

GLOBAL HOME INDEX BRITISH REPORT

A UK-WIDE STUDY ON THE HOME



HOME
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Roscoe, Rebecca

First report global home index : a UK-wide study on the home / Rebecca Roscoe; Belén Mesurado ;
illustrated by Ana Carolina Spinetto. - 1st ed. . London: Baur & Cristina Pita da Veiga 2017. 45 p. : il. ; 30
x 21 cm. - (Global home index ; 1)

ISBN 978-0-9564058-3-8

1. An overview of British households. 2. Sample population. 3. Methodology. I. Roscoe, Rebecca II.
Mesurado, Belén III. Spinetto, Ana Carolina, illus. IV. Título. CDD 310.723

Edition date: October 2017

Design: Baur & Cristina Pita da Veiga

Print: Print Express



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Inspiring the world

The Global Home Index has made a significant impact in raising awareness of the importance of the home throughout the world. This is evident from the overwhelming number of people who participated in the online survey and also as a result of the numerous launches that we have organised around the world.

Beginning with the United Nations we announced the findings of the survey in over 15 countries (at notable Universities and non-profit-making organisations) including the governments of Argentina, Peru, El Salvador, Uruguay, Paraguay, Mexico, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, among others. We are closing the first round with a flourish, presenting the UK results in the House of Commons.

Its impact through the communications industry has been noteworthy. Thanks to Axon Marketing & Communications, a media consultancy company based in the United States, which has worked pro bono, we have received interesting data surrounding the media coverage of the Global Home Index. With more than 30 interviews and approximately 200 million people impacted by this survey, it equates to an advertising audience worth around \$2 million. We value these findings since we rely on the media as a means of culturally shaping and questioning our perception of the home and family. As Plato succinctly put it: "Shall they be a family in name only; or shall they in all their actions be true to the name?"

I am honoured to be the chairman of this Foundation that has been the driving force of this unique survey. There is clearly a great need for continued studies of the home environment and for a creative think tank to highlight the vital role of the home.



Bryan Sanderson CBE

Chairman
Home Renaissance Foundation

No place like home

There is nothing like having something taken away from you to realise the value of it. About a year ago our landlord warned us he wanted our home back. I had a sick feeling at heart, a knot in my stomach. I was filled with anxiety. How were we to provide for our family, have a roof over our children's heads? Home represented security, comfort, protection. It was a place where we all received nourishment, physically, emotionally and spiritually. A place we could all relax, be ourselves, down our problems, wash away the toils of the day, welcome our friends. It was the place I loved and spent most of my day.

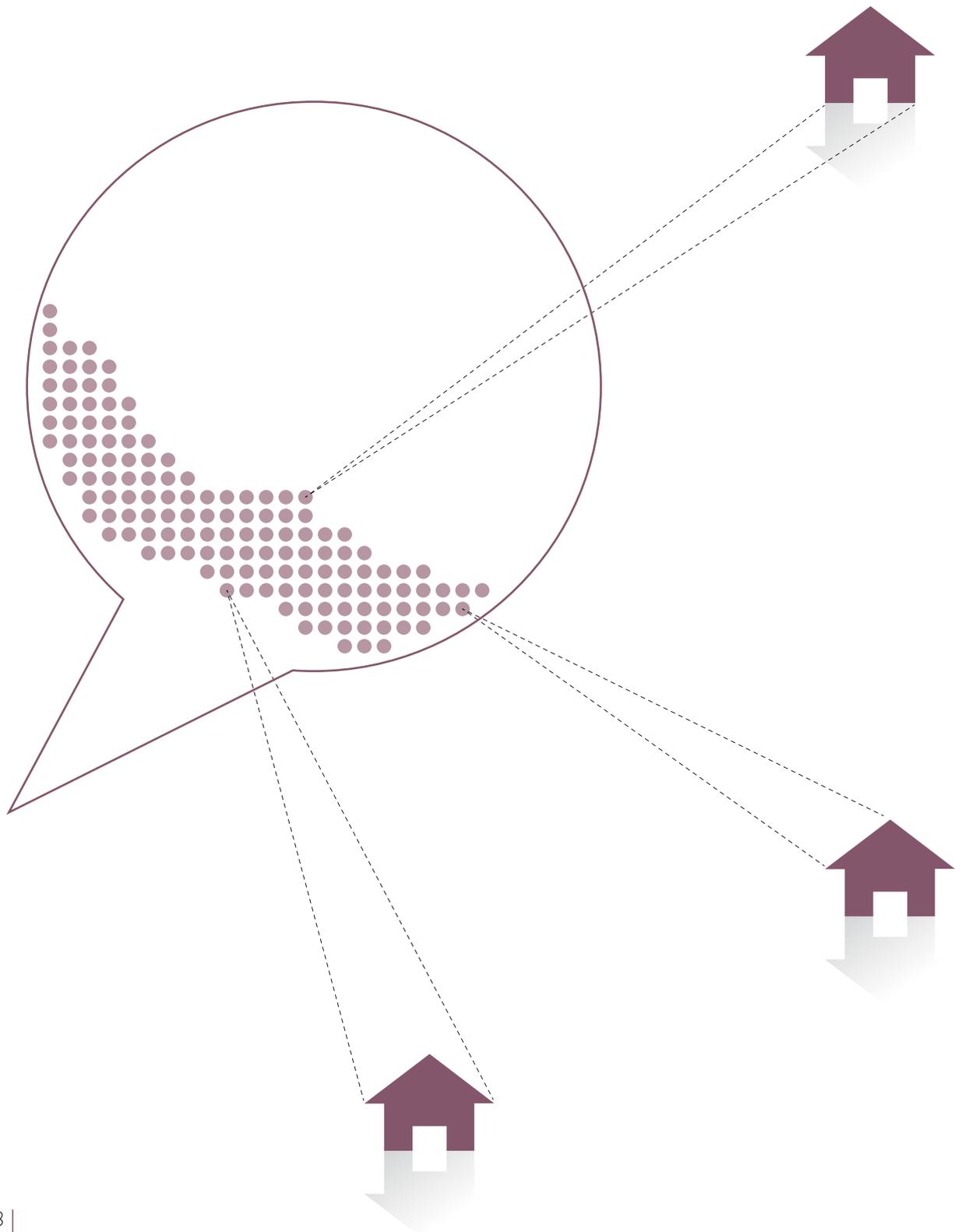
For years we have been sold the narrative of the importance of the individual, of independence, of putting number one first. Being at home has been portrayed as a prison for mothers 'chained to the kitchen sink'. Yet as I face the prospect of moving out of my home I see it as a source of empowerment and strength, a base for creativity and industry and a refuge and restorative for the soul. The strength of the family depends not on independence from each other but reliance on each other with home as a base.

It is time to renew our vision of home and consider how we can provide not only homes for the many families who face the anxiety of not having one also but make it possible for them to spend more time there.

Anne Fennell
Chairman
Mothers at Home Matter



1. An overview of British households

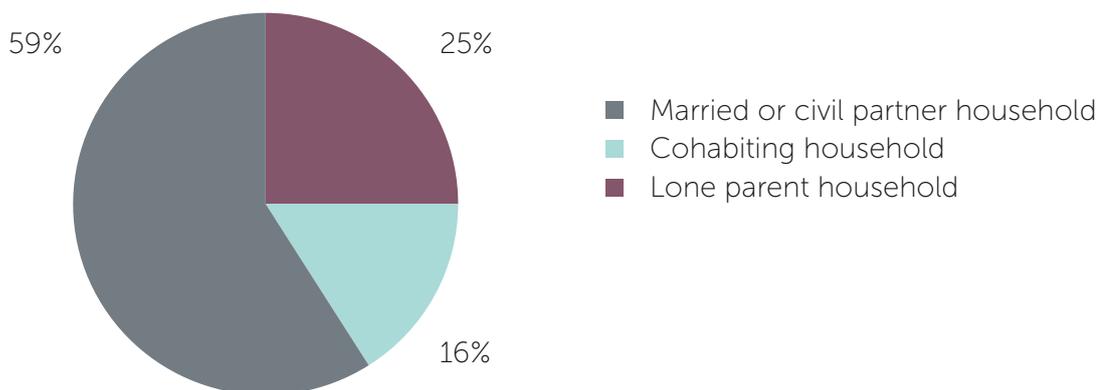


1.1. Trends in household types

The structure of the British household is changing. The once typical British home headed by two married parents has become decreasingly common in the twentieth century, with the current marriage rate being less than 40% of that reported in the 70s (see Appendix I). Meanwhile, less stable homes appear to be on the rise. In 2015, couples united in marriage or civil-partnership headed more than 12.5 million families. Cohabiting couples headed a further 3 million households and another 3 million contained a single parent (Office for National Statistics 2015).

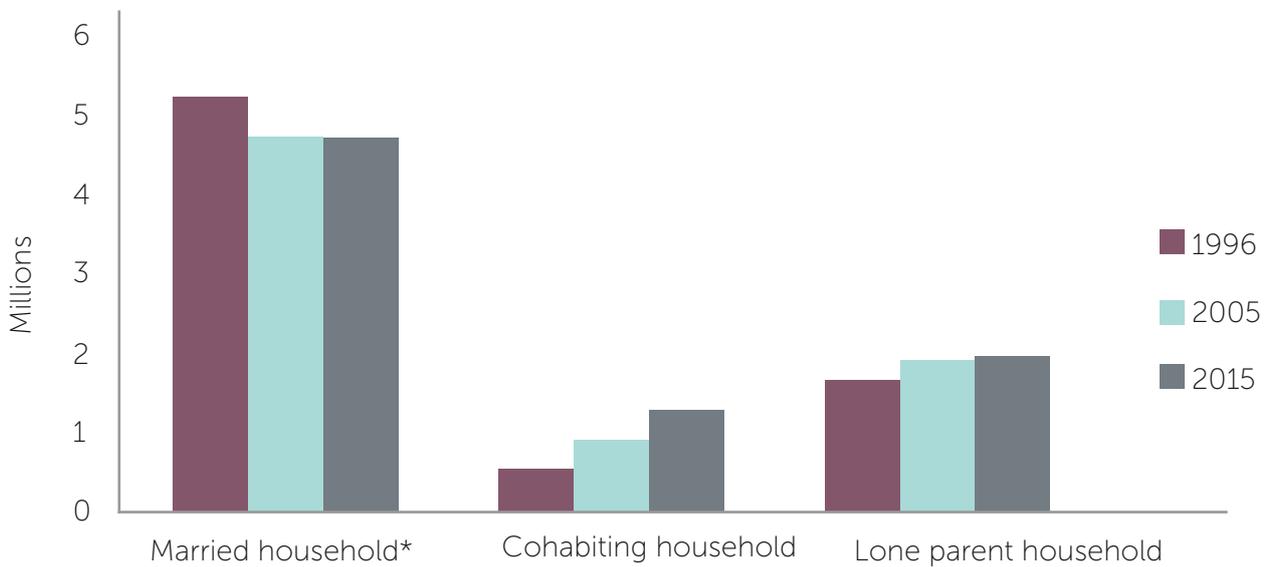
Little more than a third of married or civil-partnership couples were responsible for dependent children in 2015. Dependent children were here defined as those living with their parent(s) and either (a) under 16 years of age, or (b) aged 16 - 18 and in full-time education. Whilst married or civil-partnership households are the prevailing home environments for such children, housing 60% of the UK's dependents (see Fig. 1), lone-parent households were disconcertingly high and formed 25% of dependent child households. This was 10% higher than those formed by cohabiting parents.

