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**Working Paper**

## Flexible Jobs Make Parents Happier: Evidence from Australia

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SEPTEMBER 2020

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# Flexible Jobs Make Parents Happier: Evidence from Australia

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SEPTEMBER 2020

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## ABSTRACT

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# Flexible Jobs Make Parents Happier: Evidence from Australia

Recent studies have found that self-reported life satisfaction drops during the transition into parenthood which has been mainly attributed to work-family conflict. This study investigates whether different forms of flexible employment can alleviate this drop in parental life satisfaction during this period. A fixed-effects analysis in an event study framework using Australian household survey data (HILDA) delivers convincing evidence that working flexibly indeed alleviates the drop in subjective well-being suggesting that it relieves the stress related to work-family conflict. Moreover, we find substantial gender heterogeneity in the effects different types of flexible employment have on mothers and fathers. Mothers with short part-time jobs (0-20 hours per week) exhibit greater life satisfaction than mothers who work full-time, especially when their children are younger than 4 years old. Among fathers, self-scheduling and home-based work yield a significant increase in perceived happiness as compared to fixed employment terms. This is especially true for fathers of one- and two-years-olds. These results are consistent with a typical intra-household time allocation of parents in Australia.

**JEL Classification:** D1, I31, J13, J16, J21

**Keywords:** subjective well-being, transition to parenthood, work and family, flexible work

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# 1 Introduction

Numerous empirical studies have reached a counter-intuitive conclusion that parents may feel less satisfied with their lives after parenthood compared both to periods prior to having children and to other non-parents (Myrskylä and Margolis, 2014; Cetre et al., 2016; Matysiak et al., 2016; Preisner et al., 2018; Le Moglie et al., 2019).<sup>1</sup> On the one hand, childbirth can enhance parental life satisfaction through both psychological benefits (satisfying of emotional needs) and a utilitarian benefit (providing material support for the family) (Aycicegi-Dinn and Kagitcibasi, 2010) as well as through social engagement (Fawcett, 1988). On the other hand, it often triggers other factors such as financial difficulties (Stanca, 2012; Pollmann-Schult, 2014) and time pressure (Pollmann-Schult, 2014; Buddelmeyer et al., 2018) which can negatively affect life satisfaction. The latter is particularly emphasized for working parents since reconciling work and family life often leads to a work-family conflict (Matysiak et al., 2016).

Labour market decisions may help to achieve a balance between work and family life which can result in higher life satisfaction. To achieve such a balance, some parents may exploit household specialization: one partner participates in the labor market while the other one mainly undertakes domestic work including childcare (Booth and Van Ours, 2009). In dual-earner families with children, parents seek to acquire an adjustable working schedule through either self-employment (mostly women) (Semykina, 2018) or directly through improving the working flexibility in one's job in the wage sector (Minnotte et al., 2016).

The latter is at the center of this study. Using a longitudinal household survey in Australia (HILDA), this paper investigates how subjective well-being (SWB) is affected by flexible employment during the early years of parenthood and whether there is gender heterogeneity in the effects.<sup>2</sup> The panel structure of HILDA benefits us in two aspects. Firstly, it helps to eliminate the endogeneity caused by time-invariant factors. Secondly, knowing how parental status changes over a relatively long period (16 years) enables us to use an event study to capture the progression of SWB in each year relative to childbirth under different forms of flexibility. We find that flexible employment is associated with higher parental SWB during the transition into parenthood. Moreover, we find evidence of substantial gender heterogeneity showing that mothers and fathers SWB responds differently to different forms of flexible employment. Our results are in line with the typical household specialization in Australian households.

Diverse forms of flexible employment (see Hill et al. (2008) for a review) can be generally categorized into three types: *contractual flexibility*, *temporal flexibility* and *spatial flexibility* (Joyce et al., 2010). *Contractual flexibility*

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<sup>1</sup>see Hansen (2012) for a review.

<sup>2</sup>Broadly speaking, happiness can be interpreted as all that is good (Veenhoven, 2012). In this paper, we are consistent with its interpretation of life satisfaction or subjective well-being (SWB) which means how a person evaluates his or her life affectively (through emotional reactions) and cognitively (through cognitive judgements) (Diener et al., 2009).

shortens total working hours and allows part-time jobs which are normally defined as jobs less than 35 weekly working hours (Van Bastelaer et al., 1997). The other two types of flexibility do not necessarily shorten working hours but enable workers to decide the start and end of working hours (e.g. self-scheduling) and the place of work (e.g. work at home) (Hill et al., 2001).

Previous literature has typically focused on the role of *contractual flexibility* and found that women with part-time jobs report higher SWB than women working full-time (Booth and Van Ours, 2008; Álvarez and Miles-Touya, 2016). In addition, Pollmann-Schult (2018) finds working time flexibility can mitigate the physiological stress raised by parenthood. Minnotte et al. (2016) further distinguish the concepts between availability and actual use of working flexibility and argue that the improvement of SWB should be attributed to the actual use instead of the accessibility. To our best knowledge, this study is the first to provide comprehensive comparisons between various forms of flexible working schemes. We analyze all three types of flexible employment within the same population and empirical frameworks, which allows us to assess the relative importance for the different forms of flexible employment on mother's and father's SWB.

The second contribution of our study is that we deliver convincing evidence for significant gender heterogeneity with respect to the effect of the different types of flexible employment on mothers' and fathers' SWB. Previous studies have emphasized the presence of gender heterogeneity regarding how parental SWB is affected by other factors (Aassve et al., 2012; Balbo and Arpino, 2016; Musick et al., 2016; Roeters et al., 2016; Le Moglie et al., 2019). First of all, the magnitude of the effect of childbirth on parental SWB differs between mothers and fathers. Both in Australia and Germany, a birth adds much larger time pressure to a new mother than to a new father (Buddelmeyer et al., 2018). Also, mothers in the USA tend to evaluate their time spent with children with less happiness, more stress and stronger fatigue than fathers (Musick et al., 2016). Second of all, some factors that can affect the SWB for women does not necessarily apply to men (and vice versa). For example, women are more likely to report lower SWB after childbirth when they are well-paid (Le Moglie et al., 2019) and family-orientated (Balbo and Arpino, 2016), whereas the association between these two factors and men's SWB is rather weak. The gender difference can be a result of the division of labour within a couple. When the household specialization is gendered, some factors that are more related to one's specialization (such as childcare) can reasonably make one's SWB more responsive than the partner's (Matysiak et al., 2016). Another possible explanation is that in societies where social norms are restrictive and define distinct family roles by gender, childbearing and child-rearing may have different relevance to the well-being of each gender (Booth and Van Ours, 2009; Preisner et al., 2018). Therefore, we also interpret our findings with some facts about the typical intra-household division of labour in Australia.

Labor market context is extremely important when analyzing flexible employment, especially *contractual flexibility*. In many countries, the presence of *flexibility stigma* meaning that flexible employment (i.e. part-time contracts) is considered inferior to normal employment (i.e. full-time contracts) decreases the productivity and the competitiveness of flexible workers (Cech and Blair-Loy, 2014). Due to this stigma, part-time jobs may not be considered by many workers. Therefore, some workers who would benefit from flexible employment may decline such an arrangement which leads to an underestimation of the effect of flexible employment in these countries. We believe that this is not the case in Australia,<sup>3</sup> where flexible working schemes are well-established (Luppi, 2016) and commonly used by working parents (Shockley et al., 2018). Flexible employment has been developing in Australia for over 30 years. The fast growth of working flexibility began in the 1990s, during which the number of flexible workers had increased by 41% (Kramar, 1998). The growing trend continues in the new century. In 2008, around 56.4% of men and 50.3% of women reported themselves to have high flexibility in terms of work scheduling (Skinner and Pocock, 2008). The right to flexible working arrangement for parents was announced in 2009 and enacted in 2010 by a new labor market legislation, *Fair Work Act 2009*. The new regulation allows parents to request an adjustment of the working hours and the physical workplace once they have worked for the current employer up to one year and have a child who is school-aged or younger. Statistics show that 20.1% employees (15.4% men and 25.1% women) had ever requested such an arrangement until 2014, and nearly 90% of those requests were fully or partially approved (Skinner and Pocock, 2014). Part-time work has also been widely used by Australian parents. Since 2001, the most common combination of labor force status for parents is such that one partner holds a full-time job and the other works part-time, which accounts for over 30% of parents in Australia, while only around 20% parents decide to undertake full-time jobs at the same time (Baxter, 2013). Given the long history, regulatory framework, and the prevalence of flexible employment, we consider setting this study in Australian society is desirable for our purpose.

The remaining of the paper is organized as follows: section 2 discusses the sample and variables used in the empirical estimation; section 3 describes the empirical strategy; section 4 provides the estimation results; section 5 presents robustness checks and section 6 concludes.

## 2 Data and Measurements

We use data from the Household Income and Labour Dynamic in Australia survey (HILDA) for years 2002-2017. It's a national representative longitudinal survey conducted annually since 2001. However, some relevant questions

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<sup>3</sup>Comparable countries are The Netherlands and Scandinavian countries.

regarding working flexibility were not asked in the first wave. Therefore our analysis employs data from wave 2 onward. We restrict our sample to individuals who have at least one child born in the household between 2002 and 2017 and who we can observe in three waves prior to- and in 5 waves after the childbirth. Since we cannot distinguish between biological and adopted children in the data, we only include men and women who had a child before the age of 55 and 45 respectively, under the assumption that adoption is more likely among older parents. In total, the full sample comprises 18,363 male-year and 22,215 female-year observations (3,159 men and 3,721 women). Furthermore, we focus on parents who report having a heterosexual partner in the household as parenthood may affect single and partnered parents differently due to the cost of childbearing and child-rearing in terms of psychological distress, time, and financial burden (Myrskylä and Margolis, 2014; Pollmann-Schult, 2014). Moreover, this allows us to incorporate the partners' information as also done in Booth and Van Ours (2008). We will refer to it as the *main sample*.<sup>4</sup> The number of observations in the *main* sample reduces to 17,097 for male-year and 17,281 female year observations corresponding to 3,057 men and 3,124 women. However, as depicted in Table 1, the exclusion of the single and non-heterosexual parents does not alter the sample composition significantly. The exception is the slightly higher reported SWB and health among women in the main sample which is likely driven by the fact that most excluded observations are single parents (separated, divorced, or widowed).

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<sup>4</sup>We use the full sample to conduct some robustness checks



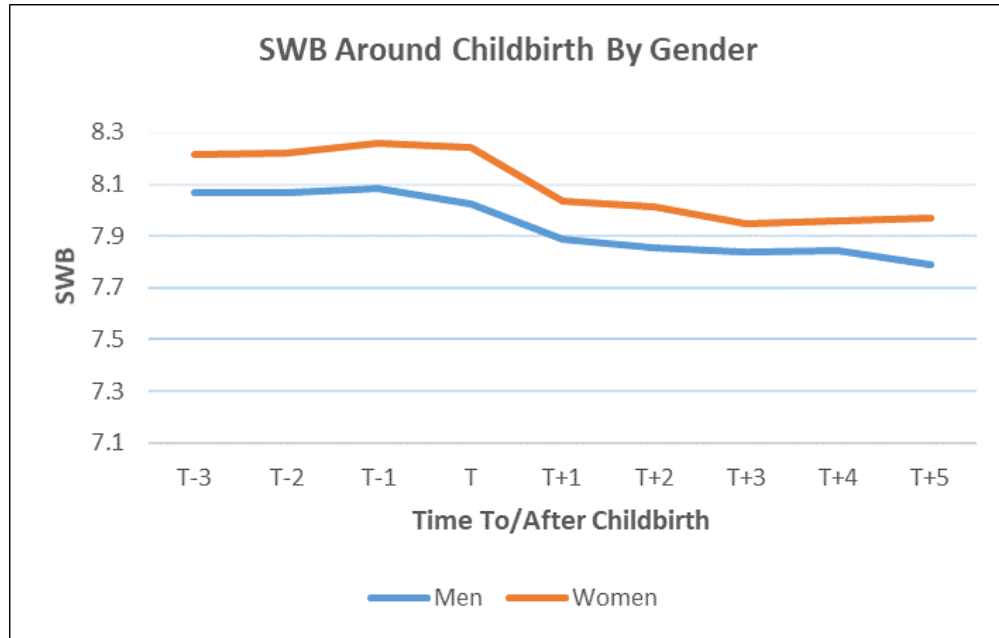
**Table 1:** Descriptive Statistics for Analytical Sample

