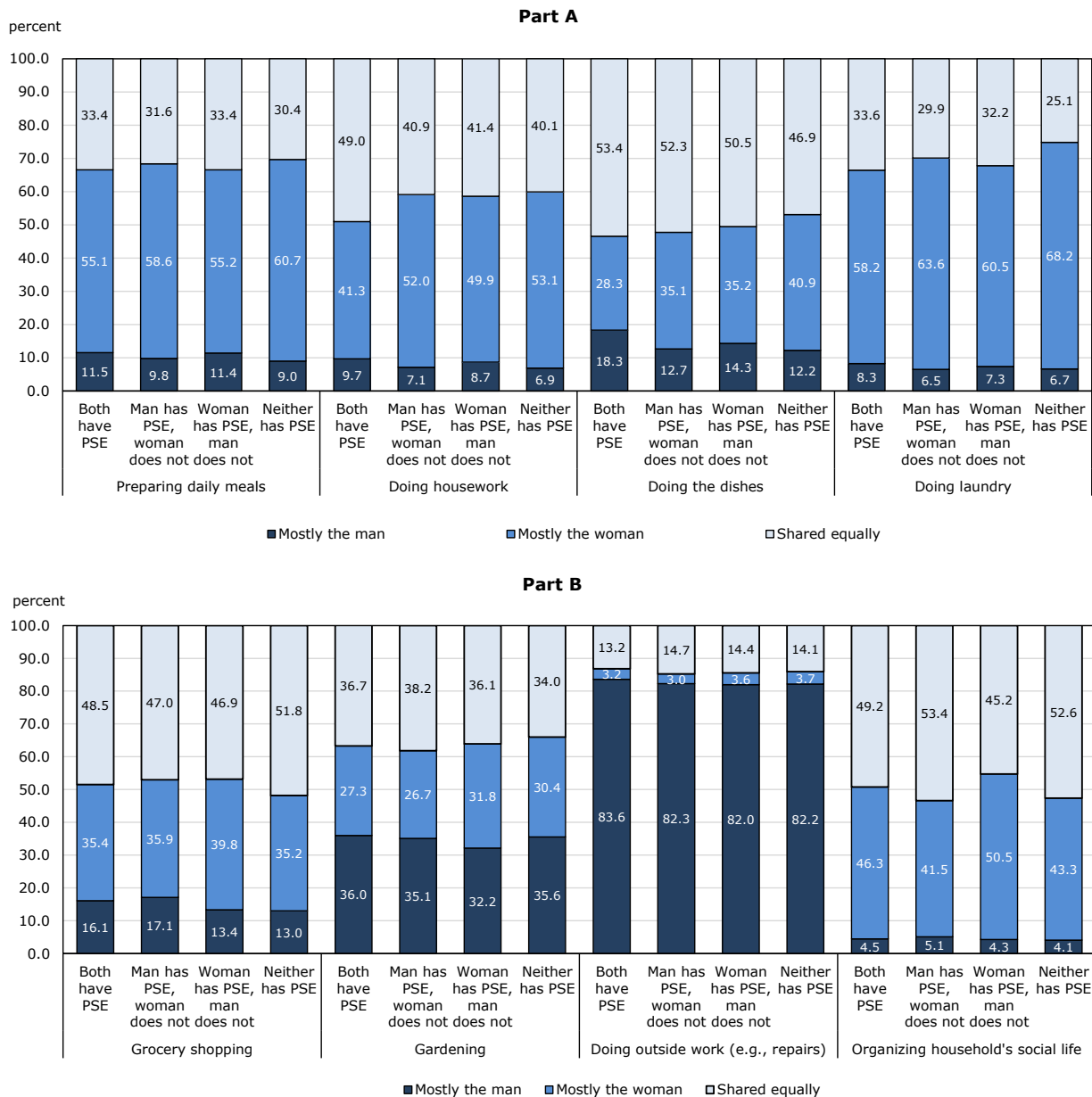
For couples in which both partners had a postsecondary education, men were more likely to assume primary responsibility for meal preparation, housework, dishes and grocery shopping than couples in which neither partner had a postsecondary education. Household tasks, such as meal preparation, housework, dishes and laundry, were more likely to be perceived as being shared equally by couples in which both partners had a postsecondary education than by couples in which neither partner had a postsecondary education.

A different division of household tasks was also observed between couples in which both partners had a postsecondary education and couples in which only the male partner had a postsecondary education. Notably, when only the man had a postsecondary education, tasks such as meal preparation, doing housework, doing the dishes, doing the laundry and organizing the household's social activities were more likely to be reported as being done primarily by the woman than in couples in which both partners had a postsecondary education.

The results also indicated that couples were more likely to report household tasks being done primarily by the woman when only the woman had a postsecondary education, compared with couples in which both partners had a postsecondary education. When only the woman had a postsecondary education, women were more likely to assume primary responsibility for doing housework, doing the dishes, grocery shopping, gardening and planning the household's social activities than women who were in relationships in which both partners had a postsecondary education.

Some differences were also observed between couples in which only the woman had a postsecondary education and couples in which neither partner had a postsecondary education. Couples in which the woman had a higher level of education than her partner were less likely to report that the woman was primarily responsible for meal preparation, doing the dishes, doing laundry, grocery shopping and planning the household's social activities, compared with couples in which neither partner had a postsecondary education.

Chart 4
Division of household tasks, by couple's level of education, 2017



Notes: The sample was made up of opposite-sex couples (either married or common law) who resided in the same household. PSE stands for postsecondary education.
Source: Statistics Canada, 2017 General Social Survey – Family (Cycle 31).

There were fewer differences in the division of child care tasks between couples with different levels of education. Interestingly, while the greatest number of differences in the gender division of household tasks was between couples in which both partners had a postsecondary education and those in which neither partner had a postsecondary education, the fewest differences were found for these two types of couples in the division of child care tasks (Chart 5). Most differences for child care tasks were observed between couples in which only the man had a postsecondary education and couples in which only the woman had a postsecondary education.