Fig. 1
Households with dependent children by type, 2015



To see how these figures compare with previous years, the numbers in each category in 2015 were plotted against recorded statistics from the years 1996 and 2005 (UNECE, statistical database). The result is shown in Fig. 2. As this graph shows, the number of married couples raising children declined by over 0.5 million between 1996 and 2005, but then stabilised to approximately 4.7 million for the next five years. On the other hand, the number of dependent children raised by cohabiting couples and lone parents increased over the past two decades. Cohabiting households with dependent children more than doubled in prevalence between 1996 and 2015 (from 0.5 million to 1.2 million), making this the fastest growing household type over this time period. In comparison, the number of lone-parent households increased by 20%, reaching almost 2 million in 2015.

Fig. 2
Families with dependent children by type, 1996-2015

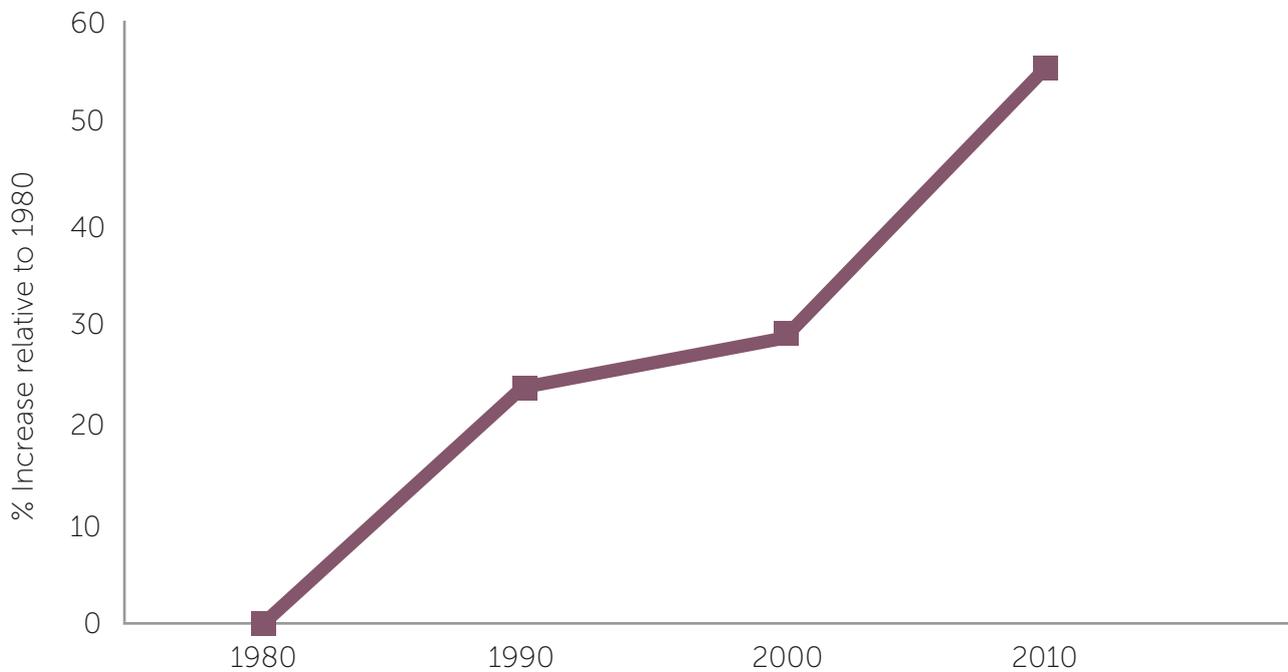


Note: Civil partnership families were excluded from this chart due to the absence of this category prior to the introduction of the Civil Partnership Act 2004, which came into effect across the UK in December 2005.

The prevalence of single-parent upbringing was further explored by studying the absolute numbers of such households. As Fig. 3 illustrates, the incidence of single-parent households increased in the four consecutive decades from 1980.

This equates to a percentage increase of over 55% over the entire time period. Importantly, this change can't be entirely attributed to population growth, which equated to 11% over this same period (UNECE statistical database). In the vast majority of cases (over 90%), the heads of these households were mothers.

Fig. 3
Increase in single-parent households, 1980-2010



1.2. Explaining these trends

Reasons for these observed changes are likely to include changing social attitudes towards the culture of marriage. As religious adherence came to be viewed as outdated, feminist movements gained momentum, increasing education and income opportunities for women, and thereby increasing their independence. Another contributing factor may be the changing economic climate. Rising student debt, coupled with low starting salaries and the decreasing affordability of mortgages for young people were potential barriers to taking on the financial responsibilities of raising a family. Even so, marriage is still the main type of partnership between men and women, and despite its decline between the 1970s and the early twenty-first century, we have even seen a slight resurgence in marriage rates of late (UNECE).

The rise in the number of couples choosing to cohabit rather than get married suggests that, in some cases, cohabitation is replacing marriage or at least postponing it. The age at which people choose to marry has also continued to rise. In 1971, the average age at first marriage was 25 for men and 23 for women in England and Wales. By 2010 however, this had increased to 33 for men and 30 for women (UNECE).

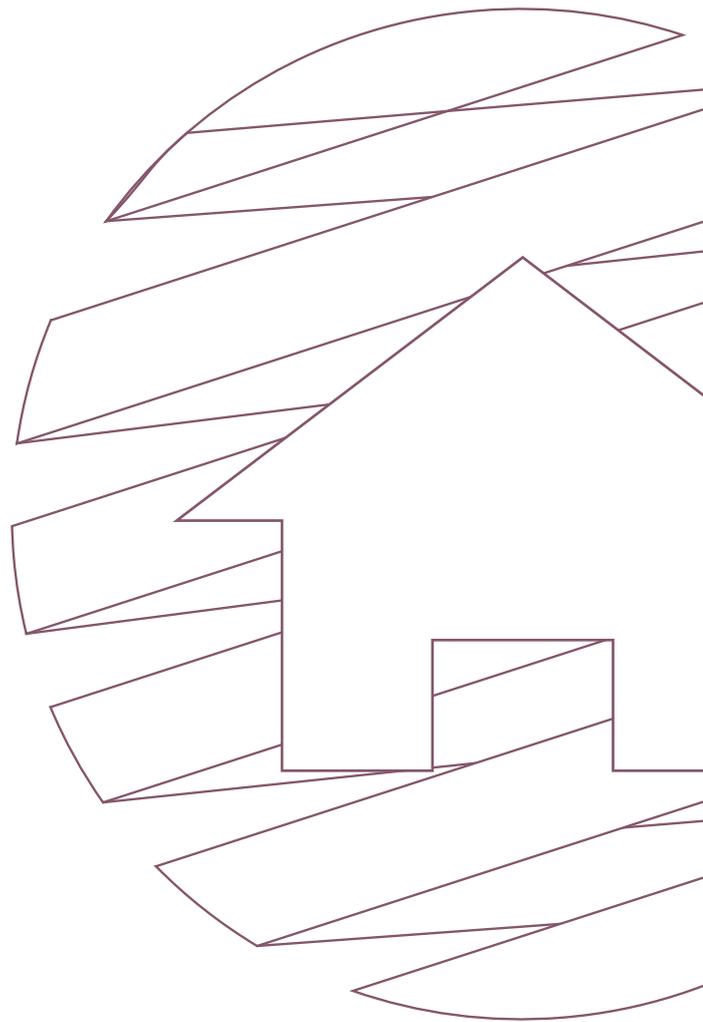
The rise in the number of single-parent households could partly result from changing social attitudes and the rise in cohabitation as opposed to marriage. It is also likely to be linked to the increasing rates of divorce, which climbed steeply in the 1960s and 1970s and then less steeply in 1980s and 1990s. However, recently we have witnessed a considerable decline, from almost 167,000 divorces in 2004 to less than 127,000 divorces in 2013, which is the lowest level in almost 40 years (UNECE). Therefore, divorce alone cannot explain the rise in single-parenthood. Another potential contributor to this trend is the increasing availability of financial support for single parents. For example, between 1997-1998 and 2010-2011, the lowest-income households (in the bottom tenth of the nation's income distribution) received a 20% increase in social security income for childcare (Browne et al., 2013).

1.3. The Global Home Index report

We have hereby provided an analysis of British families and their demographical changes over recent years. This information should provide a context for the data obtained from the Global Home Index study (GHI) and aid with interpreting the various results of this project, which will be presented in section 3.

The data subsequently presented in this report, gathered between March and December 2016, was part of a global study involving 9000 individuals from 94 countries. The initiative was a collaborative effort, involving the Home Renaissance Foundation (London); the Walmart Centre for Work-Family balance, IAE Business School (Argentina); and the Culture, Work, and Care Centre of INALDE Business School (Colombia).

The preliminary data we introduce here concerns details such as measurements of time dedicated to housework, perceptions of the utility of this housework, and distribution of tasks.