Variable	Full Sample (N=40,578)				Main Sample (N=34,378)			
	Men (n=18,363)		Women (n=22,215)		Men (n=17,097)		Women (n=17,281)	
	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.
<b>Individual information</b>								
SWB	7.88	1.32	7.94	1.35	7.90	1.29	8.06	1.23
Health	7.45	1.70	7.43	1.80	7.44	1.69	7.50	1.73
Age	34.33	6.99	31.72	6.27	34.57	6.79	32.13	5.99
<b>Household information</b>								
Children under 18	1.69	1.20	1.73	1.21	1.74	1.18	1.75	1.19
- Resident	1.57	1.14	1.70	1.18	1.63	1.12	1.73	1.16
- Non-resident	0.12	0.46	0.03	0.25	0.11	0.45	0.02	0.21
Use of childcare	0.55	0.50	0.56	0.50	0.57	0.50	0.57	0.50
Household income (in thousands)	92.61	50.64	87.06	50.21	93.85	50.31	93.30	49.78
<b>Labour market information</b>								
Not working	0.09	0.29	0.42	0.49	0.08	0.28	0.40	0.49
Part-time (PT)	0.07	0.25	0.33	0.47	0.06	0.25	0.34	0.48
Full-time (FT)	0.84	0.37	0.25	0.43	0.85	0.35	0.26	0.44
<i>within PT</i>								
- 0-20 hours	0.39	0.49	0.57	0.50	0.37	0.48	0.58	0.49
- 21-34 hours	0.61	0.49	0.43	0.50	0.63	0.48	0.42	0.49
<i>within FT</i>								
- 35-40 hours	0.42	0.49	0.67	0.47	0.42	0.49	0.68	0.47
- 41-50 hours	0.37	0.48	0.25	0.43	0.37	0.48	0.25	0.43
- >50 hours	0.21	0.41	0.08	0.27	0.21	0.41	0.07	0.26
<i>Given Employed</i>								
- Temporally flexible	0.62	0.49	0.62	0.49	0.62	0.49	0.62	0.48
- Spatially flexible	0.30	0.46	0.33	0.47	0.30	0.46	0.35	0.48
Supervise others	0.53	0.50	0.25	0.43	0.54	0.50	0.26	0.44
Self-employment	0.17	0.37	0.07	0.26	0.17	0.38	0.08	0.26

SWB is elicited with a single question where respondents are asked to evaluate their overall life satisfaction with an integer number between 0 (totally dissatisfied) and 10 (totally satisfied). Based on different assumptions, self-evaluated happiness can be interpreted as either cardinal or ordinal numbers. However, Ferrer-i Carbonell and Frijters (2004); Van Praag et al. (2004) have shown that distinguishing between these two assumptions about life satisfaction is trivial to the estimated results. For simplicity, we assume the cardinality of SWB which allows us to use a linear model in this study.<sup>5</sup> Figure 1 presents the trajectory of SWB around the transition to parenthood (from 3 years ahead of childbirth to 5 years after it).  $T$  denotes the year of childbirth, and  $-/+$  refers to a preceding/following period to childbirth. Although the average SWB is around 8 during this period as shown in Table 1, from this figure we can

<sup>5</sup>Similar approach has been used in numerous studies concerning SWB such as Clark et al. (2008); Frijters et al. (2011); Margolis and Myrskylä (2011); Stanca (2012); Clark and Georgellis (2013); Matysiak et al. (2016). Nevertheless, we realize that the debate of the ordinal or cardinal nature of SWB has not been settled (Bond and Lang (2019) as an example). To verify our results, we collapse SWB into a binary variable with 8 or 9 as a cutoff corresponding to 70% or 33% 'satisfied' observations and estimate with a fixed-effects logit model. The results (not shown but available on request) are consistent with those from a linear model.

see a sharp decrease of SWB for both men and women between  $T$  and  $T + 1$  showing that parents feel less satisfied with their life after childbirth compared to the pre-birth periods. Moreover, this figure also shows that parental SWB remains below the pre-birth levels until the 5<sup>th</sup> year after childbirth as the end of the observation window.



**Figure 1:** Trajectories of SWB at the stage of parenthood by gender.  $T$  denotes the birth year of a child.  $T + /-s$  means  $s$  periods (years) before(-) or after(+) this childbirth.

We distinguish between three forms of flexible employment: *contractual*, *temporal* and *spatial*. *Contractual* flexibility is first broadly reflected by labor force status: full-time, part-time and not working.<sup>6</sup> We also define *contractual* flexibility more precisely using working hour intervals based on a question about typical weekly working hours. As presented in Table 1 men are much more likely to work (only 8% of men and 40% of women are not working), and they are also more likely to work more hours (85% of men report full-time employment versus 26% of women).<sup>7</sup> These crude summary statistics confirm that part-time jobs are more prevalent among mothers in Australia, especially when the children are very young (0-6 years old) (Baxter, 2013).

*Temporal* flexibility is defined as the possibility of a flexible start and end time of a working day (self-scheduling) and *spatial* flexibility refers to the possibility of home-based work. No major differences with respect to these forms

<sup>6</sup>We combine unemployment and not in the labor force into the not working category, and 35 hours per week is used as a threshold to distinguish full-time and part-time employment.

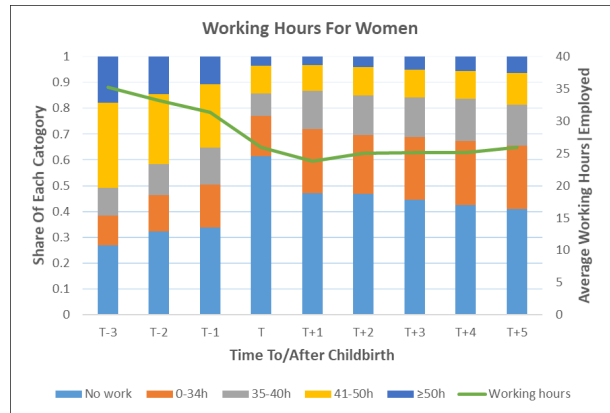
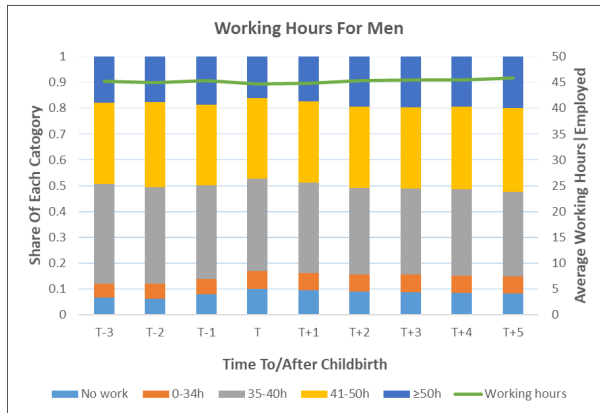
<sup>7</sup>Low rate of employment among women is partly due to parental leave in some observational periods. In Australia, there are generally three possibilities regarding parental leave for women: unpaid leave, government-funded paid leave and employer-funded paid leave. Employer-funded parental leave is contingent on the agreement or contract between an employer and an employee; government-funded leave is provided to the primary carer at the national minimum wage for 18 weeks; and unpaid leave for 12 months is guaranteed, which can also be extended for another 12 months by request. More details can be found here (<https://www.fairwork.gov.au/leave/maternity-and-parental-leave>). In HILDA, the first two cases are treated as not in the labor force.

between men and women can be found (Table 1) noting that *temporal* flexibility seems to be more popular than *spatial* flexibility as 62% working of men and women are entitled to self-scheduling while only about 32% have access to home-based work.

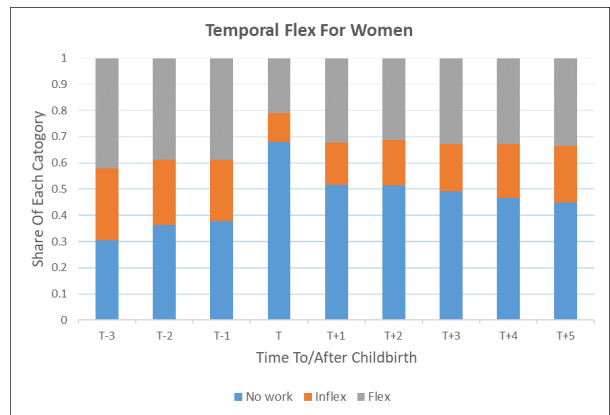
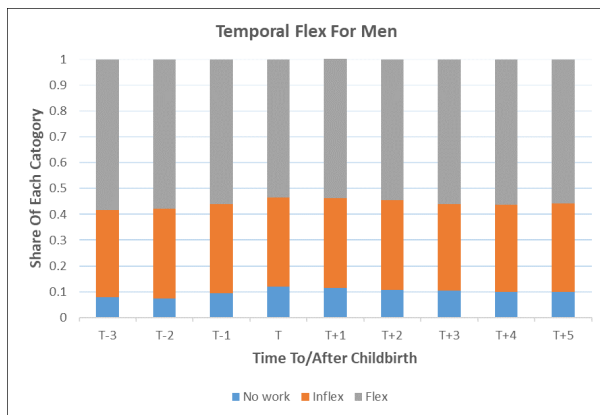
Looking at the distribution of different forms of flexible employment among fathers and mothers during the transition to parenthood, Figure 2 reveals that mothers are more likely to adjust their working lives than fathers. Each panel corresponds to a different type of flexibility. In each chart, a single bar represents the shares of different levels of flexibility in a specific period relative to childbirth which add up to 1. For Panel A, the green line corresponds to the secondary y-axis and shows the average working hour in each period for employed people. Among men, there is limited variation across periods for all types of flexibility and working hours: the majority of men work full-time (between 35-50 hours per week) throughout the transition to parenthood and about 60% of men are entitled to self-scheduling and 30% to home bases work. These facts are consistent with some findings in the literature: Baxter (2019) find that most fathers in Australia hold full-time jobs even if they can to switch to part-time jobs while Baxter (2013) find that fathers' use of flexible arrangement (including self-scheduling and home-based work) does not vary with the age of children. In contrast, nearly 70% of women do not work at the year of childbirth which is 30% more than the previous year as depicted on the right-hand-side graph in Panel A.<sup>8</sup> Despite some decrease in the following years, the proportion of non-working women is still much larger after childbirth. Moreover, the green line noting the average working hours shows that employed women spend 30-35 hours per week on their work before childbirth while the weekly hours are only slightly over 25 after childbirth. This further confirms that women who stay in the labour market after childbirth tend to reduce weekly hours and opt for part-time jobs (Baxter, 2013).

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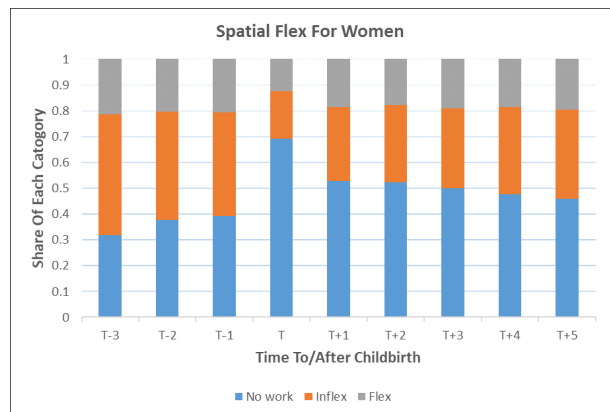
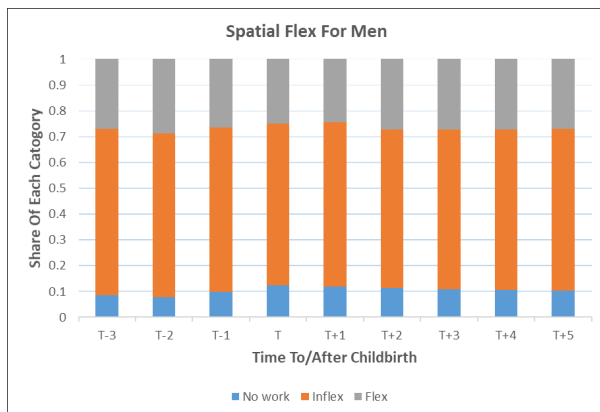
<sup>8</sup>As stated in Note 7, this figure may include some mothers in government-funded or unpaid leave.