Moreover, differences in couples' educational attainment resulted in variations in how parents divided the task of helping their children with homework. For couples in which only the man had a postsecondary education, the man was more likely to be reported as taking primary responsibility for helping the children with homework (20.3%), compared with couples in which

only the woman had a postsecondary education (4.8%). Additionally, among couples in which only the woman had a postsecondary education, helping children with homework was much more likely to be reported as being done primarily by the woman (54.9%) than in couples in which only the man had a postsecondary education (26.6%). However, for couples in which only the man had a postsecondary education, a higher proportion of couples reported that the woman was more likely to be primarily responsible for helping the children with homework than the man (26.6% and 20.3%, respectively).²⁰

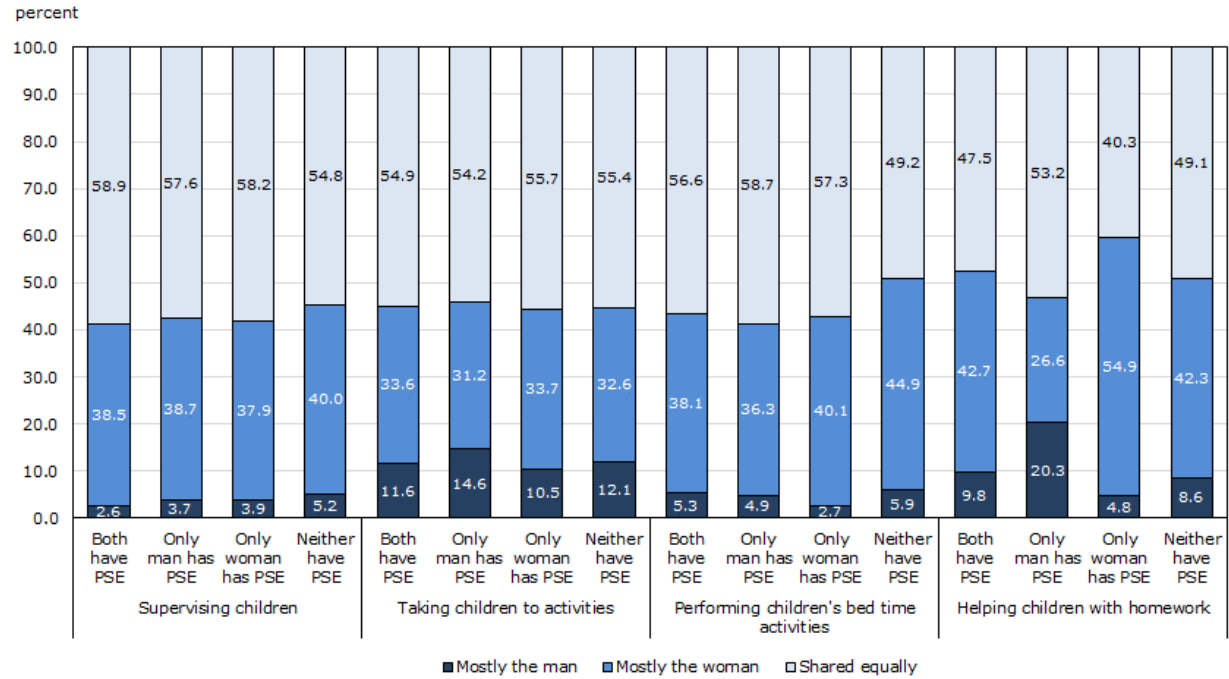
Differences in the division of unpaid labour by immigrant status

Previous research has found that women who migrated from countries with more traditional gender roles assumed a greater share of housework in Canada than their counterparts who migrated from countries with a more equitable division of labour (Frank and Hou 2015). This suggests that the gender division of household labour among immigrant couples may differ from that of Canadian-born couples or couples in which only one partner is an immigrant. Several differences were found between immigrant and Canadian-born couples in the division of household tasks (Chart 6).

Generally, immigrant couples were more likely than Canadian-born couples to report that the male partner assumed most of the responsibility for housework, laundry, grocery shopping, gardening and organizing the household's social activities. However, women in immigrant couples were more likely to be the partner who was primarily responsible for meal preparation and doing the dishes than women in Canadian-born couples. Canadian-born couples were more likely than immigrant couples to report sharing the tasks of doing the dishes and gardening equally, while immigrant couples were more likely than Canadian-born couples to report sharing grocery shopping and organizing the household's social life equally.

20. Differences between couples' educational attainment could also be attributable to age differences. Because younger women are more likely than men to have completed a postsecondary education—particularly a university-level education—this may have implications for the division of labour between different age groups. To examine this, additional analysis was conducted for three age groups: both partners aged 45 or older, both partners aged between 30 and 44, and both partners younger than 30. Most differences across age groups were found among couples in which both partners had a postsecondary education. Refer to Appendix Chart A.2 for detailed results. Results for the remaining educational groups are available upon request.

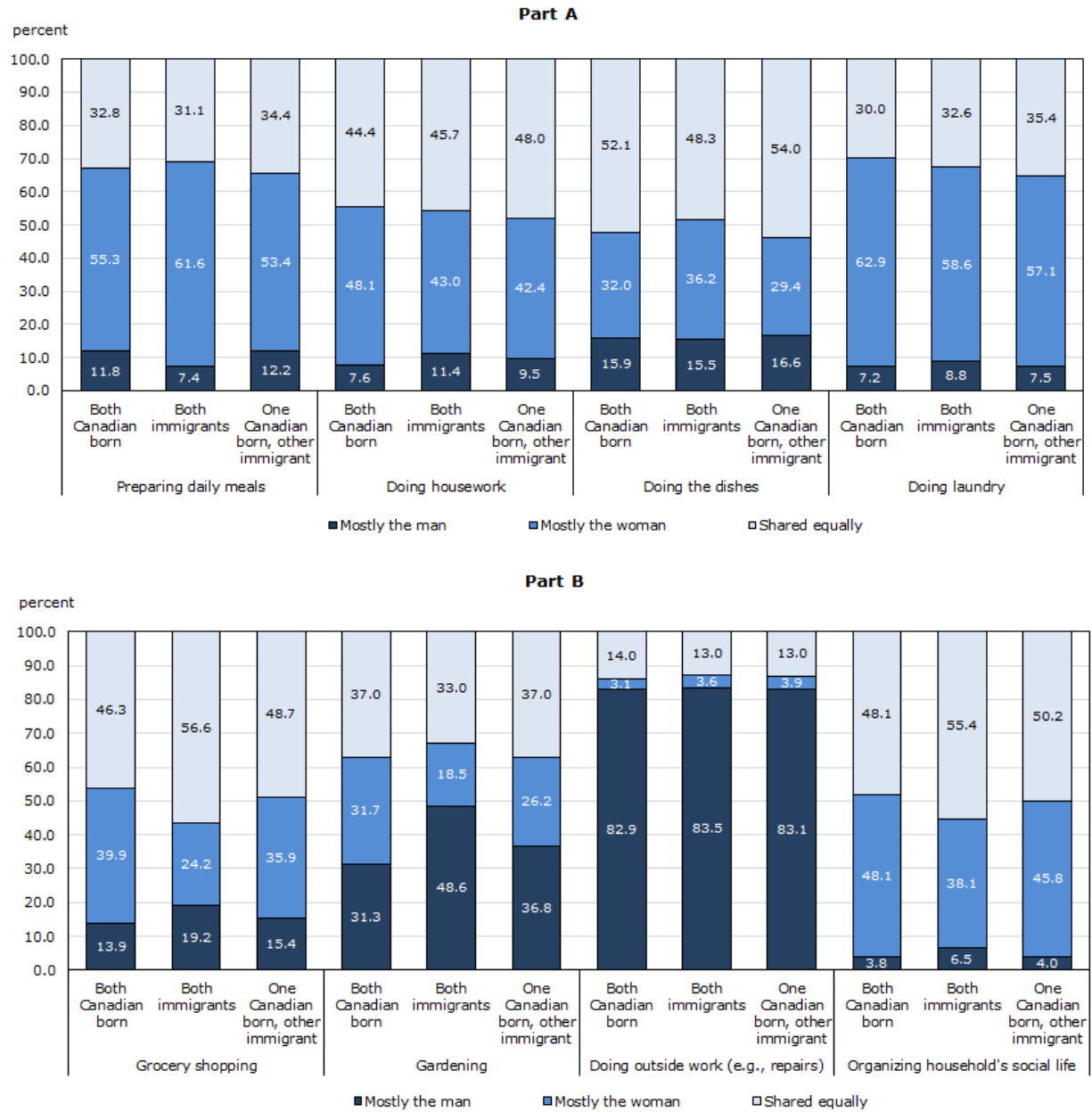
Chart 5
Division of child care tasks, by couple's level of education, 2016