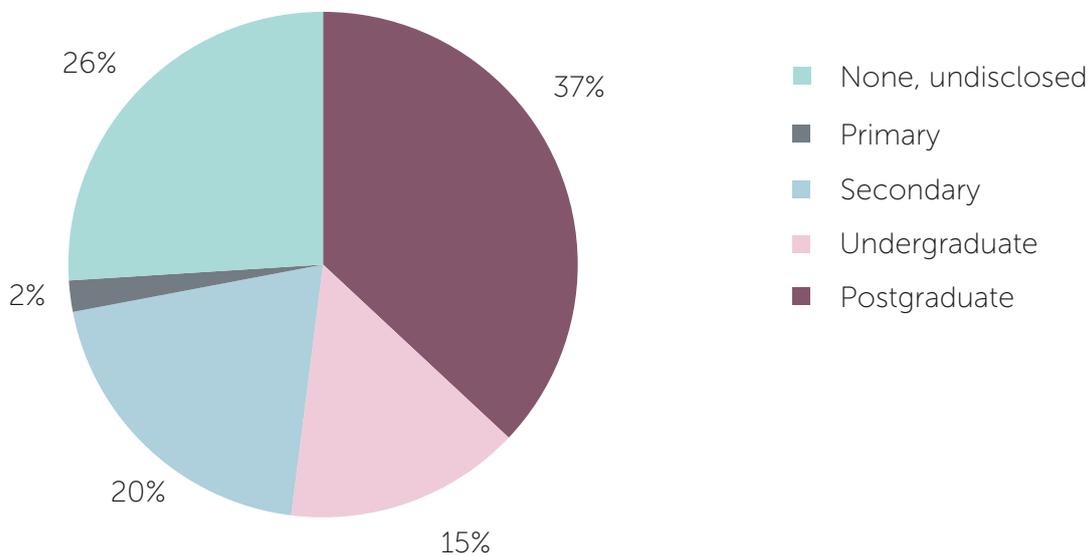


2. Sample population

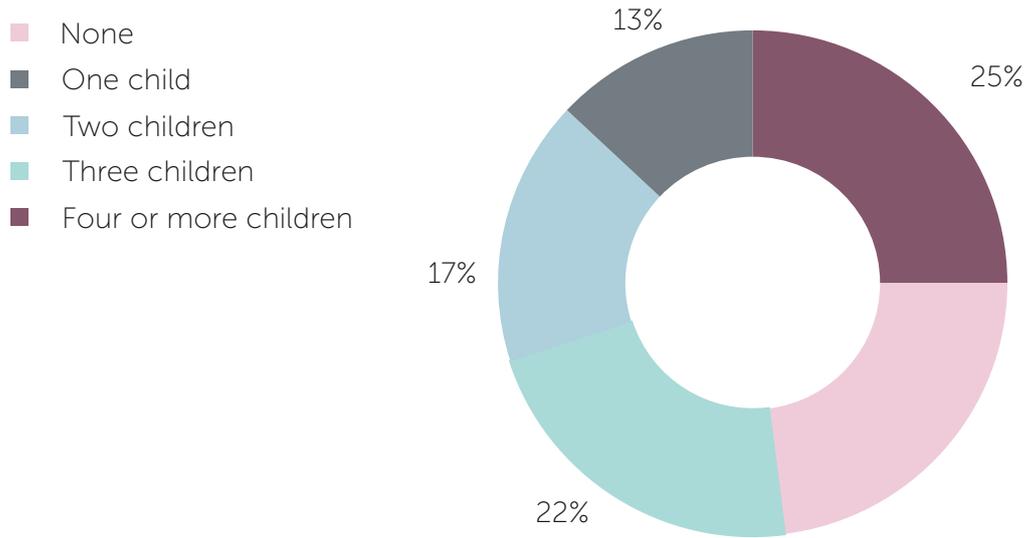
In total, 273 British citizens were involved in the Global Home Index Study. Those involved were distributed over 70 towns and cities within the UK and Ireland, with around half residing within the London. The vast majority of study participants (90%) were female. The age of individuals ranged widely, from 18 to 82 years, with an average age of 45 years. In terms of their employment status, approximately 30% of participants identified as full-time homemakers and 10% were retired or unemployed.

The following figures illustrate further characteristics of the involved study population, namely their level of education, number of children and civil status.

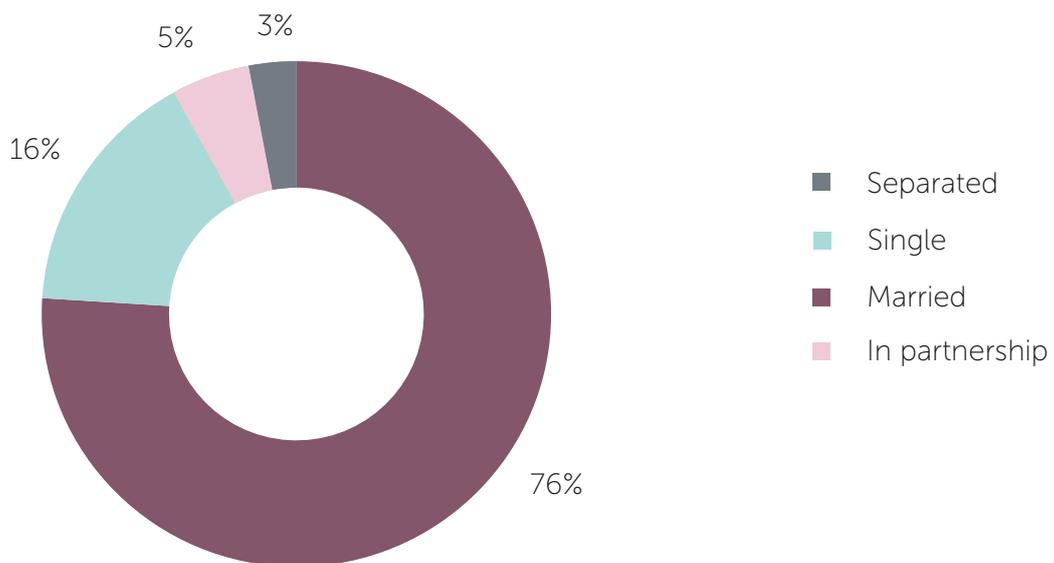
Education Level of Participants



Number of children per participant



Civil status of participants



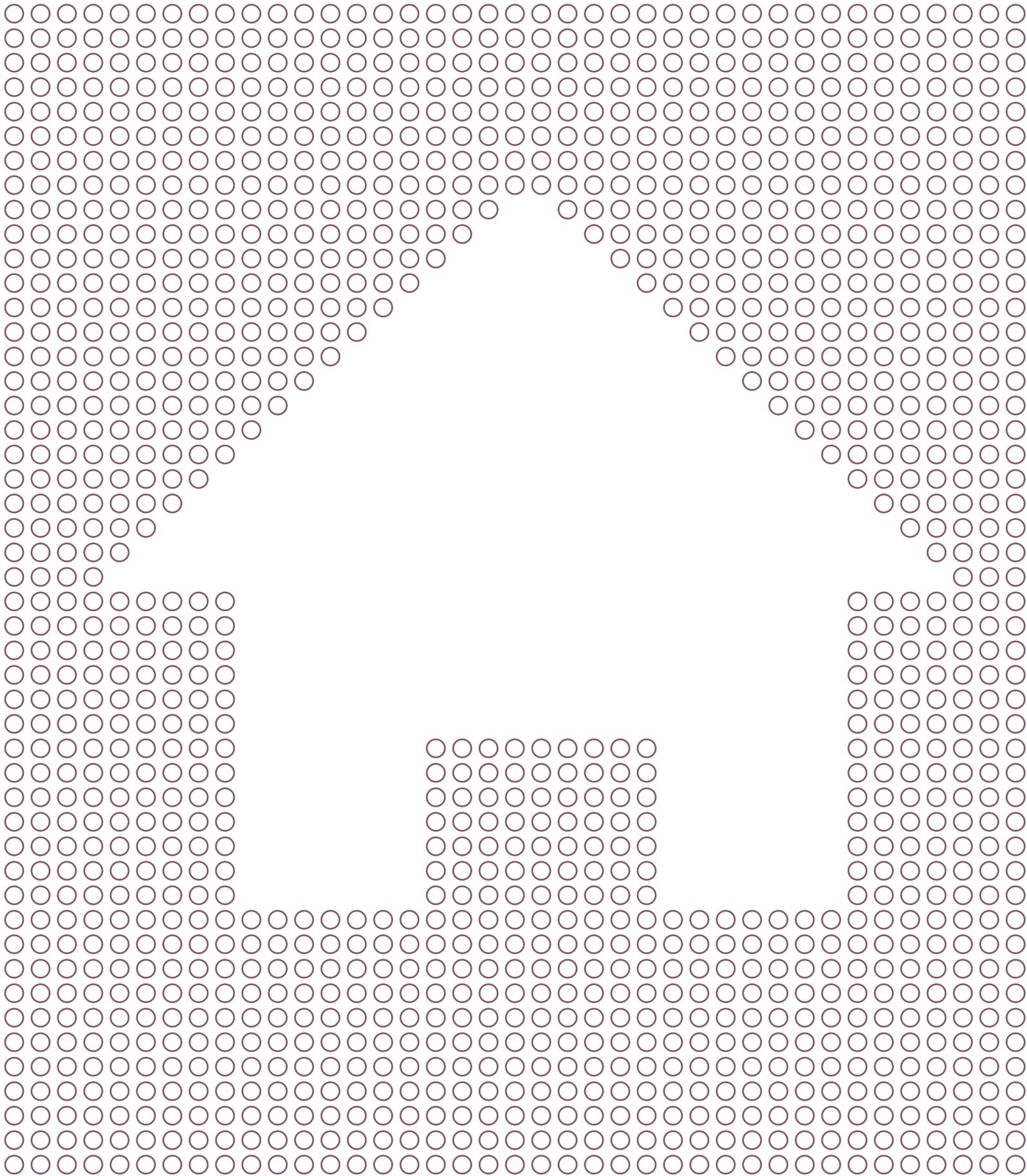
3. Methodology

The key concepts dealt with in the GHI survey were established during a series of interviews with professionals from various sectors of society (public, private, academic, NGOs and media). These interviewees were selected by snowball sampling, a technique used to study highly dispersed or minority populations that are in contact with each other.

Once developed, the survey was disseminated globally to individuals above 18 years of age. This was primarily achieved by invitation from partners of the survey in the form of emails, newsletters, press, social networks, magazines, and brochures. The responses were collected on-line through a multi-lingual web page: <http://globalhomeindex.org>.

A limitation of the sample used for the survey is its non-probabilistic nature, in the sense that many of the participants recruited were connected to the partners involved in the survey (many of which were members of NGOs or academic institutions with a pre-established interest in issues of the home) and therefore may not be sufficiently representative of the general population.

The style of response was based on a Likert scale, which allows measurement of the extent of agreement with a statement or the frequency with which a task is carried out. The response options ranged from 1 to 5, with 1 representing complete disagreement or a frequency of "never", and 5 representing complete agreement or a frequency of "always".