Panel A: Contractual Flexibility



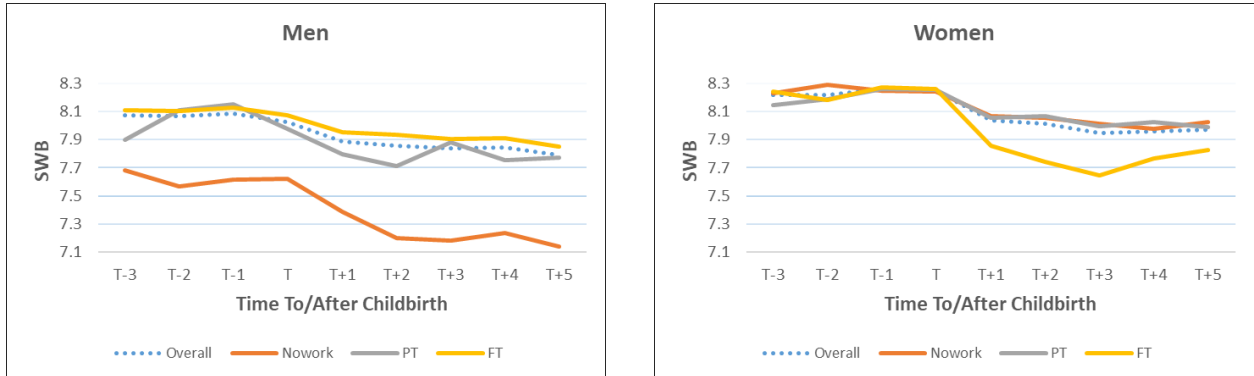
Panel B: Temporal Flexibility



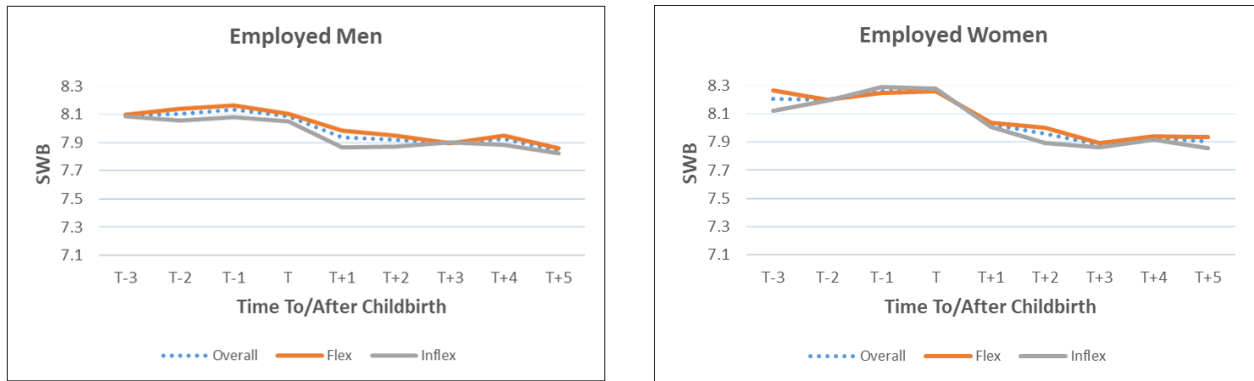
Panel C: Spatial Flexibility

**Figure 2:** Share of each level of working flexibility in different time periods around the transition into parenthood by gender.  $T$  denotes the birth year of a child.  $T + / - s$  means  $s$  periods (years) before(-) or after(+) this childbirth. The dashed line is the average trajectory for each gender

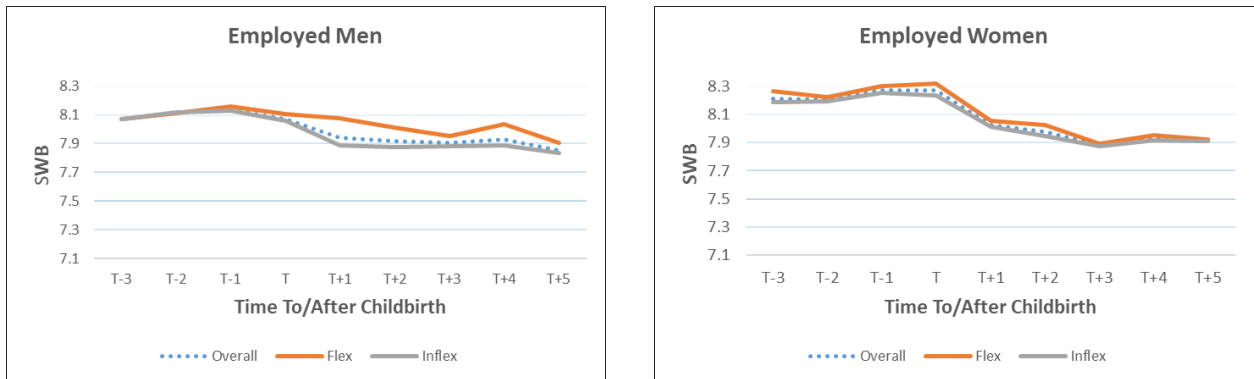
Figure 3 summarizes SWB around the transition into parenthood separately for men and women by working flexibility. In each graph, solid lines represent SWB among individuals in the different types of flexible employment, and the dashed line denotes the overall SWB in each period. According to Panel A, men without any jobs have much lower SWB than those with a job, which may highlight the importance of employment for men in Australia. Among employed men, there is little difference between men in part-time and full-time jobs. Among women, labor force status appears to affect SWB mainly after childbirth. Part-time or non-working mothers have much higher SWB than full-time mothers in some post-birth periods. We also find men's SWB is associated with *temporal* and *spatial* flexibility when their children are young (such as 1-2 years old). In Panel B, men with temporal flexibility have slightly higher SWB than those without it at  $T + 1$ . Home-based work appears to have an even more pronounced effect in  $T + 1$  and  $T + 2$  as depicted in Panel C. However, both *temporal* and *spatial* flexibility do not seem to affect women's SWB suggesting the presence of substantial gender heterogeneity. Mothers' SWB appears to be sensitive to *contractual* flexibility, while *temporal* and *spatial* flexibility appear to matter more for fathers' SWB.



Panel A: Contractual Flexibility



Panel B: Temporal Flexibility



Panel C: Spatial Flexibility

**Figure 3:** Trajectories of SWB at the stage of parenthood by gender and types of flexibility. T denotes the birth year of a child.  $T + / -s$  means s periods (years) before(-) or after(+) this childbirth. The dashed line is the average trajectory for each gender.

### 3 Empirical Strategy

We employ an event-study framework with a fixed-effects model. This approach enables us to draw a trajectory of SWB during the transition to parenthood. This is important for two reasons. First of all, according to the set-point theory of happiness, while SWB (from a life-course perspective) is relatively stable at a level predetermined by biological and social endowments (Matysiak et al., 2016), a life-changing event of becoming a parent can cause transitory variation in SWB (Clark et al., 2008; Clark and Georgellis, 2013; Frijters et al., 2011).<sup>9</sup> Moreover, this transitory variation may even start prior to the event when expectations concerning the event are formed (Frijters et al., 2011). Therefore, the time profile of SWB around a life-changing event can be divided into two phases: an *anticipation* effect (deviation from the baseline happiness before an event), and an *adaptation* effect (recovery to the baseline level after the event). Due to the leads and lags of SWB resulted from these two effects, our empirical framework focuses on multiple periods during the transition into parenthood to capture the dynamics of SWB in each period. Second of all, a within-individual analysis accounts for all time-invariant factors that impact SWB, including the difference in reporting styles.<sup>10</sup>

Our basic specification is as follow:

$$SWB_{it} = \sum_{s=-2}^5 \phi_s Period_{T+s,it} + \mathbf{job}_{it}'\boldsymbol{\beta} + \mathbf{x}_{it}'\boldsymbol{\gamma} + \alpha_i + \mu_t + \epsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

where  $SWB_{it}$  represents the subjective well-being of individual  $i$  in year  $t$ ;  $Period_{its}$  is a period dummy variable indicating that it is the  $s^{th}$  year away from childbirth;<sup>11</sup>  $\mathbf{job}_{it}$  is a vector of job characteristics including flexibility (such as working hours), a dummy for self-employment, a dummy for supervision roles and partner’s job characteristics;<sup>12</sup>  $\mathbf{x}_{it}$  is a vector of other control variables which can be broadly categorized into household and individual level controls.

At the household level, we control for household income (in logarithm) which reflects the impact of financial situation on parental SWB;<sup>13</sup> the number of resident and non-resident children under 18 as not only the transition into parenthood but the number of children also matters for SWB; use of childcare service as it can be an alternative

<sup>9</sup>Lucas et al. (2004) and Clark et al. (2008) point out that certain life-changing events (including parenthood) can temporarily deviate SWB from its base level.

<sup>10</sup>For example, depending on the personality type, individuals may over- or under-estimate the SWB. Personality type might also correlate with the preference for full- and part-time employment (recall the flexibility stigma mentioned above). Under the assumption that personality is constant over time, the within-transformation with panel data removes the confounding factor of personality.

<sup>11</sup>As shown in eq. (1), the observation window is from period  $T - 3$  to  $T + 5$  ( $T - 3$  is omitted as a reference period). The same observation window has been used by Le Moglie et al. (2019). Meanwhile, previous studies have found that a significant anticipation effect generally begins at  $T - 2$  or  $T - 1$ , and a significant adaptation effect ends before  $T - 5$  (Clark et al., 2008; Frijters et al., 2011; Clark and Georgellis, 2013; Le Moglie et al., 2019). Therefore, the window used here should enable us to observe a complete time profile of SWB.

<sup>12</sup>Despite having autonomy on working hours and workplace by definition, self-employed workers are still included in our analysis as some of them in the sample still report no self-scheduling (23%) or no home-based work (50%). The estimation results without the self-employed are not different from the main results

<sup>13</sup>Due to some extreme values in the household income distribution, the top 1% and bottom 1% household income are replaced with the value of the 1<sup>th</sup> and 99<sup>th</sup> percentile, which are A\$315,053 and A\$21,500 respectively.

solution for flexible employment. At the individual level, we control for respondent’s health status and squared age.<sup>14</sup> We also control for the partner’s individual information (health and squared age) and partner’s level of work flexibility to capture how one’s SWB is impacted by the partner’s working condition.<sup>15</sup> We also include individual and time (yearly) fixed effects with  $\alpha_i$  and  $\mu_t$  respectively, and  $\epsilon_{it}$  is an idiosyncratic error term. The model is estimated separately for men and women to account for gender heterogeneity in the effects of flexible employment on parental SWB.<sup>16</sup>

The period indicators,  $Period_{T+s,it}$ , are essential elements in an event study analysis. We explain how they are formulated in detail with a hypothetical example in Table 2. Suppose we have information for an individual  $i$  for 7 consecutive years ( $t \in [1, 7]$ ). During these 7 years, individual  $i$  has two children: one in year 1 and the other in year 5 whose ages in each year  $t$  are also shown in Table 2. The right-hand side of Table 2 is the period indicators generated from the ages of these children where  $T$  corresponds to the year of birth of a child.<sup>17</sup> In year  $t$ , a period indicator  $Period_{T+s,it}$  takes a value 1 if this year corresponds to the  $T+s$  period relative to the birth of a child born in  $T$  and 0 otherwise. The earliest period in our scope is  $T - 3$ , three periods before childbirth; and the latest period in our scope is  $T + 5$ , five periods after childbirth. For individual  $i$ , as the first child is aged 0 in year 1, indicator  $T$  corresponding to the birth of this child equals to 1. Since the second childbirth will take place in year 5, year 1 is the 4<sup>th</sup> period before this childbirth, which is outside of our observation window (earlier than  $T - 3$ ). Therefore, this birth is too early to be reflected by an indicator. As a result, in year 1, the remaining indicators are zero. However, this is not the case for year 2. Year 2 is both 1 period after the first childbirth and 3 periods before the second birth where both are in our scope. Accordingly,  $T + 1$  and  $T - 3$  are equal to 1. Consequently, in each following year up to year 6, two corresponding indicators are equal to 1 to denote the period relative to these two childbirth in each year  $t$ . Finally, in year 7, only indicator  $T + 2$  equals to 1 for the second child as it has been the 6<sup>th</sup> period after the birth of the first child, which is, again, out of the range of the period indicators in our model.

Since an indicator,  $Period_{T+s,it}$ , shows the period relative to childbirth, its coefficient  $\phi_s$  captures the variation of SWB when a respondent is in this period. Thereby, coefficients for all period indicators can altogether capture

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<sup>14</sup>Pointed out by Kassenboehmer and Haisken-DeNew (2012), there might be a ‘learning effect’ for SWB which means participants tend to report more negative SWB when they are asked this question more often. We address this issue by adding how many waves one has participated as a control variable in a robustness test (not shown). Our results remain unchanged conditional on this factor.

<sup>15</sup>We are aware that flexible employment may affect SWB via one’s and the partner’s health. Such an effect may be absorbed if health-related factors are included as a control variable. We also estimate the model without one’s and the partner’s health, and the results are not qualitatively different from the main results.