Notes: The sample was made up of opposite-sex couples (either married or common law) who resided in the same household and had children aged 14 or younger. PSE stands for postsecondary education.

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2016 General Social Survey – Canadians at Work and Home (Cycle 30).

Chart 6
Division of household tasks, by couple's immigrant status, 2017



Note: The sample was made up of opposite-sex couples (either married or common law) who resided in the same household.
Source: Statistics Canada, 2017 General Social Survey – Family (Cycle 31).

Similar results were found when comparing immigrant couples with couples in which one partner was an immigrant and the other was Canadian born. For example, immigrant couples were more likely to report that it was primarily the man who did the grocery shopping, gardening and organizing the household's social life than couples in which one partner was an immigrant and the other was Canadian born. Furthermore, women in immigrant couples were more likely to be identified as the partner who took primary responsibility for meal preparation and doing the dishes, compared with couples in which only one partner was an immigrant.

Fewer differences in the gender division of labour were found between Canadian-born couples and couples in which one partner was Canadian born and the other was an immigrant. Generally, Canadian-born couples were more likely to report that the woman was primarily responsible for doing the housework, laundry, grocery shopping and gardening than couples of mixed immigrant

status. Canadian-born couples were also less likely than couples with mixed immigrant status to report that they shared doing the laundry equally.

Differences by immigrant status were also observed across some child care tasks (Chart 7). Immigrant couples were more likely than Canadian-born couples to report that the children's bedtime activities were performed primarily by the woman. Couples in which both partners were Canadian born were more likely than immigrant couples to report sharing some child care tasks equally (e.g., taking children to activities, performing children's bedtime activities and helping children with homework).

While immigrant couples and couples with mixed immigrant status had similar results for the division of household tasks, some exceptions were observed in child care tasks. For example, immigrant couples were less likely to report sharing performing children's bedtime activities and helping with children's homework equally.

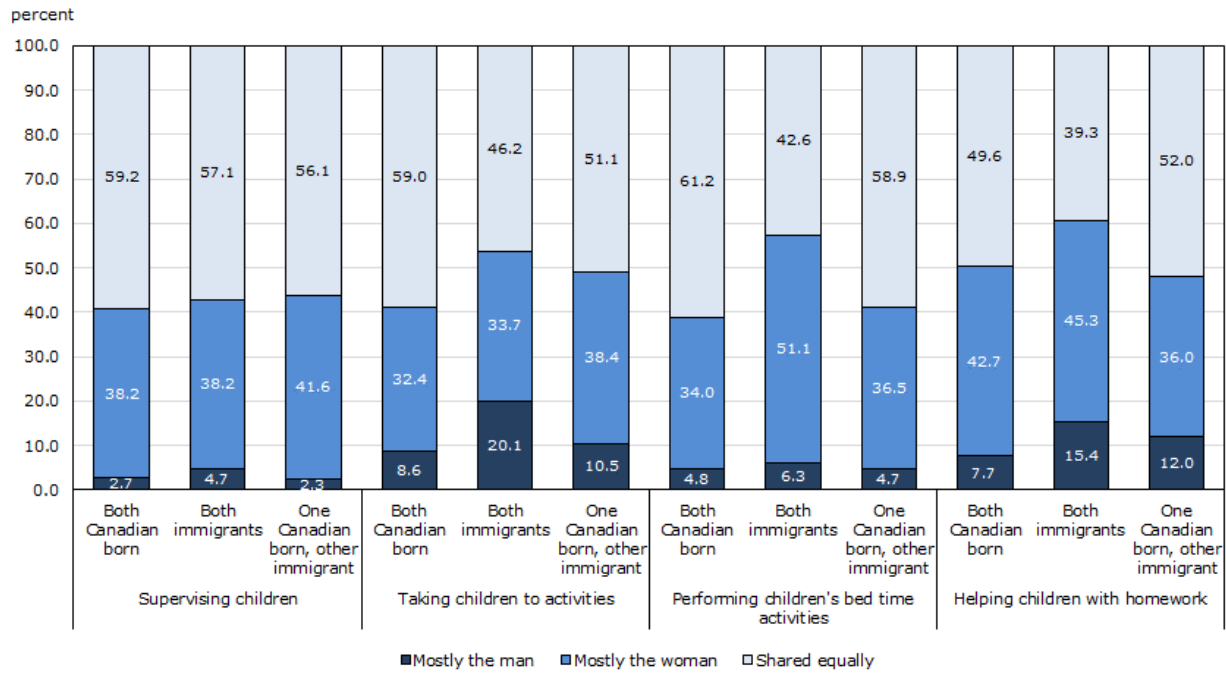
Differences in the division of unpaid labour by presence of young children

The presence of children—particularly young children—may also play a role in couples' division of household labour. Generally, the birth of a child has been found to increase the amount of household labour for women, but does not change men's unpaid work substantially (Frenette 2011; Sanchez and Thomson 1997). Canadian research has shown that men with young children are less likely to be involved in housework than their counterparts with older children but are more likely to be involved with child care tasks (Houle, Turcotte and Wendt 2017).