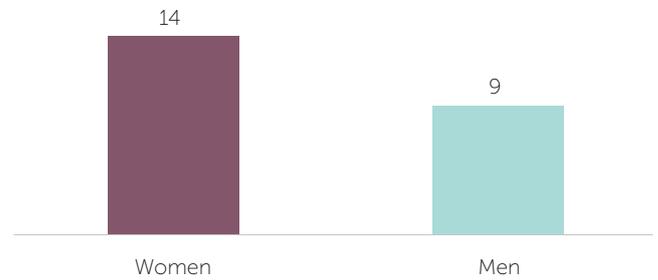


4. Analysis of results

4.1 General perception in relation to household tasks

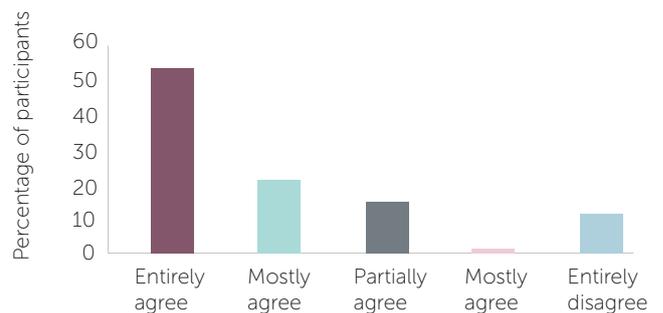
In line with previously reported findings (Bø 2008; Braun et al., 2008; Gaunt and Bouk-nik, 2011, Käsälä and Oinas, 2015), our GHI study confirms that the burden of housework continues to fall on women in most British households. Specifically, within the UK and the Republic of Ireland women spend an average duration of 14 hours per week on housework, while men commit an average of 9 hours weekly (see fig. 4).

Fig. 4
Average number of hours per week spent on housework



Despite this difference, similarly high proportions of male and female participants reported feeling that society places limited value on managing such home-related tasks. When asked the extent to which they agree with the following statement: “Society values professional success outside the home above looking after the home” over half of both male and female participants completely agreed. See Fig. 5.

Fig. 5
Perceived social value for professional success over household tasks



Note: This figure relates to participants’ agreement with the statement “Society values professional success outside the home above looking after the home”. (n=273).

A similar sentiment is reflected in some of the comments left by survey participants. The following are some examples:

Mother
Carer
Dublin, aged 51

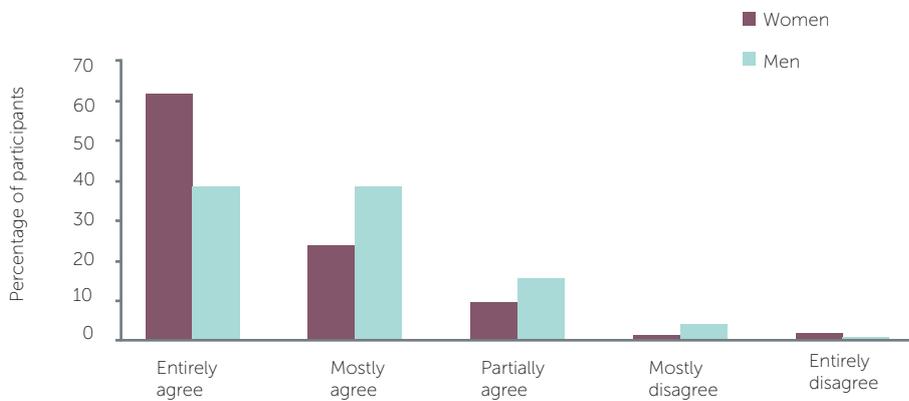
“I am very pleased that work in the home and family life are recognised. So many women are torn between work and home and staying home has become undervalued...I wish women could be better taught in school to make having children and rearing them at home a priority and that nothing is more fulfilling.”

Mother,
Business administrator
London, aged 43

“Not everyone is aware of the importance of homemaking in society. I hope this changes... money is not everything and you cannot put your most precious treasure given to you by God (your family) in the hands of strangers.”

When participants were then asked for their own opinion on the value of performing household tasks, the clear majority agreed that such tasks were important (see Fig. 6). It is worth noting that the proportion of women who completely agreed with this was found to be higher than the proportion of male participants of the same opinion. This could help to explain reported differences in time dedicated to housework.

Fig. 6
Personal opinion on the importance of household tasks



Note: This figure relates to participants' agreement with the statement "I consider it important to take care of household tasks". (n=246 (women), 27(men)).

The feelings of one participant are demonstrated by the following comment:

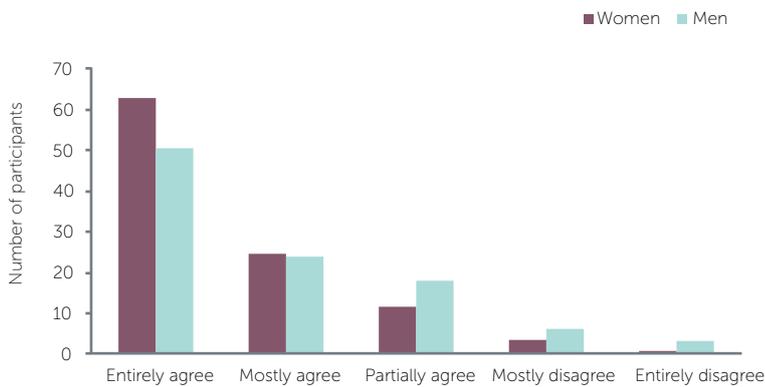
Housewife
Retired radiographer
Surrey, age 71

“[As] a grandparent of 16, I feel very strongly that the family is the building block of society”

To further explore public opinion on the utility of housework, participants were asked whether they agree that it helps to develop skills applicable to other areas of life. As Fig. 7 shows, more than 60% of female participants and almost half of the males completely agreed. Despite the clear finding that most participants recognised household chores as serving some measure of importance, several individuals admitted to neglecting these duties because of professional commitments outside of the home.

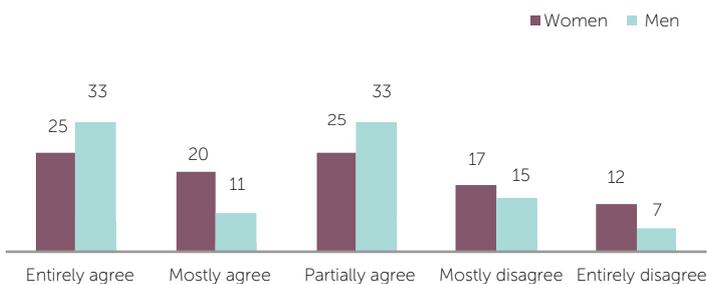
As shown in Fig. 8, over a quarter of participants completely agreed that their professional careers interfered with their responsibilities at home and approximately 70% partially agreed. Sorting responses according to gender indicated that work-home balance could be slightly more of an issue for men since 7% more male participants answered in the affirmative. These results are consistent with the previously mentioned finding that the males surveyed dedicated less time on average to performing household duties than women.

Fig. 7
Utility of housework in the development of other skills



Note: This figure shows the extent to which participants agree with the statement "Performing household tasks helps me to develop skills required in other areas of life". (n=246 (women), 27(men))

Fig. 8
Work commitments cause neglect of the household



Note: The above figure shows the extent to which participants agree with the statement "My work commitments lead me to neglect time which should be dedicated to home and family life." The percentage of participants is shown (n=246 (women), 27(men)).

4.2. Components of homemaking

The second part of this study was concerned with breaking down the tasks that constitute 'homemaking' into discrete activities that can be individually investigated. The idea behind this was to discern public perception regarding which specific tasks are important, based on how regularly they are performed by family members and also to make 'homemaking' comparable across families worldwide.

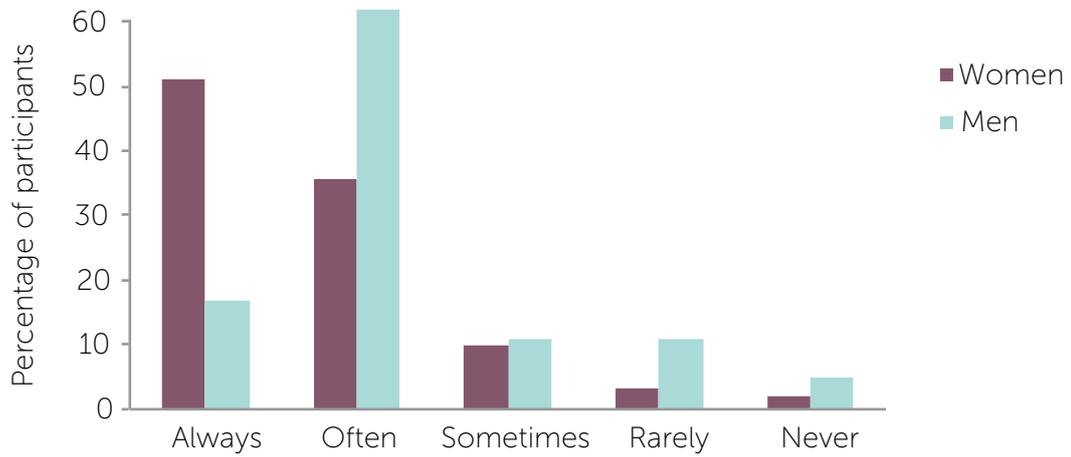
a. Organisation and co-ordination of the home

In this section attention was paid to the frequency with which survey participants personally performed the cleaning, tidying, shopping, cooking, and household maintenance. How such tasks were divided between family members was also investigated.

The first activity considered was the cooking and consumption of homemade meals. Whilst the health implications of eating nutritiously are widely recognised, other aspects of home cooking that make it worthwhile may be less obvious. For example, certain sociologists perceive home cooking to be important in establishing tradition within families and to create a sense of identity (Charles and Kerr, 1998; DeVault, 1991; Grieshaber, 1997; Moiso, Arnold and Price, 2004; Valentine, 1999). Furthermore, eating as a family provides an opportunity to engage with one another and thereby develop appropriate social behaviour (Borgmann, 2000).

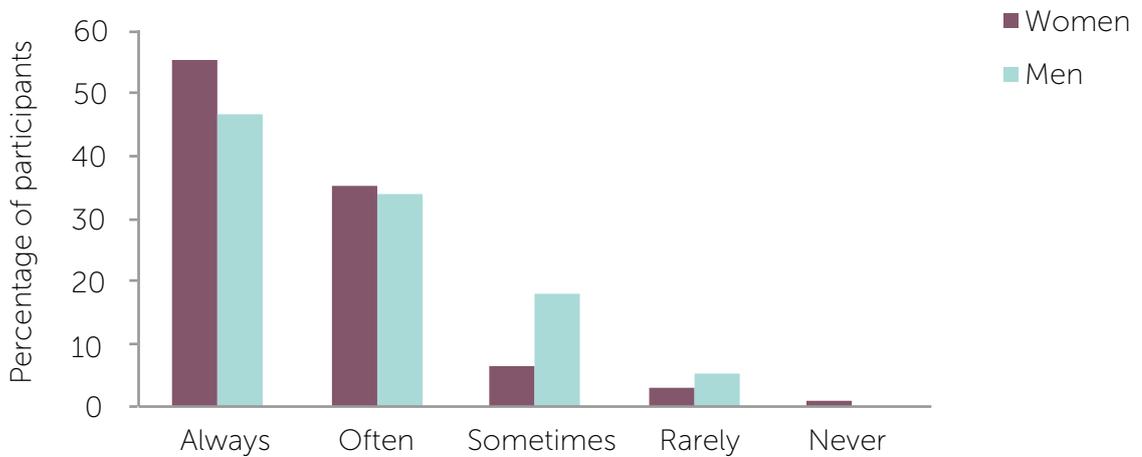
When participants were asked how often they cook homemade food for their family, a substantial 50% of women, but only 15% of men, reported to do so on a daily basis (Fig. 9). When subsequently asked how frequently they eat as an entire family, the responses were more equal, with 55% of women and 44% of men claiming to always dine together (Fig. 10).