<sup>16</sup>Due to an expectation that the relationship between SWB and child-related factors is gender-specific, a separate estimation by gender is a common practice in literature (Aassve et al., 2012; Myrskylä and Margolis, 2014; Matysiak et al., 2016; Pollmann-Schult, 2018; Le Moglie et al., 2019).

<sup>17</sup>We only generate indicators from ages of resident children. Here we implicitly assume these two children live together with individual  $i$ .



**Table 2:** A Hypothetical Example to Illustrate the Construction of Period Indicators

Year (t)	Ages of Children		Period Indicators								
	Child 1	Child 2	T-3	T-2	T-1	T	T+1	T+2	T+3	T+4	T+5
1	0	.	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
2	1	.	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
3	2	.	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
4	3	.	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
5	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
6	5	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
7	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0

the trajectory of SWB at the stage of parenthood which is defined as from 3 years before to 5 years after childbirth. Meanwhile, in eq. (1),  $\beta$  represents an overall effect of job-related factors on SWB of parents.

To capture the heterogeneity in the trajectories of SWB with respect to work flexibility, we extend the model to include interaction terms between the period indicators and a variable reflecting the level of job flexibility in vector  $\mathbf{job}_{it}$  and we estimate the following model:

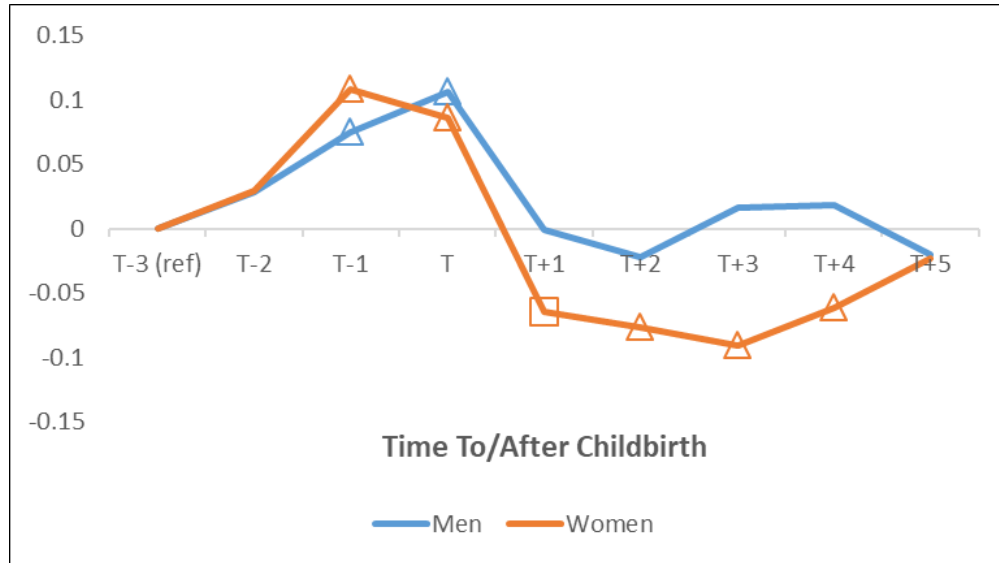
$$SWB_{it} = \sum_{s=-2}^5 (\phi_s Period_{T+s,it} + \psi_s Period_{T+s,it} \times flex_{it}) + \mathbf{job}'_{it}\beta + \mathbf{x}'_{it}\gamma + \alpha_i + \mu_t + \epsilon_{it} \quad (2)$$

where  $flex_{it}$  is the variable for a given type of flexible employment included in  $\mathbf{job}_{it}$ .  $\psi_s$  is the coefficient for the interaction term between flexibility and period indicators capturing how the trajectories of SWB differ with respect to job flexibility in each period  $T + s$ .

## 4 Results

We start with the estimation of the trajectory of SWB during the transition to parenthood (eq. (1)) which is presented in Panel A of Table 3 and Figure 4.<sup>18</sup> Our results are in line with the literature and suggest a presence of both anticipation and adaptation effects (Clark et al., 2008; Clark and Georgellis, 2013). In the pre-birth periods, the coefficients for  $T - 1$  and  $T$  are significantly higher than the reference level at  $T - 3$ , for both men and women. This is suggestive of a positive anticipation effect. In the post-birth periods, men's SWB reverts to the reference level relatively quickly and remains stable at this level for the remaining periods. In contrast, it takes more time for women's SWB to recover to its baseline level as their SWB is significantly lower than the reference level up to  $T - 4$  suggesting a longer adaptation effect.

<sup>18</sup>Due to our interest in diverse forms of flexible employment, we estimate the model for multiple times with different flexible employment variables, which makes the estimated coefficients for period indicators slightly different each time. The coefficients presented here are from the estimation with different labour force status (nowork/PT/FT).



**Figure 4:** Trajectories of SWB at the stage of parenthood by gender.  $T$  denotes the birth year of a child.  $T + / - s$  means  $s$  periods (years) before(-) or after(+) this childbirth. The SWB at period  $T - 3$  is set to be 0 as the reference level for each gender.  $\circ$   $\square$  and  $\triangle$  denote the significance levels are 0.1, 0.05 and 0.01 respectively.

Panel B-E of Table 3 present the estimation results corresponding to different forms of flexible employment. Panel B-C correspond to *contractual* flexibility measured with labor force status (Panel B) and weekly working hours (Panel C). Both sets of results reveal substantial gender heterogeneity with respect to the effect of *contractual* flexibility on SWB during the transition to parenthood. In Panel B, compared to part-time, full-time employment raises men's SWB by 0.09 but reduces women's SWB by -0.07.<sup>19</sup> In contrast, women's SWB is not affected by not working, whereas this status could lead to a -0.14 decline to men's SWB. Similar trends are found for working hours (Panel C). The intervals used in the estimation are: 0-20 hours, 21-34 hours, 35-40 hours, 41-50 hours and more than 50 hours.<sup>20</sup> Although previous results in Panel B suggest full-time employment, as a whole, boosts men's SWB, results in Panel C show that this positive effect is mainly attributed to 35-50 weekly hours because jobs requiring longer weekly hours can hardly improve men's SWB. For women, in general, when working hours get longer, their impact on SWB becomes more negative. Therefore, even within part-time employment, working less than 20 hours a week yields higher SWB than working 21-35 hours a week.

The bottom two panels (Panel D and E) present the results concerning *spatial* and *temporal* flexibility.<sup>21</sup> The results once again confirm the presence of gender heterogeneity, however, in this case, the effects are more pronounced

<sup>19</sup>Considering the standard deviation of SWB is low (1.3), the effect size around 0.1-0.2 is not insubstantial even if it seems small in a 0-10 scale of SWB.

<sup>20</sup>Due to a small sample size, 1-20 hours and 21-34 hours are combined for men; and 41-50 hours and more than 50 hours are combined for women.

<sup>21</sup>Only the working sample is considered in this analysis.

among men. The effectiveness of temporal and spatial flexibility in improving men’s SWB is illustrated by some significantly positive coefficients in Panel D and E although the coefficient of temporal flexibility is only significant at the 10% level. Men with temporal and spatial flexibility are 0.04 and 0.09 higher in their SWB than the inflexible counterparts. However, autonomy in choosing working time and workplace has a negligible and insignificant effect on women’s SWB.

The presence of gender heterogeneity with respect to the forms of flexible employment among parents is in itself interesting, but it is not informative about the intermediary effect of job flexibility on the trajectory of SWB during the transition to parenthood. Therefore, we turn to eq. (2) and extend the model to include interaction terms between period indicators and the different measures of flexible employment. Figure 5 presents the estimated trajectories during the transition to parenthood for different forms of flexible employment, separately for men and women. Top two panels consider *contractual* flexibility (Panel A and B), while the bottom two panels present the results for *spatial* and *temporal* flexibility (Panels C and D, respectively), with graphs for the fathers depicted on the left and for the mothers on the right. In each graph, geometric shapes denote the significance level of the interaction terms between flexible employment and period indicators. A significant interaction term indicates the intermediary effect of job flexibility at a certain period. It means that at a given time period, the difference of the SWB generated by a given level of flexible employment and by the reference level is significantly different than at the baseline period,  $T - 3$ . The output tables used to create Figure 5 is available in Appendix Table A.1.

It appears that *Contractual* flexibility has little effect on men as none of the interaction terms between full-time jobs and period indicators are significant. In fact, the SWB of full-time and part-time workers progresses in a similar way: both exhibit a positive anticipation effect in the pre-birth periods, while SWB remains relatively stable around each respective baseline level after childbirth. However, the SWB of non-workers follows a different path because such a positive anticipation effect does not exist; and non-workers’ SWB is significantly worse at children’s age of 2-3. Using working hours to measure work flexibility<sup>22</sup> confirms that men’s SWB progresses in a similar way regardless of working hours (Panel B). Moreover, as none of the interaction terms turn to be significant, we conclude that *contractual* flexibility might not effectively alter men’s SWB at the stage of parenthood.

A very different story unfolds when we consider mothers. *Contractual* flexibility appears to have a positive effect on mothers’ SWB during the transition into parenthood. Part-time working women first experience a significant increase between  $T - 2$  and  $T - 1$ , and then their SWB fluctuates around the baseline level in subsequent periods.

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<sup>22</sup>We also treat ‘nowork’ as a special category and interact it with period indicators. Since we mainly discuss the role of different working hours, they are not shown in Panel B

SWB of full-time and non-working women also increases in the periods leading to the birth of a child, but then it sharply drops and remains at a lower level than each baseline level for at least three periods. In Panel A, the interaction terms for both non-working and full-time working mothers are significantly negative at  $T + 2$ , which implies some negative effects of these two labour force status on mothers' SWB at  $T + 2$ . Moreover, as depicted in Panel B, such a negative intermediary effect exists in jobs requiring longer than 20 hours at some periods between  $T + 2$  and  $T + 4$  in contrast to women working under 20 hours.

Similarly, to baseline estimates (eq. (1)), an opposite pattern is observed for *temporal* and *spatial* flexibility. While men entitled with self-scheduling and home-based work gain some additional SWB at children's early ages compared to the inflexible counterparts, women's SWB does not seem to be affected in a similar way. Both self-scheduling and home-based work may not make a significant difference in their SWB in any period compared to the situation at  $T - 3$ . This of course can be driven by the types of occupations and jobs. We explore this further in the next section.

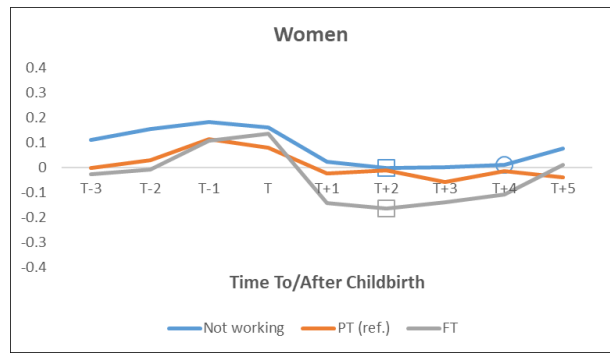
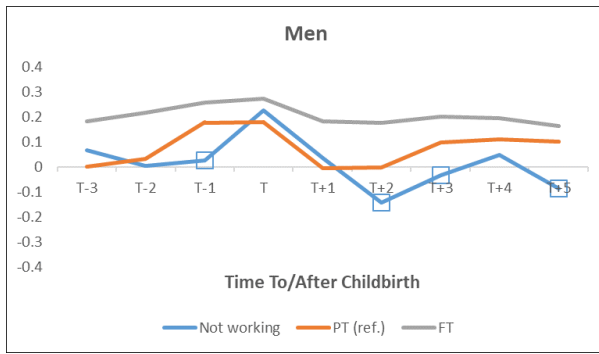
**Table 3:** Fixed-effects Estimation of SWB