The results of this study indicated few differences in the division of household tasks between couples with no children younger than 15, those who had at least one child younger than 5, and those whose youngest child was aged between 5 and 14 (Chart 8).

Couples with no children younger than 15 were less likely than couples whose youngest child was younger than 5 to report that the woman assumed most of the responsibility for doing the dishes and organizing the household's social activities. These tasks were more likely to be reported as shared equally among couples with no children younger than 15 than among those who had a child younger than 5.

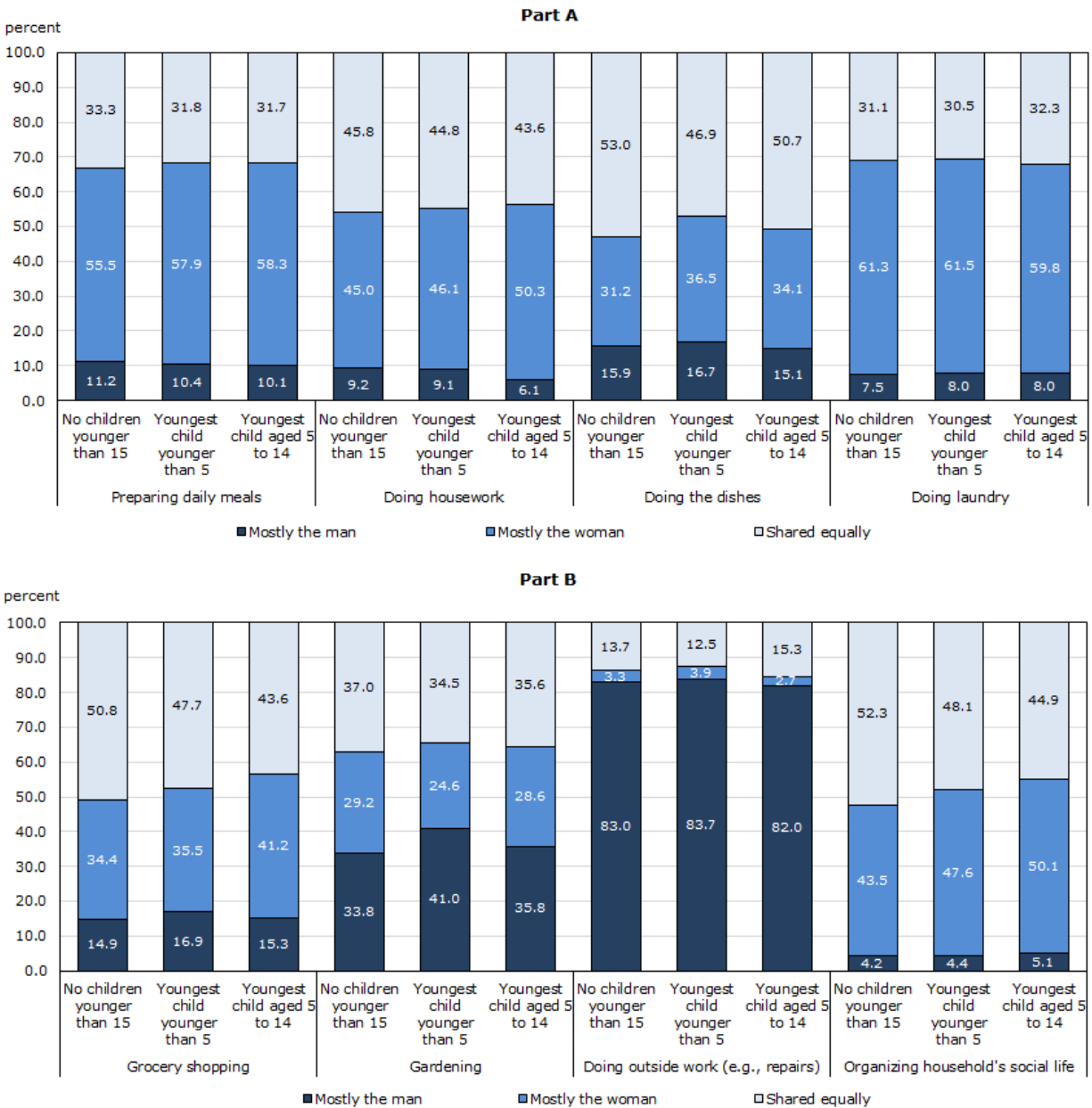
Chart 7
Division of child care tasks, by couple's immigrant status, 2016



Note: The sample was made up of opposite-sex couples (either married or common law) who resided in the same household and had children aged 14 or younger.

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2016 General Social Survey – Canadians at Work and Home (Cycle 30).

Chart 8
Division of household tasks, by presence of children, 2017



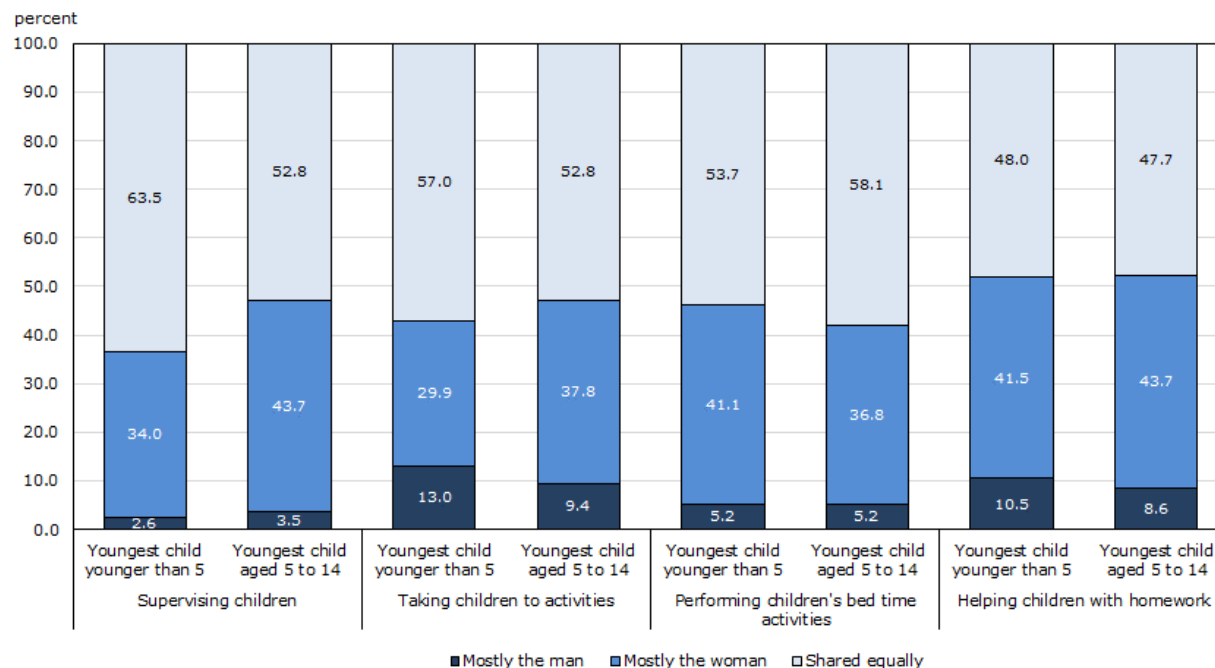
Note: The sample was made up of opposite-sex couples (either married or common law) who resided in the same household.
Source: Statistics Canada, 2017 General Social Survey – Family (Cycle 31).