Fig. 9
Frequency of consumption of homecooked meals



Note: The percentage of participants was calculated from a sample size of (n=246 (women), 27(men)).

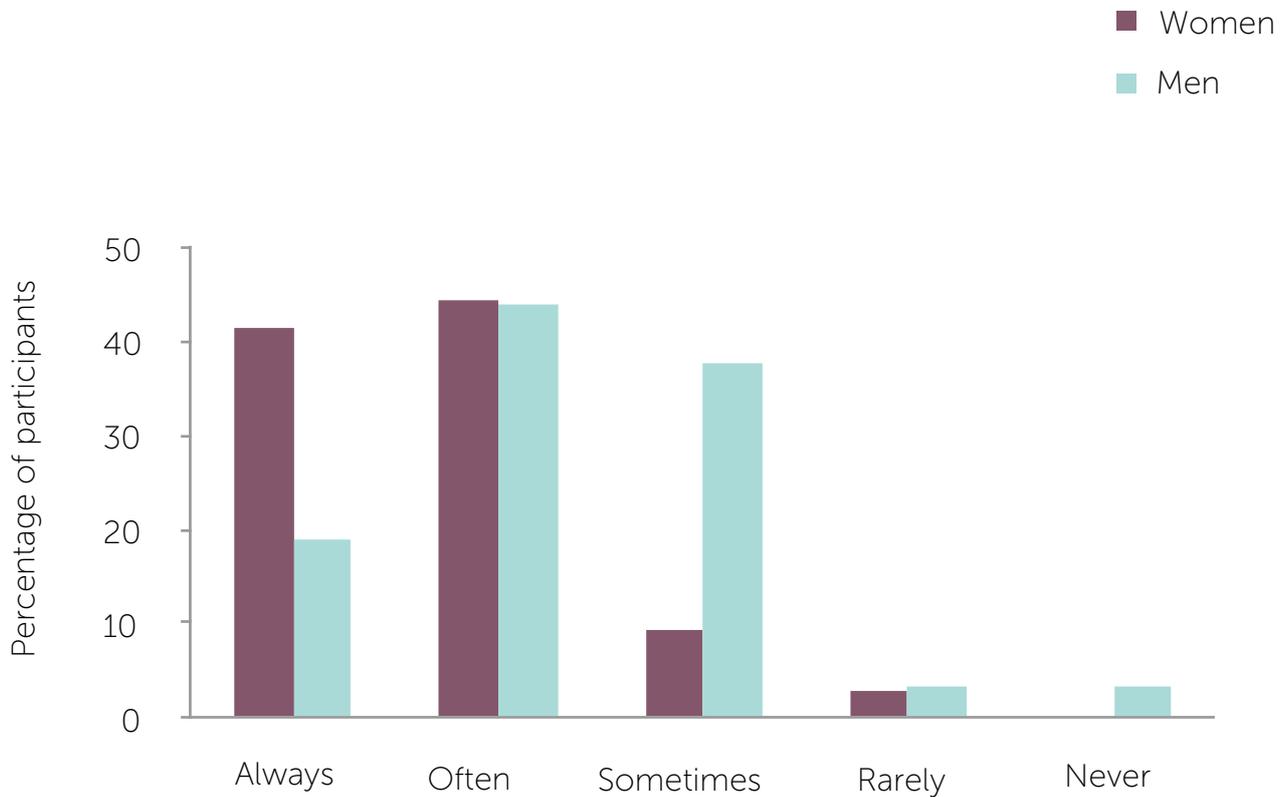
Fig. 10
Frequency of dining as a whole family



Note: The percentage of participants was calculated from a sample size of (n=246 (women), 27(men)).

Next, participants were asked how often they personally performed routine tasks involving cleaning or organisation. The responses revealed that women personally undertake such chores more frequently than men. For example, 42% of female participants always performed the cleaning and tidying, compared with less than 20% of male participants (Fig. 11).

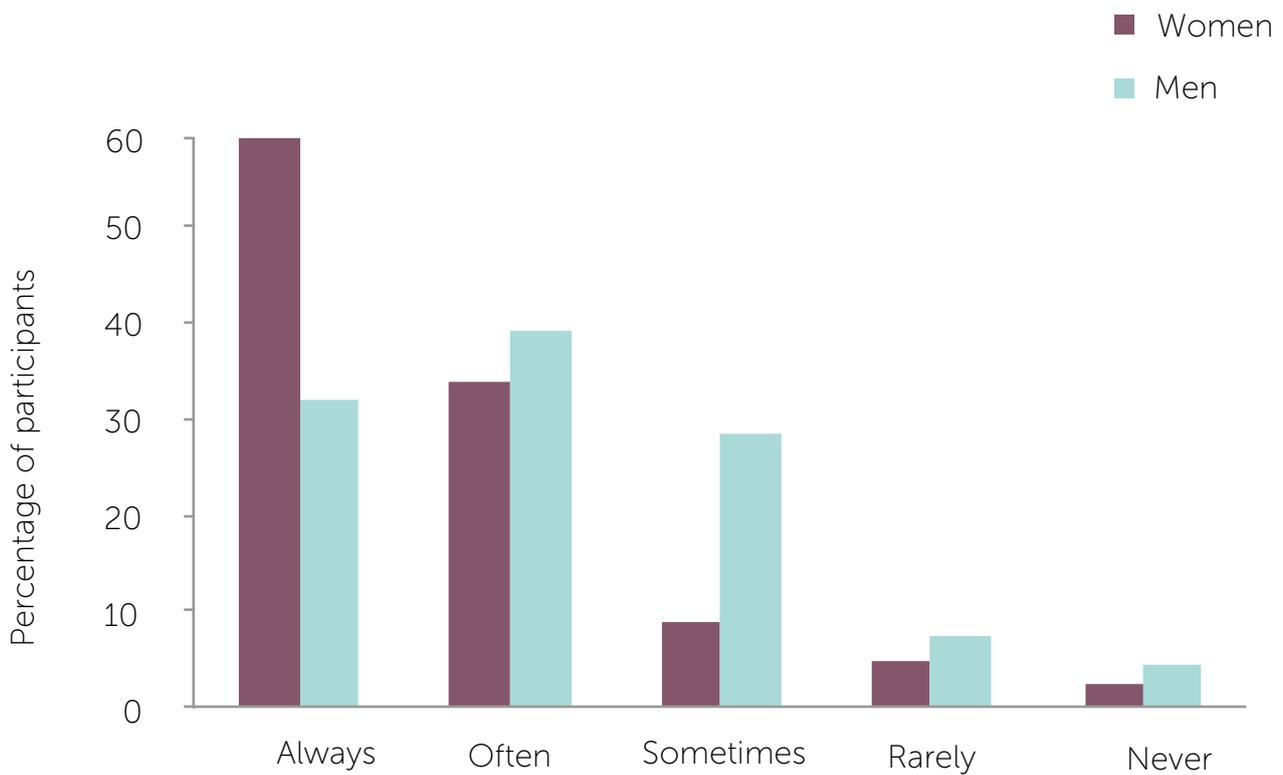
Fig. 11
Frequency of cleaning and tidying



Note: The percentage of participants was calculated from a sample size of (n=246 (women), 27(men)).

Participants were also asked how often they personally handled the household shopping, including purchasing items such as groceries, cleaning products, and other household maintenance items. In similar fashion, the proportion of women taking full responsibility for these tasks was much greater; almost 60% claimed to always carry out the shopping, compared with 30% of men. See Fig. 12.

Fig. 12
Frequency of shopping for household items

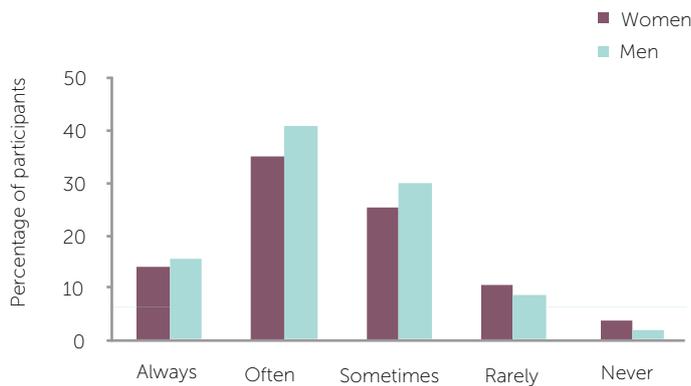


Note: The percentage of participants was calculated from a sample size of (n=246 (women), 27(men)).

The next type of activity to come under investigation was household maintenance. This included carrying out building repairs, decorating the home, gardening, and maintenance of appliances. As is evident from Fig. 13, the percentage of female participants entirely responsible for maintaining the household was much lower compared with other household-related tasks. Approximately 18% of women surveyed performed such duties, which is very close to the percentage of male participants (18.5%). A reason for this reduction could be the requirement for specific, technical training to be able to perform these tasks.

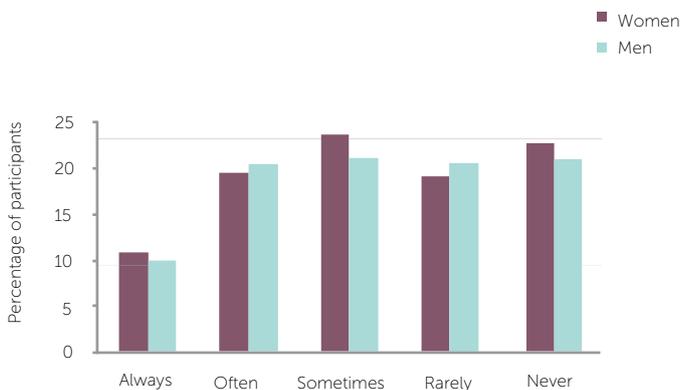
As Fig. 14 shows, little time appeared to be spent on acquiring such training, as fewer than 30% of participants always undertook training for household maintenance.

Fig. 13
Personal handlings of household maintenance



Note: The percentage of participants was calculated from a sample size of (n=246 (women), 27(men)).