Dependent Variable	(1)		(2)		
	Men		Women		
SWB	Coef.	s.e.	Coef.	s.e.	
<b>Panel A: Trajectory of SWB Around Childbirth</b>					
T-2	0.028	0.024	0.030	0.024	
T-1	0.075***	0.023	0.108***	0.023	
T	0.106***	0.027	0.086***	0.027	
T+1	-0.001	0.025	-0.065**	0.025	
T+2	-0.022	0.024	-0.077***	0.024	
T+3	0.016	0.024	-0.090***	0.024	
T+4	0.018	0.025	-0.062***	0.024	
T+5	-0.020	0.025	-0.023	0.024	
Observations	17,097		17,281		
R-squared	0.108		0.124		
Number of ID	3,057		3,124		
<b>Panel B: Contractual Flexibility (Labour Force Status)</b>					
not working	-0.142***	0.047	0.027	0.024	
PT	ref.		ref.		
FT	0.092***	0.036	-0.067***	0.024	
Observations	17,097		17,281		
R-squared	0.108		0.124		
Number of ID	3,057		3,124		
<b>Panel C: Contractual Flexibility (Working Hour Intervals)</b>					
not working	-0.142***	0.047	not working	0.000	0.026
0-34 h	ref.		0-20 h	ref.	
35-40 h	0.108***	0.037	21-34 h	-0.079***	0.028
41-50 h	0.092**	0.038	35-40 h	-0.086***	0.030
>50 h	0.015	0.042	>40 h	-0.179***	0.038
Observations	17,097		17,281		
R-squared	0.108		0.125		
Number of ID	3,057		3,124		
<b>Panel D: Temporal Flexibility</b>					
no self-scheduling	ref.		ref.		
self-scheduling	0.040*	0.022	0.028		
Observations	12,449		8,447		
R-squared	0.098		0.134		
Number of ID	2,625		2,180		
<b>Panel E: Spatial Flexibility</b>					
no home-based work	ref.		ref.		
home-based work	0.085***	0.025	0.048		
Observations	11,703		8,048		
R-squared	0.100		0.130		
Number of ID	2,603		2,135		

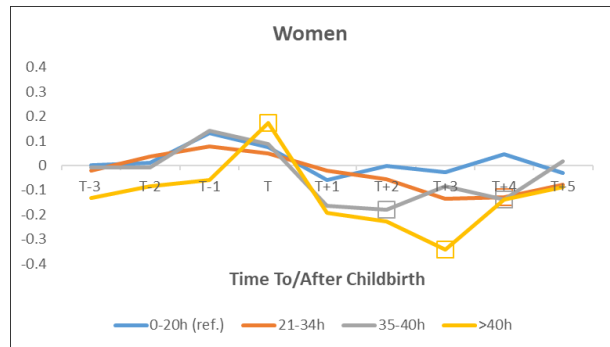
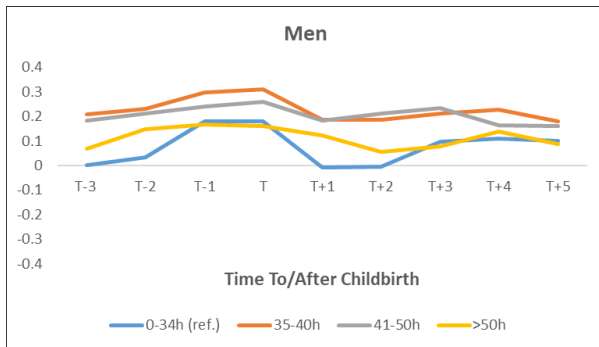
\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Results in Panel A are from the estimation together with the labour force status. Therefore, results in Panel A and B are from the same estimation.

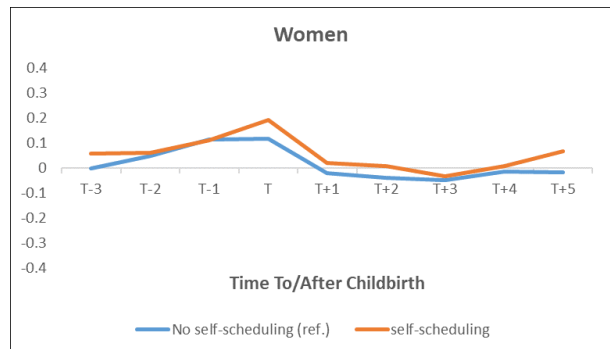
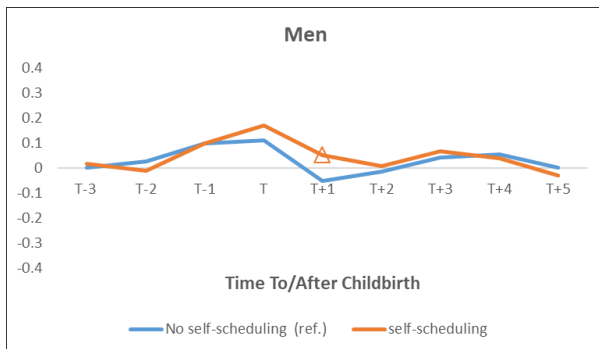
In Panel B-E, other control variables are one's and partner's health, one's and partner's squared age (divided by 1,000), household income (in logarithm), use of childcare, the number of resident and non-resident children, self-employment, supervising others, period indicators (from  $T - 2$  to  $T + 5$ ), year dummies and partner's labour force status (in Panel B)/partner's working hour intervals (in Panel C)/one's and partner's working hour intervals (in Panel D-E).



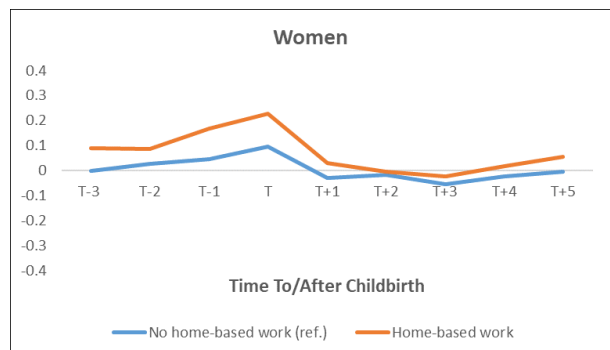
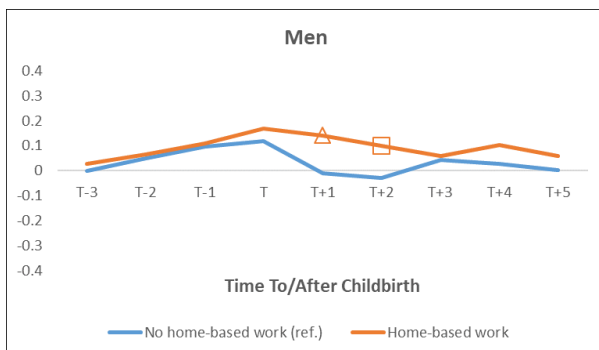
Panel A: Contractual Flexibility (Labour Force Status)



Panel B: Contractual Flexibility (Working Hour Intervals)



Panel C: Temporal Flexibility



Panel D: Spatial Flexibility

**Figure 5:** Trajectories of SWB at the stage of parenthood by different levels of working flexibility separately for men and women. The SWB for the reference working status at  $T - 3$  is set to be 0.  $\circ$   $\square$  and  $\triangle$  denote the significance levels are 0.1, 0.05 and 0.01 respectively. They show the significance of the interaction terms between period indicators and flexible employment.

## 5 Robustness Check

### 5.1 An Alternative Specification

In eq. (2) of the main analysis, we use interaction terms between period indicators and flexible employment to examine the effect of flexible employment in each period during the transition into parenthood. However, since the sample is divided by period and flexibility, some period-flexibility pairs only contain a small number of observations, which could result in a lack of precision in our estimates. To cope with this problem, we re-estimate the model with an alternative specification proposed by Berger (2013), where dummies for age categories of the youngest resident child are used instead of period indicators. We estimate the following models:

$$SWB_{it} = \mathbf{age}'_{it}\beta_1 + \mathbf{job}'_{it}\beta_2 + \mathbf{x}'_{it}\gamma + \alpha_i + \mu_t + \epsilon_{it}, \quad (3)$$

$$SWB_{it} = \mathbf{age}'_{it}\beta_1 + \mathbf{job}'_{it}\beta_2 + (flex_{it} \times \mathbf{age}'_{it})\theta + \mathbf{x}'_{it}\gamma + \alpha_i + \mu_t + \epsilon_{it} \quad (4)$$

where  $\mathbf{age}_{it}$  is a vector of four age categories: not born, age 0, age 1-2, and age 3-5.<sup>23</sup> Remaining notation follows previous specifications, noting that we include an additional control variable, *expecting*, which takes on value 1 if a child is born in the household in the following year and 0 otherwise.

The results of eq. (3) presented in Table 4 are similar to the results in the main analysis (Table 3) in terms of both the magnitude and significance of the coefficients. Compared to part-time workers, non-working men report lower SWB, while full-time workers report significantly higher SWB, especially among men who work 35-50 hours a week. In contrast, full-time jobs have a negative impact on women's SWB and the negative impact becomes stronger as the weekly hours are longer. In terms of temporal and spatial flexibility, the positive effect on SWB is only significant for men.

Estimates from eq. (4) are also qualitatively comparable with the results from the main specification. Based on the estimated results, we draw the trajectories of SWB for different forms of flexible employment depending on the age of the youngest resident child (Figure 6).<sup>24</sup> In the alternative specification, we still find *contractual* flexibility has no intermediary effect on men's SWB as none of the interaction terms between the youngest child's age and full-time work (Panel A) or working hours (Panel B) are significant. Nevertheless, the age-specific effects can be found among women. Compared to working up to 20 hours per week, working between 35 and 40 hours decreases the SWB of

<sup>23</sup>The group *not born* composes individuals who currently have no resident children but will have at least one within 3 years. This group is omitted in the regression as a reference group. In this estimation, the maximum age of the youngest child is 5. For this reason, we selected out 392 observations whose youngest child is older than 5.

<sup>24</sup>The output table for this estimation is available in Appendix Table A.2.

mothers with children aged 1-2. Furthermore, for mothers with the youngest child between 3-5 years old, working more than 20 hours a week has a negative impact on their SWB (Panel B). In terms of *temporal* flexibility, we find the results in Panel C are slightly different from the main analysis. Even though the difference of SWB between men with and without self-scheduling at children's age 1-2 appears to be larger than the difference at the baseline (childless periods), this difference is not statistically significant. This difference could be driven by the fact that self-scheduling is especially beneficial for fathers at  $T+1$  (as shown in the main analysis) and becomes less important afterward. In terms of *spatial* flexibility, the results from the baseline and the alternative specification are similar. Since home-based work has a significantly positive effect on men's SWB at both  $T+1$  and  $T+2$  in the main analysis, a similar effect is also found in Panel D for the corresponding age group, aged 1-2.

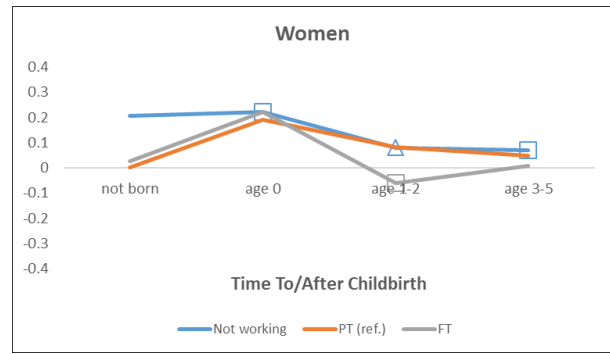
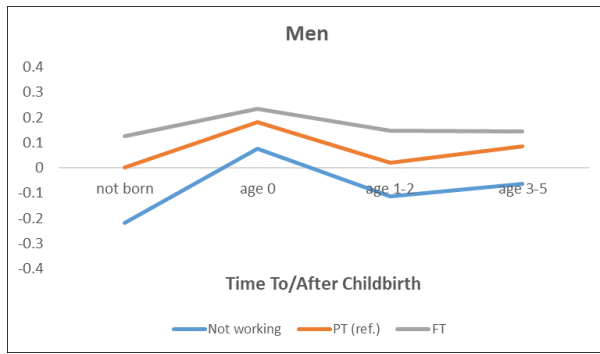