Among couples with children younger than 15, few differences in household tasks were observed. Couples who had at least one child younger than 5 were more likely than those with older children to report that the housework and gardening tasks were done primarily by the man. Furthermore, grocery shopping was more likely to be reported as a task that was shared equally among couples with a child younger than 5 than among couples with older children.

The division of some child care tasks differed between couples with children. For example, couples who had at least one child younger than 5 were less likely than couples with older children to report that the man was primarily responsible for supervising the children (Chart 9). However, couples with a child younger than 5 were more likely than those with older children to report sharing this child care task equally. Furthermore, couples with a child younger than 5 were more likely to report that the woman assumed primary responsibility for performing children’s bedtime

activities and less likely to report that the woman was primarily responsible for taking children to activities than couples with older children.

Chart 9
Division of child care tasks, by presence of children, 2016



Note: The sample was made up of opposite-sex couples (either married or common law) who resided in the same household and had children aged 14 or younger.

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2016 General Social Survey – Canadians at Work and Home (Cycle 30).

4.4 Do women and men report similar levels of satisfaction with the division of household labour?

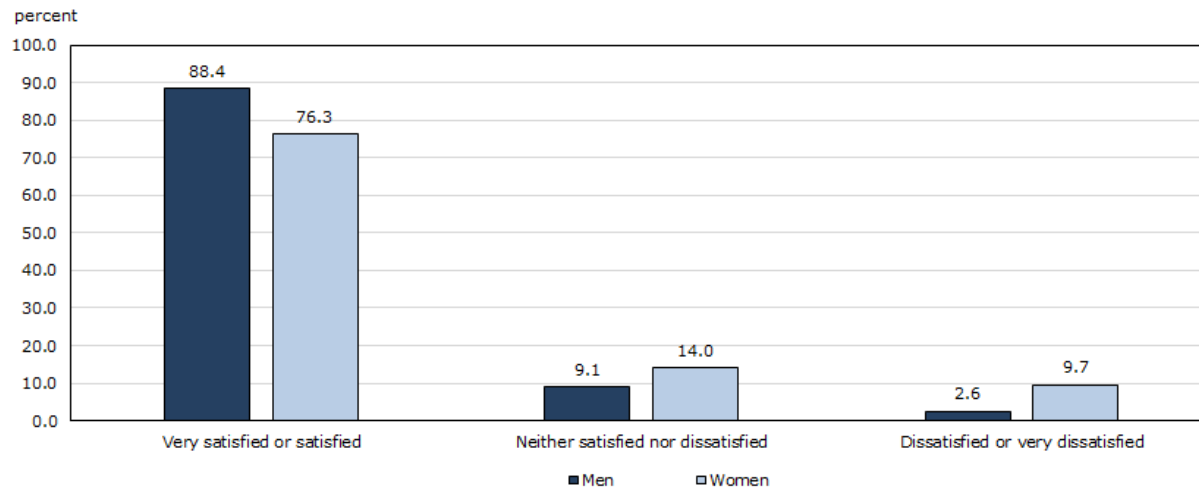
Research has found that men from Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States reported higher levels of satisfaction with the division of household work than women. However, despite an unequal division of labour, a high proportion of women reported that they were satisfied with the division of labour (Baxter and Western 1998). The apparent discrepancy between the unequal distribution of household labour and women’s level of satisfaction has been explained by different theoretical perspectives, such as the relative economic power that the woman has in the household, as well as gender role attitudes and societal norms, which may influence what is considered an appropriate division of labour for each partner (Baxter and Western 1998; Geist 2005; van Hooff 2011). Therefore, while there may be an inequitable division of labour within a household, couples might not necessarily be dissatisfied with their situation.

However, recent research from Germany has also found that women’s satisfaction with the division of housework has been decreasing while men’s has been increasing (Leopold 2019). Therefore, despite fewer hours spent doing housework than earlier cohorts, women have become less satisfied with their division of this housework. Leopold (2019) attributes this to changing gender role attitudes, noting that, since more recent cohorts of women are more highly educated and hold more egalitarian attitudes, they are more likely to devalue household tasks. However, changing gender role attitudes may also lessen men’s perception of housework as a gendered task, resulting in their increased satisfaction with the division of housework.

The results show that the majority of both women and men were satisfied or very satisfied with the division of unpaid labour within their household (Chart 10). However, women were less likely than men to report that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the division of unpaid labour

(76.3% and 88.4%, respectively). Women were also more likely than men to report dissatisfaction with the division of household tasks—nearly 1 in 10 women (9.7%) reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, compared with 2.6% of men.²¹ Additional analysis indicated that women were less likely to report being satisfied or very satisfied even when sociodemographic and employment differences were accounted for in a regression model (results are not shown but are available upon request).

Chart 10
Satisfaction with the division of household tasks, by sex, 2016



Notes: The sample was made up of opposite-sex couples (either married or common law) who resided in the same household. All differences between men and women were statistically significant at $p < 0.001$.

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2016 General Social Survey – Canadians at Work and Home (Cycle 30).

Further investigation into the characteristics of men and women who were dissatisfied with their division of housework is useful for understanding differences in their levels of satisfaction. Ordinary least squares (OLS) regression models²² examining the relationships between sociodemographic and employment characteristics with the likelihood of being dissatisfied with the division of housework were conducted for both men and women. By examining each sex separately, questions about whether different factors are associated with women’s and men’s dissatisfaction with the division of housework can be addressed. Overall, marital status was not associated with the likelihood of being dissatisfied with the division of housework for either men or women (Table 1).