Fig. 14
Time spent on training in household maintenance tasks

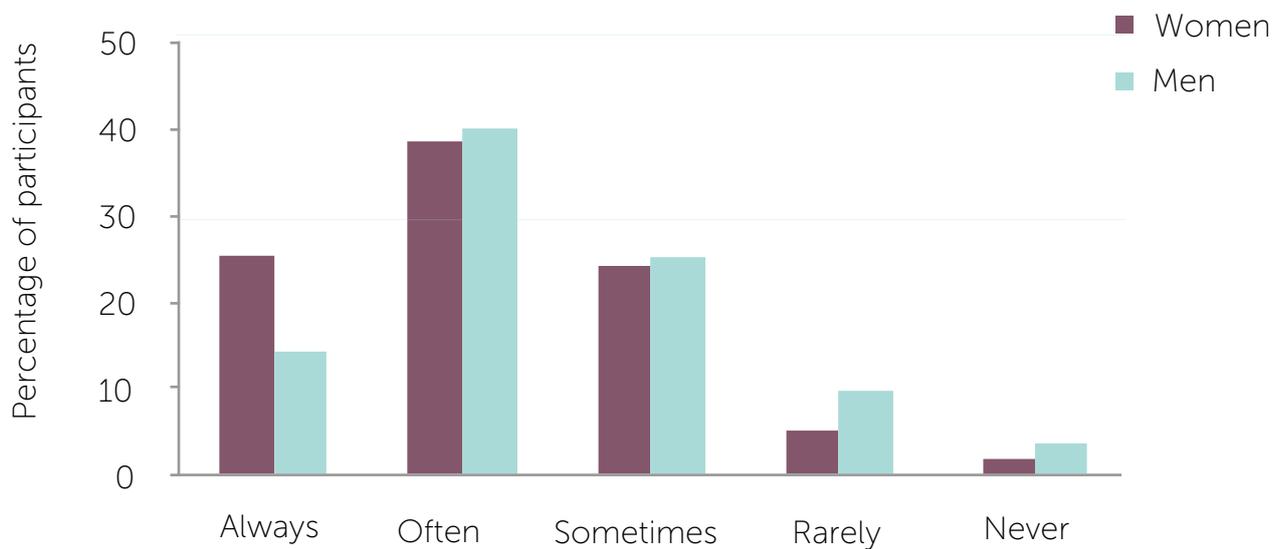


Note: The percentage of participants was calculated from a sample size of (n=246 (women), 27(men)).

b. Teaching values to children involved in homemaking

Another area of interest to the conductors of this study was the extent of intergenerational transfer of the knowledge and skills involved in homemaking. To determine whether survey participants attempted to teach such values to their children, they were firstly asked whether they frequently distributed domestic tasks amongst the family, considering the age, ability, and preferences of family members. Responses were scaled as previously, ranging from ‘always’ to ‘never’. The results indicated that merely 15-26% of participants are always in the habit of distributing household tasks (Fig. 15). In addition to limiting opportunities to teach values to children; a lack of participation on the part of children and/or partners would potentially be a source of added strain on many homemakers.

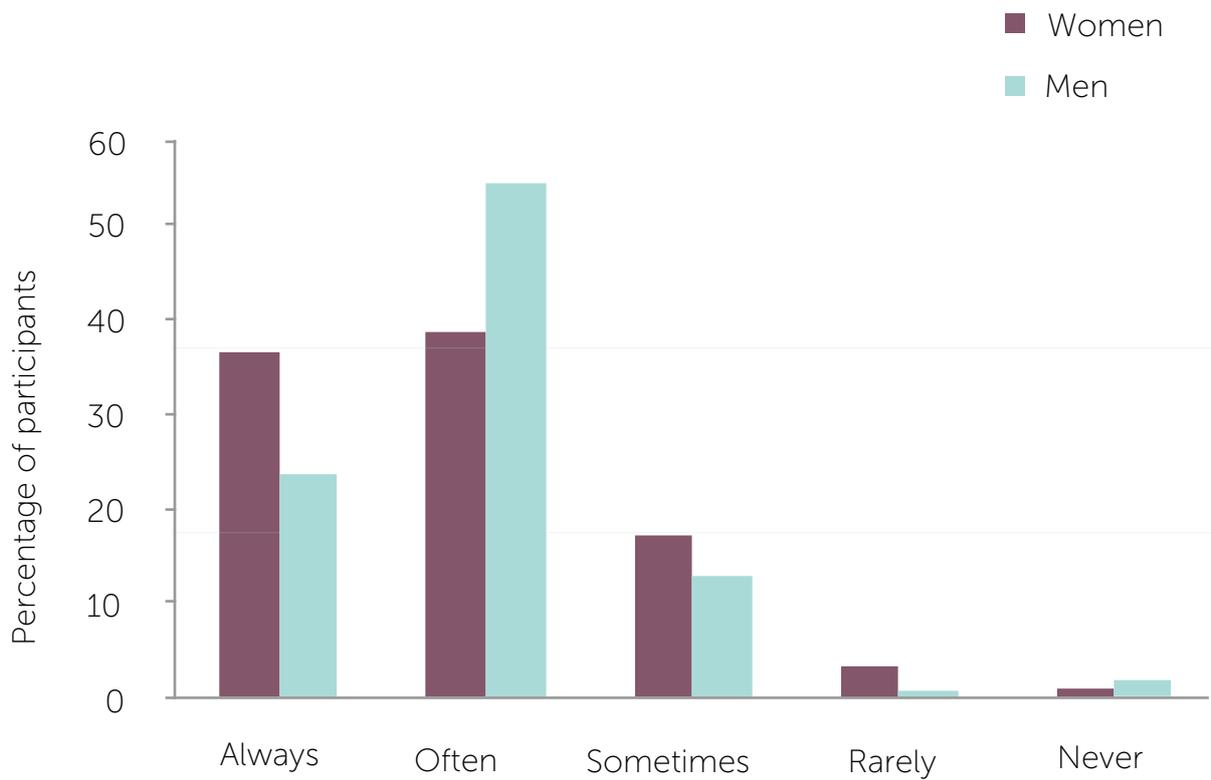
Fig. 15
Distribution of tasks throughout the family



Note: The percentage of participants was calculated from a sample size of (n=246 (women), 27(men)).

Furthermore, participants were asked how often they teach their family to look after the material details of the home. For example, performing fix-it jobs. The results revealed that between 26-37% of participants always taught family members to do so. See Fig. 16.

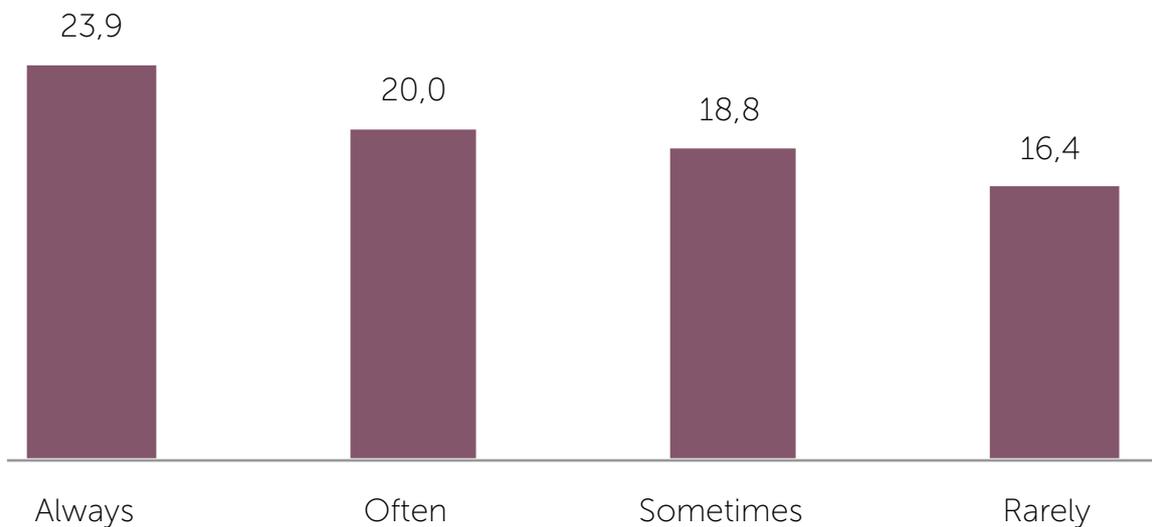
Fig. 16
Teaching family to care for the material details of the home



Note: The percentage of participants was calculated from a sample size of (n=246 (women), 27(men)).

Following on from this question, we examined whether a link can be drawn between a participant’s commitment to teaching infants to care for the material components of the home, and their overall dedication to housework. To achieve this, we pooled participants’ responses to the question concerning material details into separate frequency categories (‘always’, ‘often’ etc.) and for each pool we calculated the average number of hours of housework performed by these participants. Any participants involved in work outside of the home were excluded from this analysis. As Fig. 17 illustrates, the frequency of teaching these values positively correlated with the amount of time dedicated to the work of the home.

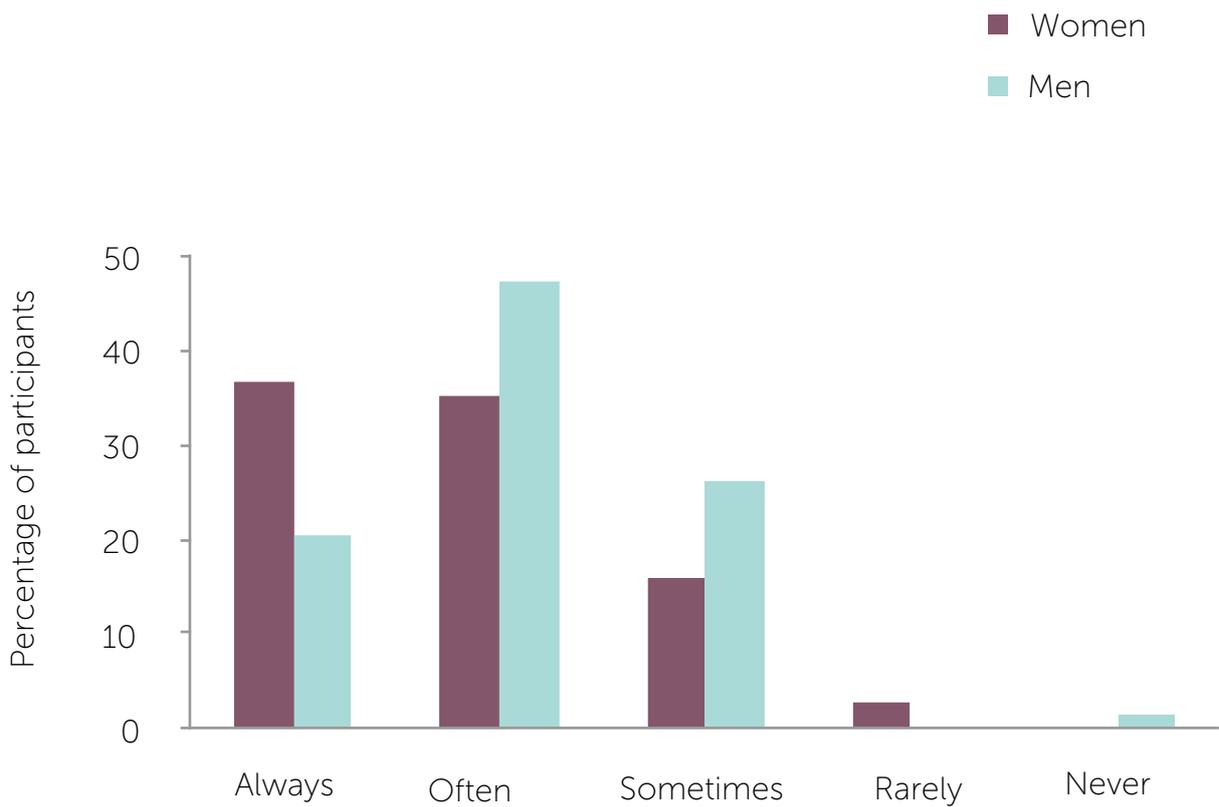
Fig. 17
Hours of housework and caring for material details