**Table 4:** Fixed-effects Estimation of SWB with an Alternative Specification

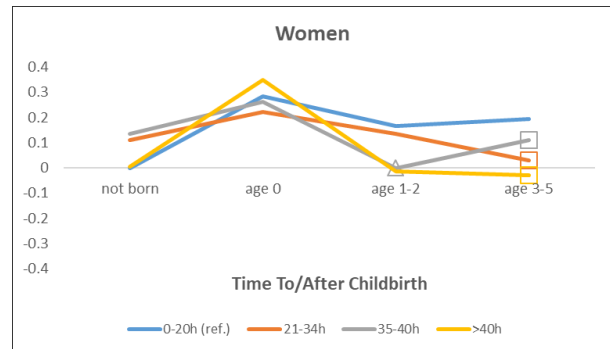
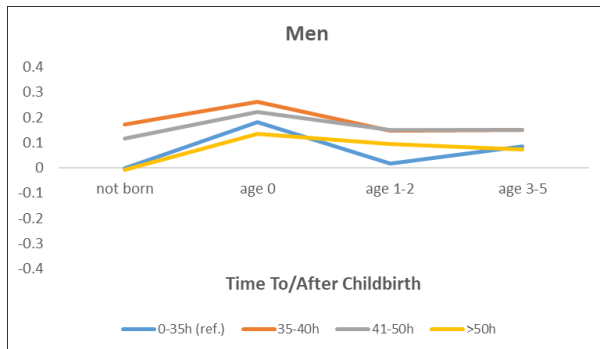
Dependent Variable	(1)		(2)		
	Men		Women		
SWB	Coef.	s.e.	Coef.	s.e.	
<b>Panel A: Contractual Flexibility (Labour Force Status)</b>					
not working	-0.144***	0.047	0.023	0.024	
PT		ref.		ref.	
FT	0.091**	0.036	-0.059***	0.025	
Observations		16,916		17,023	
R-squared		0.107		0.123	
Number of ID		3,057		3,124	
<b>Panel B: Contractual Flexibility (Working Hour Intervals)</b>					
not working	-0.144***	0.047	not working	-0.002	0.026
0-34 h		ref.	0-20 h		ref.
35-40 h	0.107***	0.037	21-34 h	-0.077***	0.029
41-50 h	0.090**	0.039	35-40 h	-0.079***	0.031
>50 h	0.012	0.043	>40 h	-0.171***	0.039
Observations		16,916		17,023	
R-squared		0.108		0.124	
Number of ID		3,057		3,124	
<b>Panel C: Temporal Flexibility</b>					
no self-scheduling		ref.		ref.	
self-scheduling	0.045**	0.022		0.018	0.029
Observations		12,307		8,317	
R-squared		0.096		0.134	
Number of ID		2,621		2,171	
<b>Panel D: Spatial Flexibility</b>					
no home-based work		ref.		ref.	
home-based work	0.085***	0.0257		0.050	0.032
Observations		11,568		7,923	
R-squared		0.098		0.130	
Number of ID		2,599		2,126	

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

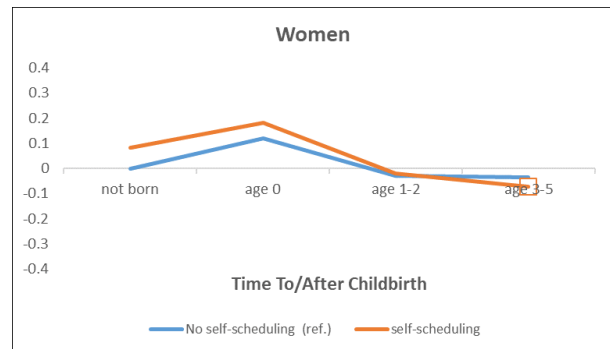
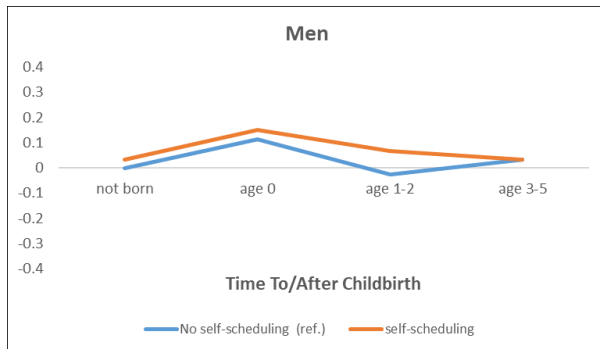
In Panel A-D, other control variables are one's and partner's health, one's and partner's squared age (divided by 1,000), household income (in logarithm), use of childcare, the number of resident and non-resident children, self-employment, supervising others, newborn in the next year, the age of the youngest child (age 0, age 1-2 or age 3-5), year dummies and partner's labour force status (in Panel A)/partner's working hour intervals (in Panel B)/one's and partner's working hour intervals (in Panel C-D).



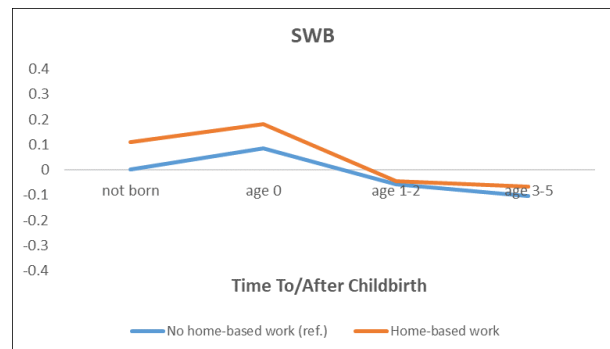
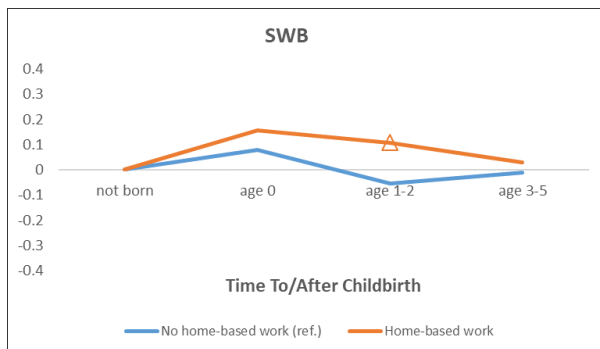
Panel A: Contractual Flexibility (Labour Force Status)



Panel B: Contractual Flexibility (Working Hour Intervals)



Panel C: Temporal Flexibility



Panel D: Spatial Flexibility

**Figure 6:** Trajectories of SWB at the stage of parenthood by different levels of working flexibility separately for men and women. The SWB for the reference working status at  $T - 3$  is set to be 0.  $\circ$   $\square$  and  $\triangle$  denote the significance levels are 0.1, 0.05 and 0.01 respectively. They show the significance of the interaction terms between age intervals and flexible employment.

## 5.2 Industry and Occupation

As mentioned in the Results section, we realize that the effect of flexible employment on SWB can be driven by types of industries and occupations due to unequal accessibility of flexible opportunities across industries and occupations. Despite that, our fixed-effects estimation may not be affected if individuals remain in the same industry and occupation through the observational period. However, industries and occupations can be confounding factors once they are associated with the variation of job flexibility within individuals. To address this problem, we add industry and occupation fixed effects into the model. By doing so, the coefficients of flexibility indicators can be interpreted as the effect of flexible employment on SWB given the industry and occupation. The results reported in the Appendix in Table A.3 (without interaction terms) and A.4 (with interaction terms) are in line with the results from the main analysis suggesting that the effect of flexible employment on parental SWB is not confounded by jobs certain industries or occupations.

## 5.3 Alternative Sample

In addition to the two checks above, we also consider three alternative samples to verify the external validity of the results for different population groups.

First, we re-estimate the model with the full sample mentioned in the Data section, i.e. we include single parents in the analysis.<sup>25</sup> We replicate the estimation with all observations aged 18-55 during the transition into parenthood regardless of marital status. Different from the main analysis, we cannot control for the partner's information such as health, age and flexibility in this model as this information is missing for some single parents. Instead, we add a set of dummy variables indicating the marital status of individuals.<sup>26</sup> The results reported in Appendix Table A.5 confirm that marital status, indeed, appears to be a significant determinant of SWB (e.g Panel A). Compared to being single (the reference status), cohabitation and marriage are positively related to SWB, and the marginal effects for women (0.29 and 0.38) are stronger than for men (0.11 and 0.22). Meanwhile, women's SWB decreases by -0.14 when they are separated, divorced or widowed, while these events seem not significantly related to men's SWB. Nevertheless, our main findings regarding the role of flexible employment on SWB during the transition to parenthood still hold. This is especially true in terms of the period-specific impact of flexible employment shown in

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<sup>25</sup>Single parents are identified using the marital status variable and comprise parents who report being single, widowed, separated, or divorced

<sup>26</sup>The statistical description of the full sample has been given in Table 1.

Table A.6. Based on the full sample, we also find evidence of gender heterogeneity. Working more than 20 hours a week has a significantly negative impact on women’s SWB during certain post-birth periods while men’s SWB is positively affected by the accessibility of self-scheduling and home-based work when children are young. Since all of these results do not differ from the main analysis, we could claim the results based on the partnered sample can be generalized to the population of all parents.

The second problem we encounter is the incompleteness of the period indicators in the last three waves. When period indicators are generated, whether one year is a preceding period relative to childbirth is informed by ages of children in future waves. For example, if a respondent reports having a 0-year-old in the following wave, we know the current wave is one period before this childbirth. This approach may cause difficulty in generating the indicators for upcoming childbirth (from  $T - 3$  to  $T - 1$ ) for the last three waves (2015-2017) as no further waves can provide the information for these three years. As a result, some observations from 2015 to 2017 which indeed are pre-birth periods are omitted, and the reported SWB might be affected by the corresponding anticipation effect which we cannot account for. To solve this problem, we re-estimate the model using observations from 2002 to 2014 in which we have full information about future births. The estimated results are very similar to the main analysis in terms of magnitudes and significance suggesting that our main results are not affected by this potential bias.<sup>27</sup>

Finally, contrary to our approach, some previous studies only consider how parental SWB progresses during the first childbirth (Roeters et al., 2016; Le Moglie et al., 2019). While we acknowledge that the effect of the first-born child into a households is more pronounced than of the subsequent children, following this approach results in a significant information loss as the sample size reduces to 8,230 male-year and 8,517 female-year observations (less than a half of the sample used in our main analysis). Due to this information loss, if we re-estimate the model according to the specification used in the main analysis where periods are interacted with flexibility, some period-flexibility combinations would only contain a limited sample size and thus lead to imprecise estimation. Instead, we use the alternative specification mentioned in Section 5.1 which interacts children’s age groups and flexibility to make the sample size of each combination larger. The results are reported in Appendix Table A.7 (without interaction terms) and A.8 (with interaction terms). According to Appendix Table A.7, unlike taking all childbirth into account, the overall effect of *temporal* and *spatial* flexibility for first-time fathers is not significantly positive. A possible reason

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<sup>27</sup>Output tables for this analysis are not shown here but are available on request.

is that the work-family conflict is still moderate for the first child so that the autonomy of work time and workplace has not become an important factor for men’s SWB. However, we find the estimated results in Appendix Table A.8 are not qualitatively different from the all-childbirth case (available in Appendix Table A.2), which suggests the age-specific effect of flexible employment also exists for the first-born child.

## 6 Conclusions

This paper provides clear evidence that flexible employment is an effective tool to alleviate the drop in parental SWB in the early years of parenthood. We also find evidence for gender heterogeneity regarding each form of flexible employment. *Contractual* flexibility appears to be important for women’s SWB, while *spatial* and *temporal* flexibility yield an increase in SWB among fathers of young children.

Our main results are in line with the traditional intra-household time allocation, typically adopted by Australian households. Most fathers are employed in full-time jobs, whereas mothers split their time between domestic work and part-time jobs, or do not participate in the labor market at all (Baxter, 2015). Meanwhile, as pointed out by Buddelmeyer et al. (2018), mothers in Australia are under greater time stress than fathers in the first few years after childbirth. Therefore, *contractual* flexibility increases women’s SWB as it could relieve the work-family conflict. *Spatial* and *temporal* flexibility do not reduce total weekly hours, therefore they do not have the same effects on women’s SWB.<sup>28</sup> In contrast, fathers benefit from *spatial* and *temporal* flexibility as the possibility of self-scheduling and home-based work allows them to maintain relatively long hours while being able to undertake some household tasks and/or care for the children. These effects are significant when children are one- or two- years old which typically correspond with the mother’s return to the labor market after maternity/parental leave.

The results of this paper are important for at least three reasons. Firstly, we believe that they can be generalized to parents in other developed countries.<sup>29</sup> Flexible employment has also been a common practice in European countries with 75% of employees entitled to flexibility on work scheduling (OECD, 2016). Moreover, similarly to Australia, some countries also announce policies to guarantee the accessibility of flexibility for working parents. For example, in the Netherlands, the 2000 *Wet Aanpassing Arbeidsduur* and the 2016 *Wet Flexibel Werken* guarantee that the

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<sup>28</sup>In our sample, the average weekly hours for jobs allowing home-based work is 30 hours for women.

<sup>29</sup>It might be the case that the results for women are not present in countries where part-time employment is not considered equal to full-time employment.

parents of young children are entitled to all three forms of flexibility discussed in this paper.

Secondly, by delivering convincing evidence that flexible employment can alleviate the loss in the SWB of parents in the transition to parenthood, our results further enhance the motivation for such policies. Especially, with regard to *contractual* flexibility, flexible jobs are often associated with social stigma (Chung, 2018). Improving the attractiveness of such jobs to women may help overcome the social stigma and result in a higher labor force participation among women. Our results show that the SWB of mothers with young children is higher in part-time jobs suggesting that some women might opt out of the labor market if only full-time jobs are considered. However, access to *contractual* flexibility needs to be universal across all jobs to ensure that the gender gap does not widen. Furthermore, policies that make it more attractive to employers to offer part-time positions, might help to close the gap.