Furthermore, most other characteristics were not significant predictors of men’s dissatisfaction. However, some interesting results were found for women.

First, women who were in older couples (both partners aged 45 or older) were more dissatisfied with the division of housework than women in younger couples (both partners aged 30 to 44 and both partners younger than 30).

While the presence of children younger than 15 was not a statistically significant predictor of men’s dissatisfaction with the division of housework, it was for women. Women who had children younger than 15 were more likely to be dissatisfied with the division of housework than women who had no children younger than 15. This was true for both women who had a least one child younger than 5 and women who had older children.

21. These differences are statistically significant at $p < 0.001$.

22. Although the dependent variable is dichotomous (i.e., dissatisfied or very dissatisfied coded as 1 and neither satisfied or dissatisfied and satisfied or very satisfied coded as 0), OLS regressions were used for ease of interpretation. However, probit and logit models were also run to examine the appropriateness of employing OLS models. The marginal probabilities produced from these models were consistent with the results from the OLS models.

Couples' educational attainment played a role in both men's and women's dissatisfaction with the division of housework. Men who did not have a postsecondary credential but whose partner did, as well as men who were in a relationship in which neither partner had a postsecondary education, were less likely to be dissatisfied with the division of housework than men who were in a relationship in which both partners had a postsecondary education. However, women who had a postsecondary education and whose partner did not have a postsecondary education were more likely to report being dissatisfied with their division of housework than women who were in a relationship in which both partners had a postsecondary education.

Furthermore, while immigrant status was not associated with men's dissatisfaction with the division of housework in their households, it was a factor for women. When both partners were Canadian born, women were more likely to be dissatisfied than immigrant women whose partner was also an immigrant. Similarly, Canadian-born women whose partner was an immigrant were more likely to be dissatisfied with the division of housework than immigrant women whose partner was an immigrant.

Lastly, employment status was also a predictor of dissatisfaction among women. Women who worked full time as a paid employee or in self-employment were more likely to be dissatisfied with the division of housework than their counterparts who did not work. However, there was not a statistically significant difference in dissatisfaction among women who worked part time and women who worked full time.

Table 1
Ordinary least squares regression of the likelihood of being dissatisfied with the division of household tasks on sociodemographic and employment factors, men and women, 2016

	Men		Women	
	Coefficient	Standard error	Coefficient	Standard error
Age group of couple				
Both partners aged 45 or older (reference group)	...	...	...	...
Both partners aged 30 to 44	-0.009	0.012	-0.036 †	0.021
Both partners younger than 30	-0.015	0.014	-0.054 *	0.025
Partners are of mixed ages	-0.010	0.012	0.000	0.025
Presence of children younger than 15				
No children younger than 15 (reference group)	...	...	...	...
Children younger than 15, youngest aged between 5 and 14	-0.002	0.010	0.046 *	0.022
Children younger than 15, youngest younger than 5	0.020	0.014	0.065 **	0.020
Couple's level of education				
Both have a postsecondary education	...	...	...	...
Man has a postsecondary education, woman does not	-0.006	0.011	0.000	0.016
Woman has a postsecondary education, man does not	-0.024 **	0.007	0.041 *	0.020
Neither has a postsecondary education	-0.021 *	0.008	0.009	0.017
Couple's immigrant status				
Both partners are immigrants (reference group)	...	...	...	...
Both partners are Canadian born	0.012	0.009	0.038 *	0.015
Man is an immigrant, woman is Canadian born	0.009	0.014	0.103 **	0.033
Woman is an immigrant, man is Canadian born	0.000	0.012	0.032	0.026
Marital status				
In a common-law relationship (reference group)	...	...	...	...
Legally married	0.015	0.011	0.020	0.016
Employment status				
Worked full-time as a paid employee or in self-employment (reference group)	...	...	...	...
Worked part-time as a paid employee or in self-employment	0.002	0.014	-0.020	0.018
Did not work	-0.007	0.008	-0.055 ***	0.012

... not applicable

* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

** significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.01$)

*** significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.001$)

† significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.10$)

Note: The sample was made up of opposite-sex couples (either married or common law) who resided in the same household.

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2016 General Social Survey – Canadians at Work and Home (Cycle 30).

5 Conclusion

The division of household labour has been identified as a key aspect of equality between women and men. Substantial increases in women's labour force participation and educational attainment over the past few decades have resulted in an examination of whether their work within the home has also changed over time. While most research indicates that women continue to assume the majority of unpaid labour within their homes, there has been a convergence between the hours that women and men spend doing household labour.

One drawback of the previous literature examining the gender division of unpaid labour is that little information is known about differences in couples' perceptions of the division of household labour between different subgroups of couples, particularly within the Canadian context. This study addressed these gaps by examining differences in the division of household and child care tasks reported by couples that represent various sociodemographic groups.

Overall, the majority of couples reported only a few household tasks as being done mostly by the woman or mostly by the man. However, women were more likely to assume primary responsibility for routine tasks such as meal preparation and laundry. Conversely, outside work (e.g., repairs) was a male-dominated task. These results are consistent with previous literature that found that women tended to primarily perform more routine household tasks, while men took on many non-routine tasks, particularly those related to household repairs (e.g., Barnett and Shen 1997; Coltrane 2000; Houle, Turcotte and Wendt 2017; Marshall 2006; Moyser and Burlock 2018).

More than one-third of couples reported that the woman was primarily responsible for performing the child care tasks, with a much smaller proportion reporting that these tasks were performed primarily by the man. This suggests that, in households where child care tasks are not shared equally, this work is done primarily by the woman. However, a majority of couples reported equally sharing child care tasks such as supervising children (55.2%), taking children to activities (55.2%) and performing children's bedtime activities (55.8%). While these results seem to counter time-use data indicating that women spend more time than men doing child care tasks, some of this difference may be explained by the types of child care tasks studied. For example, Moyser and Burlock (2018) found that the gender gap in the amount of time men and women spent doing child care tasks was narrower for tasks related to child engagement, development and education.

Increases in the proportion of couples who reported sharing household tasks equally were also observed between 2011 and 2017 for the majority of household tasks. Despite the short time period examined, only two of the eight tasks that could be examined—gardening and organizing the household's social life—remained static. These increases were driven in large part by decreases in the tasks that couples reported as being performed primarily by the woman.

Couples' educational attainment played a role in their division of household tasks. Generally, couples in which both partners had a postsecondary education were more likely to report sharing tasks equally than couples in which neither partner had a postsecondary education. These results align with previous research that found greater equality in the division of household labour among more highly educated couples (e.g., Sullivan 2010).