Note: The average amount of housework performed (hours weekly) is shown for each category of response to the question: How frequently do you teach your children to care for the material details of the home? (n=109)

Finally, participants were asked how frequently they taught their family to care for natural resources and utilities. For example, practising economical usage of water, electricity and gas, and recycling appropriate materials. The results indicated that approximately 22-38% of participants always taught their family members to put such values into practice. See Fig. 18.

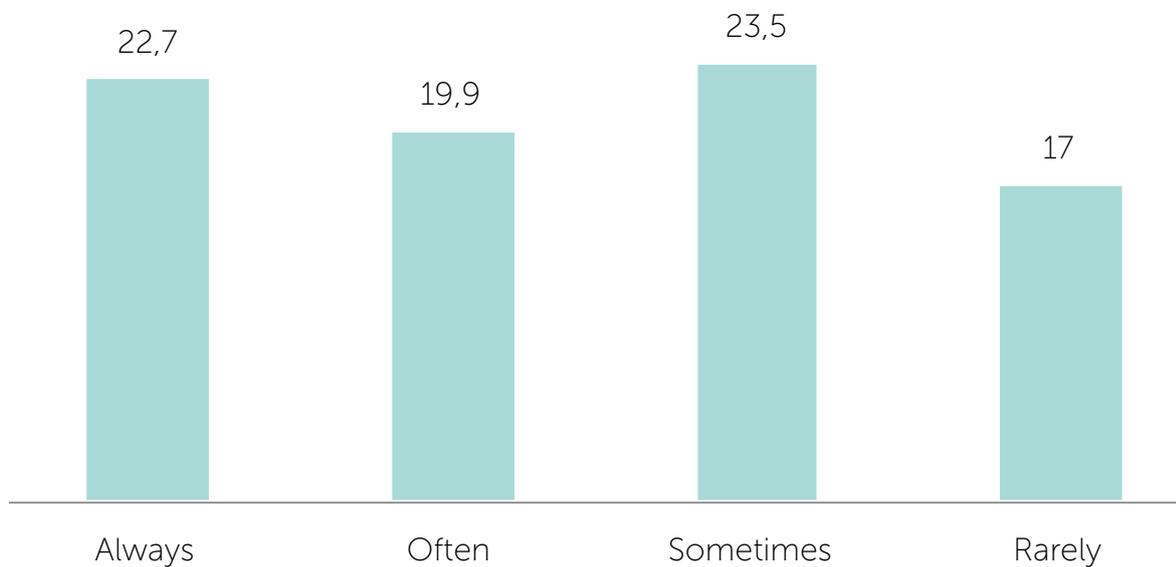
Fig. 18
Teaching family to care for natural resources



Note: The percentage of participants was calculated from a sample size of (n=246 (women), 27(men)).

Again we compared these results with the amount of housework performed by each response pool. In Fig. 19 it can be seen that those participants that were the least committed to teaching children to care for natural resources were also the least committed to performing housework. However, other than this association, a clear correlation between the two activities is lacking.

Fig. 19
Hours of housework and caring for natural resources



Note: The average amount of housework performed (hours weekly) is shown for each category of response to the question: How frequently do you teach your children to care for the natural resources. (n=109)

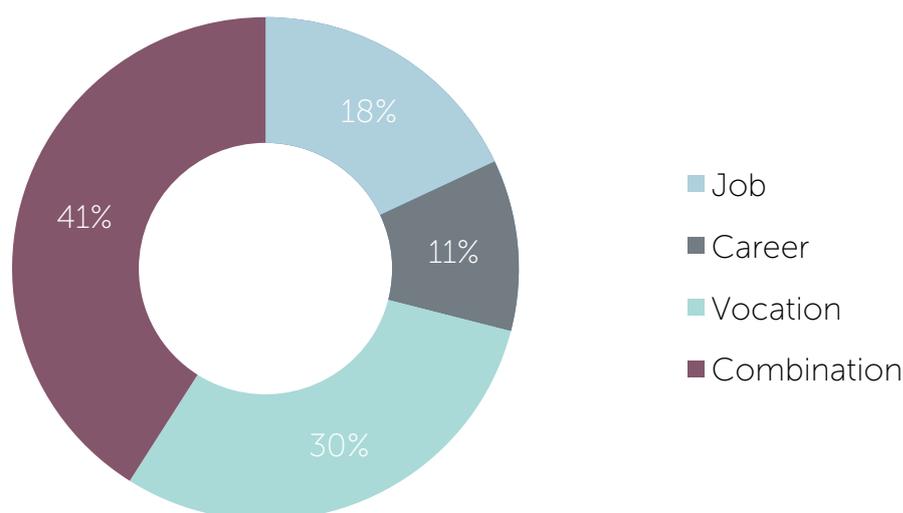


4.3. Attitudes towards employment

Anticipating that many of those involved in our survey conduct work outside of the home, we hoped to investigate their attitudes towards this employment. In line with the work of Robert Bellah, we determined the attitudes of participants towards their jobs by asking them to place their work into one of three categories: a 'job', a "career", or a "calling" (Bellah et al., 1985). According to Bellah's criteria, viewing work as a 'job' means focusing on the financial incentives, whilst viewing it as a 'career' implies a focus on professional advancement and as a 'calling' implies that it is a destiny and includes pro-social aspects. In this study, those participants carrying out full or part-time work outside the home were provided with descriptions of hypothetical cases exemplifying each of Bellah's categories and then asked to indicate how much they identify with each case. The extent of identification was graded according to a Likert-type scale, ranging from 0-3, whereby a value of 0 corresponds to the sentiment "nothing like me" and 3 corresponds to "very like me". The responses were then analysed to determine which of the three cases received the highest score overall.

The results of this investigation revealed that 30% of participants identified with Case 3, viewing work as a vocation. Approximately 11% of participants related to Case 2 and therefore view work as a career and finally, 18% view work as a job. The remaining 41% identified with more than one of these options. See Fig. 20.

Fig. 20
Categorisation of employment



¹ See Appendix II for descriptions of the hypothetical cases used

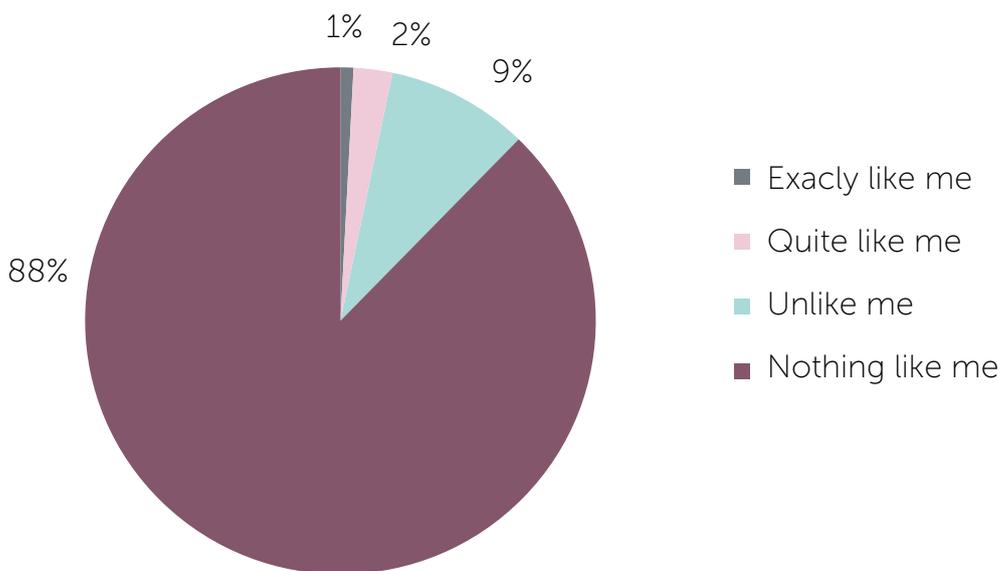
4.4. Attitudes towards household tasks

Following a similar methodology to that described in the previous section, three hypothetical cases were created to describe attitudes towards household tasks.

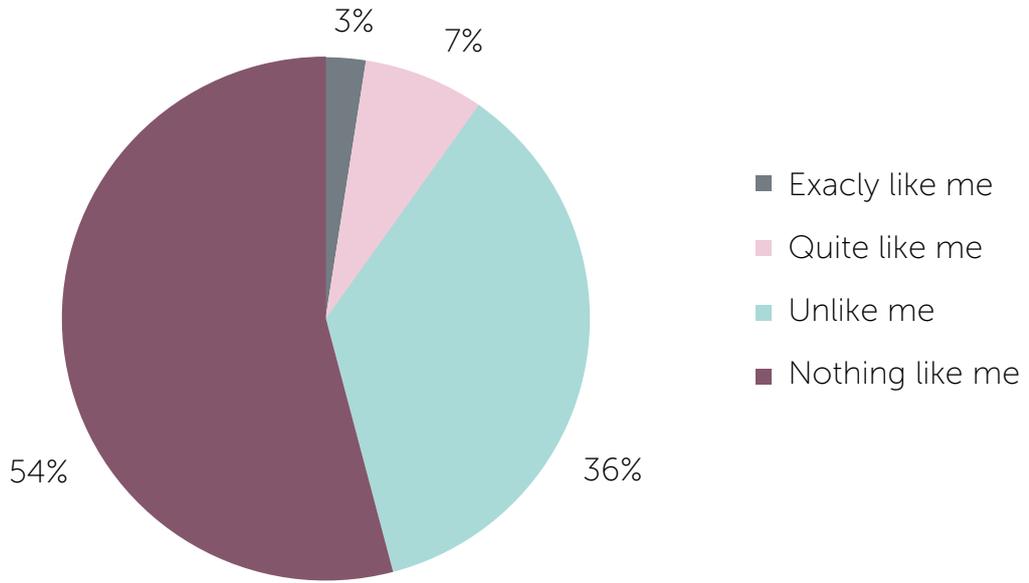
These cases were presented to those participants self-identifying as full-time homemakers. The options given included viewing homemaking as a resignation, resulting from lack of paid employment opportunities (Case 1), as a temporary situation pending on changes in family circumstances (Case 2), or rather, as a “calling” or destined vocation (Case 3). Fig. 21 displays a breakdown of the responses to each category. Whilst only 3% of participants identified with Case 1, presenting housework as a resignation, as many as 50% related to Case 3, viewing housework as a vocation. Approximately 10% of participants identified with Case 2 and therefore view work of the home as a temporary stage of their life.