Lastly, through the inter-generational transmission of happiness within a family, our results suggest that flexible employment among the parents may be beneficial for the well-being of children. Parental distress levels in previous years have been shown to have spillover effects on children's current well-being (Powdthavee and Vignoles, 2008). Additionally, flexible employment among the parents also effectively promotes parent-child interactions during the first years of the child's life (Kim, 2018), which positively impacts children's development (Pempek and Lauricella, 2017; Dodici et al., 2003).

# Appendices

**Table A.1:** Interaction Terms Between Flexible Employment and Period Indicators

Dependent Variable	(1)		(2)		
	Men		Women		
SWB	Coef.	s.e.	Coef.	s.e.	
<b>Panel A: Contractual Flexibility (Labour Force Status)</b>					
not working ×					
T-2	-0.094	0.122	0.015	0.055	
T-1	-0.220**	0.112	-0.043	0.049	
T	-0.017	0.100	-0.031	0.048	
T+1	-0.024	0.098	-0.062	0.044	
T+2	-0.206**	0.098	-0.103**	0.042	
T+3	-0.196**	0.100	-0.051	0.043	
T+4	-0.127	0.105	-0.087*	0.045	
T+5	-0.254**	0.108	0.004	0.046	
FT ×					
T-2	0.005	0.092	-0.012	0.055	
T-1	-0.101	0.087	0.019	0.051	
T	-0.088	0.078	0.081	0.060	
T+1	0.006	0.076	-0.092	0.057	
T+2	-0.001	0.076	-0.129**	0.055	
T+3	-0.078	0.077	-0.056	0.055	
T+4	-0.098	0.081	-0.067	0.058	
T+5	-0.119	0.083	0.076	0.057	
Observations	17,097		17,281		
R-squared	0.108		0.124		
Number of ID	3,057		3,124		
<b>Panel B: Contractual Flexibility (Working Hour Intervals)</b>					
35-40 h ×			21-34 h ×		
T-2	-0.011	0.096	T-2	0.049	0.081
T-1	-0.093	0.091	T-1	-0.032	0.071
T	-0.080	0.081	T	-0.003	0.078
T+1	-0.017	0.079	T+1	0.056	0.065
T+2	-0.017	0.080	T+2	-0.036	0.063
T+3	-0.095	0.081	T+3	-0.089	0.064
T+4	-0.093	0.086	T+4	-0.159**	0.067
T+5	-0.131	0.087	T+5	-0.029	0.068
41-50 h ×			35-40 h ×		
T-2	-0.003	0.097	T-2	-0.010	0.071
T-1	-0.125	0.092	T-1	0.018	0.065
T	-0.103	0.082	T	0.029	0.073
T+1	0.007	0.080	T+1	-0.095	0.069
T+2	0.032	0.080	T+2	-0.171**	0.067
T+3	-0.049	0.082	T+3	-0.052	0.068
T+4	-0.130	0.086	T+4	-0.183**	0.072
T+5	-0.124	0.088	T+5	0.049	0.072

**Table A.1 (Cont.):** Interaction Terms Between Flexible Employment and Period Indicators

Dependent Variable SWB	(1) Men		(2) Women	
	Coef.	s.e.	Coef.	s.e.
>50h ×			>40 h ×	
T-2	0.050	0.103	T-2	0.046 0.084
T-1	-0.080	0.097	T-1	-0.054 0.081
T	-0.088	0.088	T	0.232** 0.105
T+1	0.061	0.085	T+1	-0.003 0.098
T+2	-0.008	0.085	T+2	-0.088 0.091
T+3	-0.088	0.086	T+3	-0.186** 0.090
T+4	-0.040	0.091	T+4	-0.046 0.090
T+5	-0.080	0.093	T+5	0.077 0.088
Observations	17,097		17,281	
R-squared	0.108		0.125	
Number of ID	3,057		3,124	
<b>Panel C: Temporal Flexibility</b>				
self-scheduling ×				
T-2	0.010	0.049	-0.046	0.059
T-1	-0.026	0.046	-0.062	0.056
T	0.015	0.044	0.016	0.066
T+1	0.115***	0.042	-0.018	0.054
T+2	0.023	0.042	-0.012	0.053
T+3	-0.018	0.043	-0.043	0.054
T+4	-0.020	0.045	-0.037	0.056
T+5	0.005	0.046	0.025	0.057
Observations	12,449		8,447	
R-squared	0.098		0.134	
Number of ID	2,625		2,180	
<b>Panel D: Spatial Flexibility</b>				
home-based work ×				
T-2	-0.012	0.054	-0.033	0.062
T-1	-0.017	0.051	0.033	0.058
T	0.022	0.048	0.042	0.066
T+1	0.122***	0.046	-0.034	0.054
T+2	0.099**	0.046	-0.080	0.054
T+3	-0.013	0.048	-0.060	0.056
T+4	0.049	0.050	-0.048	0.058
T+5	0.029	0.051	-0.031	0.058
Observations	11,703		8,048	
R-squared	0.100		0.130	
Number of ID	2,603		2,135	

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Other control variables are the same as listed in Table 3



**Table A.2:** Interaction Terms Between Flexible Employment and Children's Age Groups

Dependent Variable	(1)		(2)	
	Men		Women	
SWB	Coef.	s.e.	Coef.	s.e.
<b>Panel A: Contractual Flexibility (Labour Force Status)</b>				
not working ×				
Age 0	0.113	0.139	-0.177	0.085
Age 1-2	0.085	0.132	-0.209	0.081
Age 3-5	0.070	0.140	-0.186	0.083
FT ×				
Age 0	-0.073	0.105	0.005	0.076
Age 1-2	0.003	0.099	-0.168	0.068
Age 3-5	-0.067	0.105	-0.065	0.068
Observations	16,916		17,023	
R-squared	0.107		0.124	
Number of ID	3,057		3,124	
<b>Panel B: Contractual Flexibility (Working Hour Intervals)</b>				
35-40 h ×			21-34 h ×	
Age 0	-0.090	0.109	Age 0	-0.173 0.125
Age 1-2	-0.040	0.103	Age 1-2	-0.140 0.113
Age 3-5	-0.105	0.108	Age 3-5	-0.273** 0.115
41-50 h ×			35-40 h ×	
Age 0	-0.073	0.111	Age 0	-0.156 0.110
Age 1-2	0.017	0.104	Age 1-2	-0.299*** 0.102
Age 3-5	-0.051	0.110	Age 3-5	-0.216** 0.104
>50h ×			>40 h ×	
Age 0	-0.039	0.117	Age 0	0.061 0.134
Age 1-2	0.082	0.110	Age 1-2	-0.183 0.115
Age 3-5	-0.004	0.116	Age 3-5	-0.228** 0.113
Observations	16,916		17,023	
R-squared	0.108		0.126	
Number of ID	3,057		3,124	
<b>Panel C: Temporal Flexibility</b>				
Age 0	0.005	0.055	-0.021	0.072
Age 1-2	0.061	0.050	-0.074	0.056
Age 3-5	-0.032	0.054	-0.119**	0.060
Observations	12,307		8,317	
R-squared	0.098		0.135	
Number of ID	2,621		2,171	
<b>Panel D: Spatial Flexibility</b>				
Age 0	0.076	0.060	-0.012	0.075
Age 1-2	0.157***	0.055	-0.096	0.060
Age 3-5	0.039	0.059	-0.073	0.065
Observations	11,703		8,048	
R-squared	0.100		0.130	
Number of ID	2,603		2,135	

\*\*\* p&lt;0.01, \*\* p&lt;0.05, \* p&lt;0.1

Other control variables are the same as listed in Table 4

**Table A.3:** Fixed-effects Estimation of SWB: Industrial and Occupational Fixed Effects Added

Dependent Variable	(1)		(2)	
	Men		Women	
SWB	Coef.	s.e.	Coef.	s.e.
<b>Panel A: Contractual Flexibility (Labour Force Status)</b>				
not working	0.266	0.354	-0.265	0.409
PT	ref.		ref.	
FT	0.086**	0.036	-0.074***	0.025
Observations	17,097		17,281	
R-squared	0.110		0.127	
Number of ID	3,057		3,124	
<b>Panel B: Contractual Flexibility (Working Hour Intervals)</b>				
not working	0.275	0.354	not working	-0.283 0.409
0-34 h	ref.		0-20 h	ref.
35-40 h	0.102***	0.037	21-34 h	-0.075*** 0.028
41-50 h	0.085**	0.039	35-40 h	-0.092*** 0.030
>50 h	0.007	0.043	>40 h	-0.189*** 0.039
Observations	16,916		17,023	
R-squared	0.111		0.128	
Number of ID	3,057		3,124	
<b>Panel C: Temporal Flexibility</b>				
no self-scheduling	ref.		ref.	
self-scheduling	0.039*	0.022	0.029	0.029
Observations	12,449		8,447	
R-squared	0.101		0.141	
Number of ID	2,625		2,181	
<b>Panel D: Spatial Flexibility</b>				
no home-based work	ref.		ref.	
home-based work	0.082***	0.026	0.039	0.032
Observations	11,703		8,048	
R-squared	0.103		0.137	
Number of ID	2,603		2,135	

\*\*\* p&lt;0.01, \*\* p&lt;0.05, \* p&lt;0.1

Other control variables are the same as listed in Table 3 together with 19 dummies for different industries and 8 dummies for different occupations.

**Table A.4:** Interaction Terms Between Flexible Employment and Period Indicators: Industrial and Occupational Fixed Effects Added

Dependent Variable	(1)		(2)		
	Men		Women		
SWB	Coef.	s.e.	Coef.	s.e.	
<b>Panel A: Contractual Flexibility (Labour Force Status)</b>					
not working ×					
T-2	-0.101	0.123	0.017	0.055	
T-1	-0.221**	0.112	-0.041	0.049	
T	-0.020	0.100	-0.024	0.048	
T+1	-0.032	0.098	-0.057	0.044	
T+2	-0.202**	0.098	-0.097**	0.042	
T+3	-0.196**	0.100	-0.047	0.043	
T+4	-0.121	0.105	-0.084*	0.045	
T+5	-0.250**	0.108	0.014	0.046	
FT ×					
T-2	-0.002	0.092	-0.010	0.055	
T-1	-0.103	0.087	0.017	0.051	
T	-0.094	0.078	0.086	0.060	
T+1	0.000	0.076	-0.093	0.057	
T+2	0.000	0.076	-0.129**	0.055	
T+3	-0.082	0.077	-0.057	0.056	
T+4	-0.095	0.082	-0.069	0.058	
T+5	-0.122	0.083	0.078	0.057	
Observations	17,097		17,281		
R-squared	0.112		0.128		
Number of ID	3,057		3,124		
<b>Panel B: Contractual Flexibility (Working Hour Intervals)</b>					
35-40 h ×			21-34 h ×		
T-2	-0.018	0.096	T-2	0.044	0.081
T-1	-0.097	0.091	T-1	-0.027	0.072
T	-0.088	0.081	T	0.005	0.078
T+1	-0.024	0.080	T+1	0.055	0.065
T+2	-0.018	0.080	T+2	-0.038	0.063
T+3	-0.097	0.081	T+3	-0.090	0.064
T+4	-0.090	0.086	T+4	-0.149**	0.067
T+5	-0.133	0.088	T+5	-0.027	0.068
41-50 h ×			35-40 h ×		
T-2	-0.009	0.097	T-2	-0.011	0.071
T-1	-0.126	0.092	T-1	0.017	0.065
T	-0.108	0.083	T	0.037	0.073
T+1	0.001	0.080	T+1	-0.099	0.069
T+2	0.035	0.080	T+2	-0.168**	0.067
T+3	-0.053	0.082	T+3	-0.055	0.068
T+4	-0.127	0.086	T+4	-0.186***	0.072
T+5	-0.127	0.088	T+5	0.047	0.072

**Table A.4 (Cont.):** Interaction Terms Between Flexible Employment and Period Indicators: Industrial and Occupational Fixed Effects Added

Dependent Variable SWB	(1) Men		(2) Women	
	Coef.	s.e.	Coef.	s.e.
>50h ×			>40 h ×	
T-2	0.042	0.103	T-2	0.039 0.084
T-1	-0.080	0.097	T-1	-0.049 0.081
T	-0.091	0.088	T	0.236** 0.105
T+1	0.057	0.085	T+1	-0.003 0.098
T+2	-0.006	0.085	T+2	-0.096 0.092
T+3	-0.093	0.087	T+3	-0.185** 0.090
T+4	-0.040	0.092	T+4	-0.034 0.090
T+5	-0.085	0.093	T+5	0.090 0.088
Observations	17,097		17,281	
R-squared	0.113		0.131	
Number of ID	3,057		3,124	
<b>Panel C: Temporal Flexibility</b>				
self-scheduling ×				
T-2	0.015	0.049	-0.051	0.059
T-1	-0.026	0.046	-0.061	0.056
T	0.017	0.044	0.009	0.066
T+1	0.113***	0.042	-0.026	0.054
T+2	0.026	0.042	-0.013	0.053
T+3	-0.016	0.043	-0.040	0.054
T+4	-0.016	0.045	-0.034	0.056
T+5	0.006	0.046	0.030	0.057
Observations	12,449		8,447	
R-squared	0.101		0.141	
Number of ID	2,625		2,180	
<b>Panel D: Spatial Flexibility</b>				
home-based work ×				
T-2	-0.014	0.054	-0.038	0.062
T-1	-0.020	0.051	0.033	0.058
T	0.023	0.048	0.039	0.066
T+1	0.116**	0.046	-0.052	0.054
T+2	0.099**	0.046	-0.089*	0.054
T+3	-0.015	0.048	-0.069	0.055
T+4	0.047	0.050	-0.054	0.058
T+5	0.027	0.051	-0.036	0.059
Observations	11,703		8,048	
R-squared	0.104		0.138	
Number of ID	2,603		2,135	

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Other control variables are the same as listed in Table 3 together with 19 dummies for different industries and 8 dummies for different occupations.