Immigrant status was also associated with variations in couples' division of labour. While both immigrant and Canadian-born couples were more likely to report that most tasks were done primarily by the woman rather than by the man, some interesting differences were observed. For example, compared with Canadian-born couples, a higher proportion of immigrant couples reported that the man assumed primary responsibility for several routine household tasks. This difference may be attributable in part to the fact that immigrants are—on average—more highly educated than the Canadian-born population (Statistics Canada 2017b). Because of Canada's immigrant selection system, immigrants often arrive with high levels of education, which could influence the gender division of labour in their households. Therefore, these results may be specific to Canada and may not be comparable with results in other nations.

Previous research indicates that parenthood generally increases the time that women spend doing unpaid work in the household and that the birth of a child typically decreases women's paid work hours but has little effect on men's paid work hours (Frenette 2011; Sanchez and Thomson 1997). This study showed that the age of a couple's youngest child mattered. Couples who had at least one child younger than 5 were more likely to report that the man assumed primary responsibility for housework and gardening than couples with older children. Moreover, couples whose youngest child was younger than 5 were more likely than those with older children to report sharing the supervision task equally. This is consistent with a previous Canadian study that found that fathers with younger children were more involved in child care tasks than those with older children (Houle, Turcotte and Wendt 2017).

Lastly, this study contributes new information about Canadian couples' level of satisfaction with the division of unpaid labour in their households. Overall, the vast majority of men and women in Canadian couples were either satisfied or very satisfied with the division of household labour. However, women were less likely to report being satisfied with the division of housework than men. These results are in accordance with studies from other countries (e.g., Baxter and Western 1998) and suggest that there is some discrepancy in the degree to which women and men are satisfied with the amount of household work they perform. Furthermore, some characteristics, such as having children younger than 15, immigrant status and employment status were associated with different levels of satisfaction with this division among women.

This study provides a first look at the differences in the division of household and child care tasks between sociodemographic groups, advancing our knowledge of the division of unpaid labour among different types of couples in Canada. One limitation of this study is that the descriptive findings presented do not account for other factors that may play an intervening role in these differences. Further investigation into factors such as age or employment status would contribute to a greater understanding of these differences.

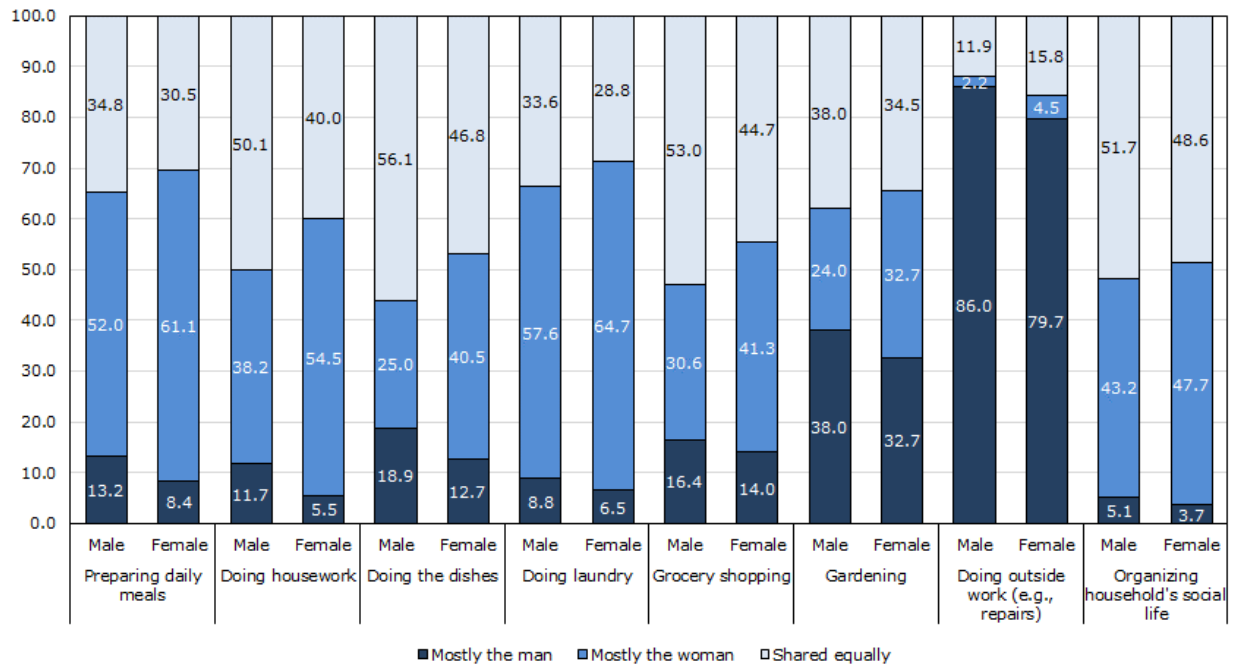
The results presented in this study can provide policy makers with insight into which groups have more or less equity in their unpaid labour. They also indicate which tasks may be most likely to become distributed more equally with changes in couples' sociodemographic characteristics.

It is important to note that the results presented in this study reflect the gender division of household and child care tasks prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is possible that the gender gap in these types of unpaid labour may change during and after the pandemic. Monitoring these trends in the future will be important as they hold important implications for women's opportunities in the paid labour market. In fact, a recent article (Zossou 2021) has looked at the gender division of six household tasks at the aggregate level (not by socio-economic characteristics), including doing the dishes, housework, laundry, meal preparation, household finances, and grocery shopping). In each case, the proportion of members of opposite-sex couples who reported that the task was mostly done by the man increased between 2017 and 2020 (between June 15 and 21). Monitoring trends in other tasks traditionally performed by either the woman (e.g. childcare) or the man (e.g. outside work) will be important to determine the full impact of COVID-19 on work sharing within couples.

6 Appendix

Appendix Chart A.1
Reported division of household tasks, by sex of respondent, 2017

percent



Note: The sample was made up of opposite-sex couples (either married or common law) who resided in the same household.
Source: Statistics Canada, 2017 General Social Survey – Canadians at Work and Home (Cycle 31).