**Table A.5:** Fixed-effects Estimation of SWB with Full Sample

Dependent Variable	(1)		(2)		
	Men		Women		
SWB	Coef.	s.e.	Coef.	s.e.	
<b>Panel A: Marital Status</b>					
single		ref.		ref.	
married	0.114**	0.056	0.289***	0.046	
cohabit	0.217***	0.047	0.381***	0.036	
other status	-0.046	0.086	-0.136**	0.062	
Observations		18,363		22,215	
R-squared		0.110		0.128	
Number of ID		3,159		3,721	
<b>Panel B: Contractual Flexibility (Labour Force Status)</b>					
not working	-0.137***	0.044	-0.021	0.024	
PT		ref.		ref.	
FT	0.098***	0.034	-0.050**	0.024	
Observations		18,363		22,215	
R-squared		0.110		0.128	
Number of ID		3,159		3,721	
<b>Panel C: Contractual Flexibility (Working Hour Intervals)</b>					
not working	-0.136***	0.044	not working	-0.039	0.026
0-34 h		ref.	0-20 h		ref.
35-40 h	0.115***	0.035	21-34 h	-0.057**	0.027
41-50 h	0.091**	0.037	35-40 h	-0.054*	0.029
>50 h	0.033	0.041	>40 h	-0.155***	0.037
Observations		18,363		22,215	
R-squared		0.110		0.128	
Number of ID		3,159		3,721	
<b>Panel D: Temporal Flexibility</b>					
no self-scheduling		ref.		ref.	
self-scheduling	0.029	0.021	0.035	0.026	
Observations		13,242		10,224	
R-squared		0.095		0.135	
Number of ID		2,712		2,572	
<b>Panel E: Spatial Flexibility</b>					
no home-based work		ref.		ref.	
home-based work	0.066***	0.025	0.038	0.030	
Observations		12,432		9,726	
R-squared		0.097		0.132	
Number of ID		2,685		2,518	

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Results in Panel A are from the estimation together with labour force status. Therefore, results in Panel A and B are from the same estimation. Other status means being separated, divorced and widowed.

In Panel B-E, other control variables are health, squared age (divided by 1,000), marital status (cohabited, married and other status), household income (in logarithm), use of childcare, the number of resident and non-resident children, self-employment, supervising others, period indicators (from  $T - 2$  to  $T + 5$ ), year dummies and working hour intervals (in Panel D-E).

**Table A.6:** Interaction Terms Between Flexible Employment and Period Indicators with Full Sample

Dependent Variable	(1)		(2)		
	Men		Women		
SWB	Coef.	s.e.	Coef.	s.e.	
<b>Panel A: Contractual Flexibility (Labour Force Status)</b>					
not working ×					
T-2	-0.072	0.112	-0.056	0.053	
T-1	-0.143	0.105	-0.067	0.048	
T	0.057	0.096	0.022	0.047	
T+1	0.020	0.093	-0.013	0.043	
T+2	-0.170*	0.094	-0.074*	0.041	
T+3	-0.112	0.096	-0.011	0.042	
T+4	-0.028	0.101	-0.103**	0.044	
T+5	-0.142	0.104	0.009	0.045	
FT ×					
T-2	-0.035	0.086	-0.069	0.054	
T-1	-0.054	0.082	-0.009	0.051	
T	-0.047	0.076	0.059	0.061	
T+1	0.037	0.073	-0.105*	0.057	
T+2	-0.015	0.074	-0.133**	0.055	
T+3	-0.061	0.075	-0.091*	0.055	
T+4	-0.099	0.079	-0.087	0.056	
T+5	-0.065	0.081	0.071	0.056	
Observations	18,363		22,215		
R-squared	0.110		0.129		
Number of ID	3,159		3,721		
<b>Panel B: Contractual Flexibility (Working Hour Intervals)</b>					
35-40 h ×			21-34 h ×		
T-2	-0.064	0.090	T-2	0.109	0.080
T-1	-0.049	0.086	T-1	0.006	0.072
T	-0.038	0.079	T	-0.052	0.079
T+1	0.012	0.077	T+1	0.008	0.065
T+2	-0.035	0.078	T+2	-0.060	0.063
T+3	-0.083	0.079	T+3	-0.081	0.064
T+4	-0.093	0.083	T+4	-0.166**	0.066
T+5	-0.082	0.085	T+5	0.011	0.067
41-50 h ×			35-40 h ×		
T-2	-0.026	0.091	T-2	-0.054	0.071
T-1	-0.064	0.087	T-1	-0.003	0.065
T	-0.051	0.081	T	-0.013	0.074
T+1	0.055	0.078	T+1	-0.135*	0.070
T+2	0.030	0.079	T+2	-0.195***	0.067
T+3	-0.018	0.080	T+3	-0.079	0.067
T+4	-0.118	0.084	T+4	-0.207***	0.070
T+5	-0.058	0.086	T+5	0.045	0.070

**Table A.6 (Cont.):** Interaction Terms Between Flexible Employment and Period Indicators with Full Sample

Dependent Variable SWB	(1) Men		(2) Women	
	Coef.	s.e.	Coef.	s.e.
>50h ×			>40 h ×	
T-2	0.009	0.097	T-2	0.054 0.083
T-1	-0.044	0.093	T-1	-0.035 0.082
T	-0.056	0.086	T	0.160 0.107
T+1	0.067	0.083	T+1	-0.044 0.099
T+2	-0.032	0.083	T+2	-0.096 0.091
T+3	-0.078	0.085	T+3	-0.236** 0.089
T+4	-0.057	0.089	T+4	-0.071 0.088
T+5	-0.034	0.091	T+5	0.114 0.087
Observations	18,363		22,215	
R-squared	0.111		0.131	
Number of ID	3,159		3,721	
<b>Panel C: Temporal Flexibility</b>				
self-scheduling ×				
T-2	-0.008	0.047	-0.007	0.056
T-1	-0.010	0.045	-0.023	0.053
T	0.010	0.043	0.001	0.064
T+1	0.105**	0.041	0.005	0.052
T+2	0.015	0.041	0.013	0.051
T+3	-0.014	0.043	-0.039	0.051
T+4	-0.019	0.044	-0.007	0.053
T+5	-0.003	0.046	0.062	0.054
Observations	13,242		10,244	
R-squared	0.096		0.135	
Number of ID	2,712		2,572	
<b>Panel D: Spatial Flexibility</b>				
home-based work ×				
T-2	-0.025	0.050	0.013	0.056
T-1	0.030	0.051	0.050	0.050
T	0.027	0.049	0.073	0.063
T+1	0.123***	0.048	0.025	0.052
T+2	0.096**	0.045	-0.036	0.047
T+3	0.004	0.048	-0.053	0.055
T+4	0.067	0.050	-0.016	0.053
T+5	0.041	0.050	0.009	0.053
Observations	12,432		9,726	
R-squared	0.098		0.132	
Number of ID	2,685		2,518	

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Other control variables are the same as listed in Appendix Table A.5

**Table A.7:** Fixed-effects Estimation of SWB for First-time Parents

Dependent Variable	(1)		(2)	
	Men		Women	
SWB	Coef.	s.e.	Coef.	s.e.
<b>Panel A: Contractual Flexibility (Labour Force Status)</b>				
not working	-0.081	0.069	0.051	0.034
PT	ref.		ref.	
FT	0.073	0.052	-0.088***	0.033
Observations	8,230		8,517	
R-squared	0.110		0.138	
Number of ID	1,819		1,878	
<b>Panel B: Contractual Flexibility (Working Hour Intervals)</b>				
not working	-0.077	0.069	not working	0.040 0.037
0-34 h	ref.		0-20 h	ref.
35-40 h	0.106**	0.053	21-34 h	-0.035 0.040
41-50 h	0.043	0.056	35-40 h	-0.085** 0.041
>50 h	-0.026	0.062	>40 h	-0.177*** 0.050
Observations	8,230		8,517	
R-squared	0.111		0.139	
Number of ID	1,819		1,878	
<b>Panel C: Temporal Flexibility</b>				
no self-scheduling	ref.		ref.	
self-scheduling	0.017	0.031	0.057	0.039
Observations	6,104		4,483	
R-squared	0.097		0.148	
Number of ID	1,566		1,322	
<b>Panel D: Spatial Flexibility</b>				
no home-based work	ref.		ref.	
home-based work	0.037	0.037	0.074	0.044
Observations	5,695		4,231	
R-squared	0.100		0.139	
Number of ID	1,543		1,294	

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

In Panel A-D, other control variables are one's and partner's health, one's and partner's squared age (divided by 1,000), household income (in logarithm), use of childcare, the number of resident and non-resident children, self-employment, supervising others, the age of the first child (age 0, age 1-2 or age 3-5), year dummies and partner's labour force status (in Panel A)/partner's working hour intervals (in Panel B)/one's and partner's working hour intervals (in Panel C-D).



**Table A.8:** Interaction Terms Between Flexible Employment and Children’s Age Groups for First-time Parents

Dependent Variable	(1)		(2)	
	Men		Women	
SWB	Coef.	s.e.	Coef.	s.e.
<b>Panel A: Contractual Flexibility (Labour Force Status)</b>				
not working ×				
Age 0	-0.020	0.187	-0.148	0.105
Age 1-2	0.118	0.170	-0.221**	0.093
Age 3-5	-0.058	0.169	-0.244***	0.093
FT ×				
Age 0	-0.030	0.136	-0.021	0.098
Age 1-2	0.059	0.123	-0.078	0.083
Age 3-5	-0.021	0.123	-0.053	0.080
Observations	8,230		8,517	
R-squared	0.110		0.139	
Number of ID	1,819		1,878	
<b>Panel B: Contractual Flexibility (Working Hour Intervals)</b>				
35-40 h ×			21-34 h ×	
Age 0	-0.113	0.141	Age 0	0.031 0.161
Age 1-2	0.030	0.127	Age 1-2	-0.103 0.127
Age 3-5	-0.029	0.127	Age 3-5	-0.283** 0.125
41-50 h ×			35-40 h ×	
Age 0	-0.023	0.144	Age 0	-0.084 0.132
Age 1-2	0.085	0.129	Age 1-2	-0.176 0.118
Age 3-5	-0.026	0.129	Age 3-5	-0.239** 0.115
>50h ×			>40 h ×	
Age 0	0.116	0.154	Age 0	0.046 0.170
Age 1-2	0.078	0.136	Age 1-2	-0.119 0.147
Age 3-5	0.002	0.135	Age 3-5	-0.137 0.129
Observations	8,230		8,517	
R-squared	0.112		0.142	
Number of ID	1,819		1,878	
<b>Panel C: Temporal Flexibility</b>				
Age 0	-0.029	0.074	-0.017	0.100
Age 1-2	0.101	0.063	-0.085	0.071
Age 3-5	-0.008	0.062	-0.049	0.070
Observations	6,104		4,483	
R-squared	0.098		0.149	
Number of ID	1,566		1,322	
<b>Panel D: Spatial Flexibility</b>				
Age 0	0.178**	0.082	0.105	0.130
Age 1-2	0.187***	0.069	-0.023	0.074
Age 3-5	0.120*	0.069	-0.140*	0.074
Observations	5,695		4,231	
R-squared	0.102		0.141	
Number of ID	1,543		1,294	

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Other control variables are the same as listed in Appendix Table A.7.

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