Appendix Table 1

Descriptive information for key variables in the 2011, 2016 and 2017 samples

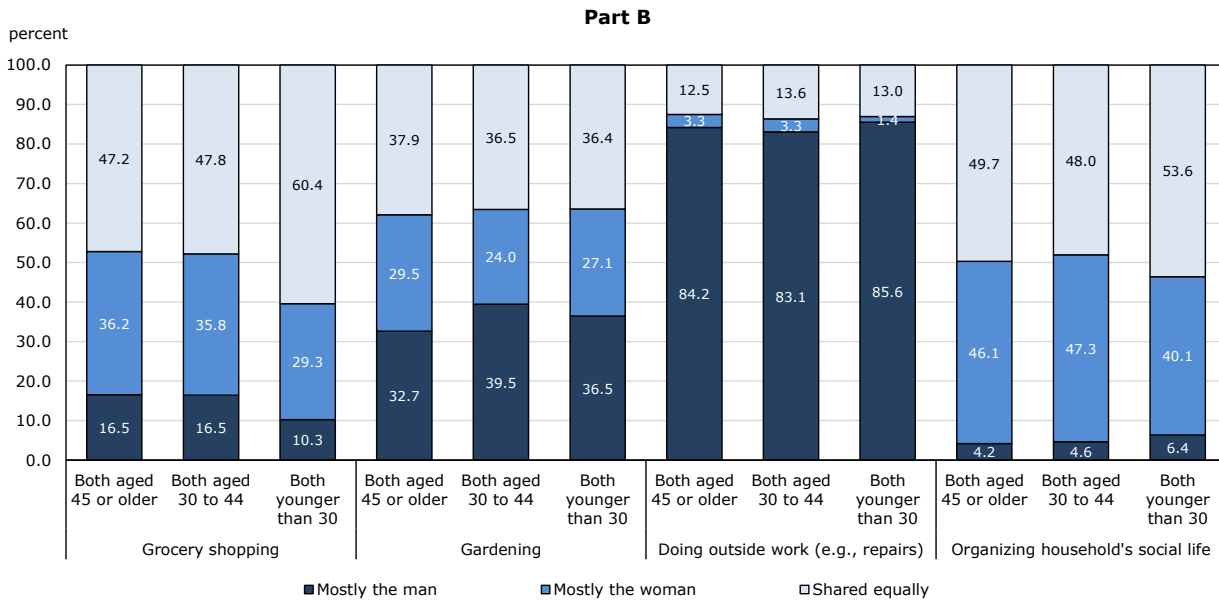
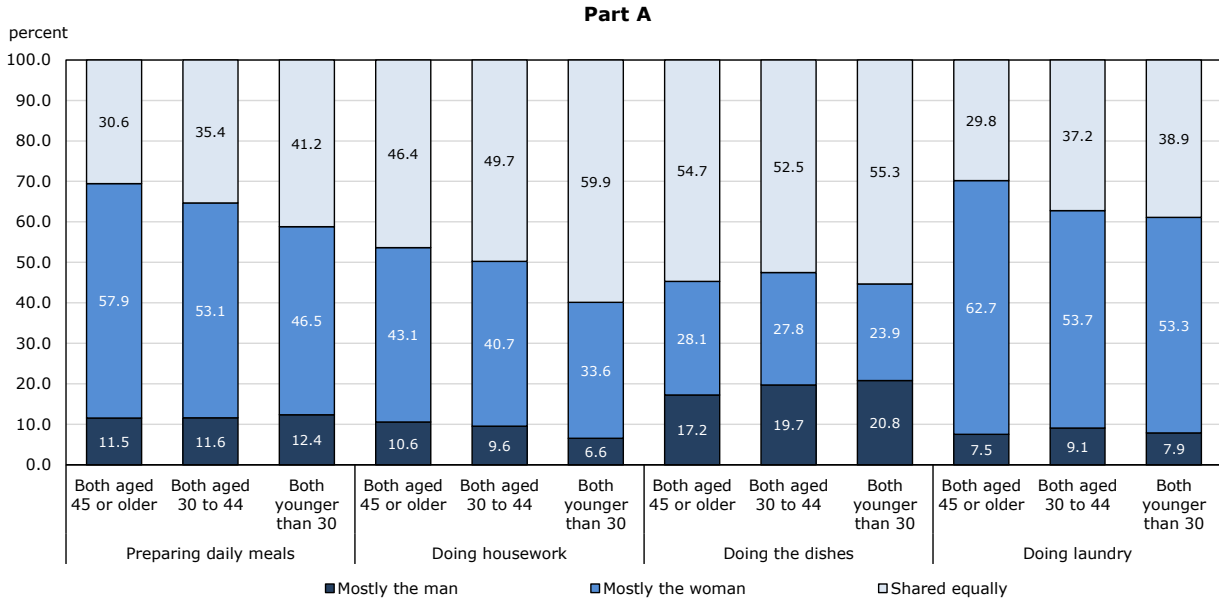
	2011 sample	2016 sample	2017 sample
		percent	
Sex of respondent			
Male	51.4	51.0	51.0
Female	48.6	49.0	49.0
Age group of couple			
Both older (aged 50 or older)	50.1	55.1	53.7
Both younger (younger than 50)	47.8	42.7	44.0
Mixed ages	2.1	2.2	2.3
Couple's level of education			
Both have a postsecondary education	40.5	54.0	54.2
Man has a postsecondary education, woman does not	15.5	12.6	12.1
Woman has a postsecondary education, man does not	16.1	13.5	14.0
Neither has a postsecondary education	27.9	19.8	19.7
Presence of children younger than 15			
No children younger than 15	62.4	65.6	64.6
Children younger than 15, youngest aged between 0 and 4	18.8	16.1	18.3
Children younger than 15, youngest aged between 5 and 14	18.9	18.2	17.1
Couple's immigrant status			
Both immigrants	18.9	21.2	22.3
One immigrant, one Canadian born	12.1	11.7	11.6
Both Canadian born	69.1	67.2	66.2
Man's share of family income			
Man contributes 66.7% or more	...	39.9	37.1
Man contributes between 50.0% and 66.6%	...	30.1	29.9
Man contributes less than 50.0%	...	30.0	33.0
		number	
Sample size	12,787	10,596	11,275

... not applicable

Note: The sample was made up of opposite-sex couples (either married or common law) who resided in the same household.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 General Social Survey – Canadians at Work and Home (Cycle 30) and Statistics Canada, 2017 General Social Survey- Family (Cycle 31).

Appendix Chart A.2
Division of household tasks among couples in which both partners have a postsecondary education, by age group, 2017



Notes: The sample was made up of opposite-sex couples (either married or common law) who resided in the same household. While results were also produced by child care task, there were issues with small sample sizes when breaking these tasks down by both education level and age group.
Sources: Statistics Canada, 2017 General Social Survey – Family (Cycle 31).

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