Fig. 21
Categorisation of homemaking

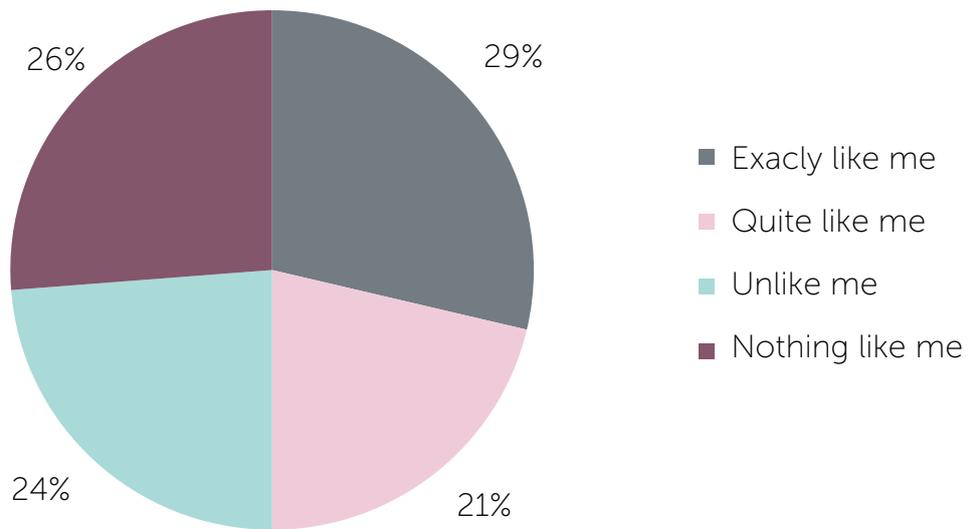
Case 1: Resignation



Case 2: Temporary circumstance

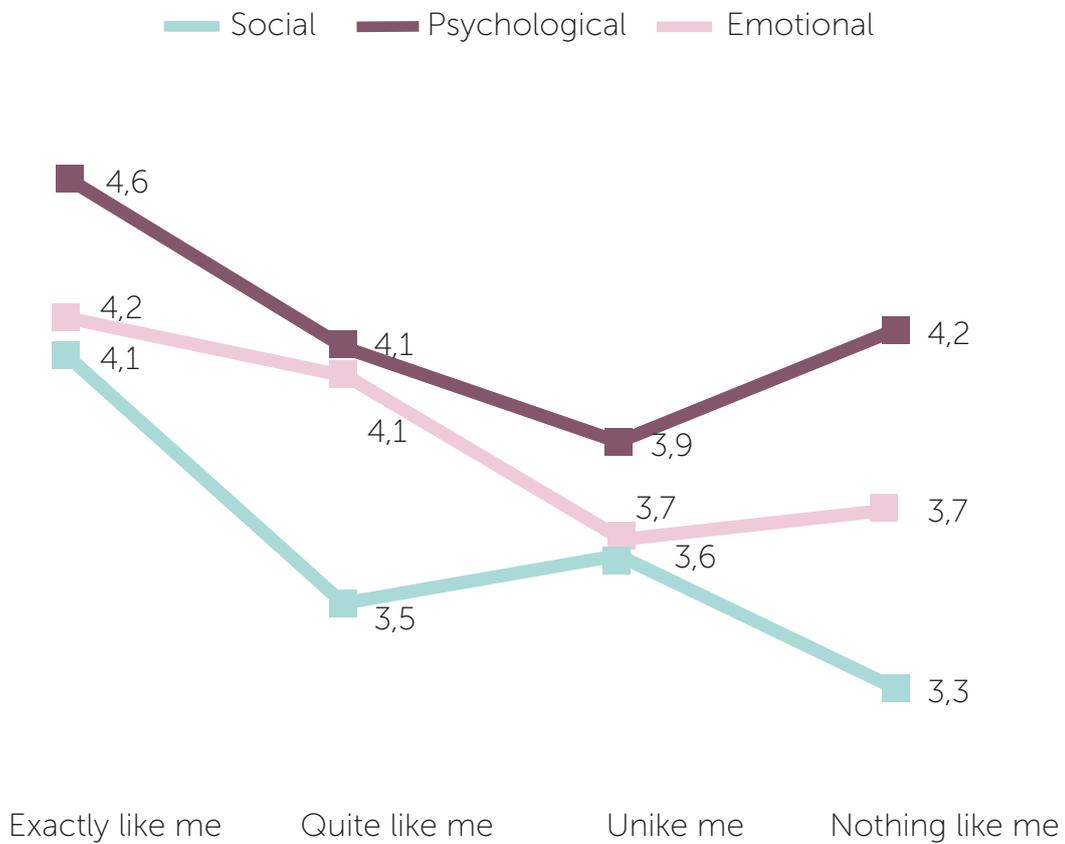


Case 3: Vocation



Following on from this enquiry, we examined whether one’s regard for the significance of their work has an outcome on their personal satisfaction levels. We would expect that those homemakers that view their work as a vocation (Case 3) would experience greater contentment in their daily lives than those viewing it as a less meaningful use of time. This is in fact what we observed, based on the stress levels of participants in each agreement category. As Fig. 22 demonstrates, the stronger the relation of a participant to Case 3, the higher their social, psychological, and emotional wellbeing score, measured on a scale of 1-5, with 5 corresponding to a feeling of maximal social integration, and psychological and emotional contentment.

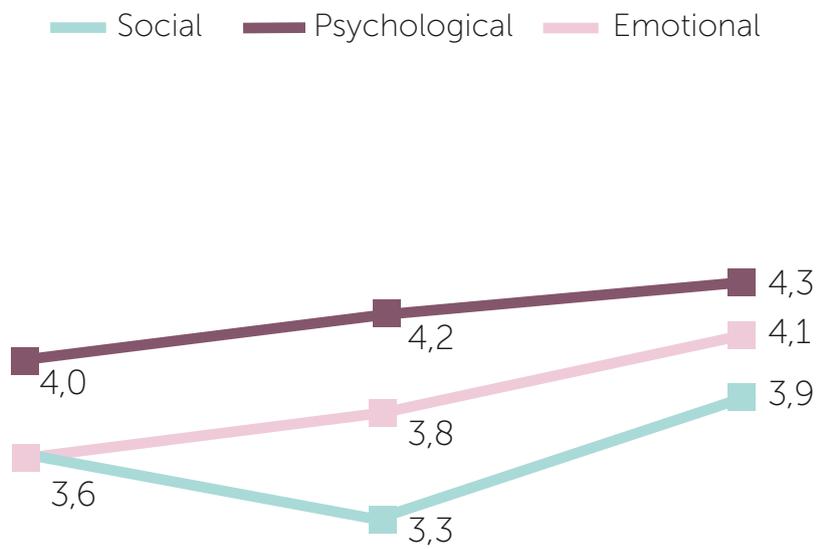
Fig. 22
Wellbeing Correlation with Case 3 Rating



4.5. Family size and emotional wellbeing

As an additional line of investigation, we considered whether family size correlated with participants' reports of social, psychological, and emotional wellbeing. By grouping responses according to the number of children a participant had, we observed that those with 3 or more reported higher emotional wellbeing ratings than those with fewer children. See Fig 23.

Fig. 23
Wellbeing Correlation with number of children



5. Conclusion

There are few studies at present that have investigated the value placed on housework by British family members. It is hoped that the findings of this report will help to inform future strategies concerning the work of the home and will permit comparisons to be made between British households and those in other areas of the world.

Our results show that women in Britain spend more time than their male counterparts on household tasks. This is not at all surprising, but is all the while important. Now that more mothers are becoming the breadwinners, we should expect more fathers to be taking on a share of the household chores. Our findings suggest that progress has yet to be made in this respect.

Those who do commit time to homemaking do so in recognition of its value and; therefore, undertake these duties with pride. One pivotal value that was acknowledged by our British participant pool is its role in teaching core principles to family members. Such principles include caring for the environment we live in. This may involve learning to recycle non-biodegradable materials or learning to conserve resources such as water and electricity. Such lessons as these were taught by approximately 22-38% of our study's participants.

Other lessons to be learnt from the home include healthy eating. With almost half of participants claiming to routinely cook homemade meals, many clearly recognise that the home is a critical source of nutrition and paves the way for future dietary awareness.

Furthermore, around 60% of participants strongly agree that homemaking can teach skills applicable to other areas of life. To name an example, eating together at the dinner table encourages family members to listen to one another and to partake in discussions, developing communication skills that are infinitely valuable in both employment and social scenarios.



Unfortunately, we can also conclude that many believe the work of the home to be undervalued by society. This links closely to the finding that several participants blame their lack of commitment to household chores on the need to undertake paid employment.

It is vital that society understands that the work of the home is not purely a matter of cleaning and tidying, but above all, it serves to create a comforting and nurturing environment in which family unity can be strengthened. This involves working together to undertake the various activities required to maintain a household.

As it becomes increasingly common for both parents to be engaged in external professional work, the requirement for family members to share the burden of housework is even greater. Yet, at present, few families appear to be regularly distributing tasks amongst themselves (15-25% of those surveyed).

In highlighting the lack of appreciation that society has for tasks that, as we have shown, many believe serve a critical purpose to families, we have exposed a problem that needs to be addressed. For the benefit of the upbringing of future members of society, we hope that the work of the home achieves greater recognition, particularly in the face of a decreasingly family-orientated culture, in which broken families are becoming ever more frequent.

Through promoting awareness of these critical issues, such as achieving a work-family balance, it is hoped that they will be considered in the design of future public and corporate policies, to encourage a culture that embraces the home.



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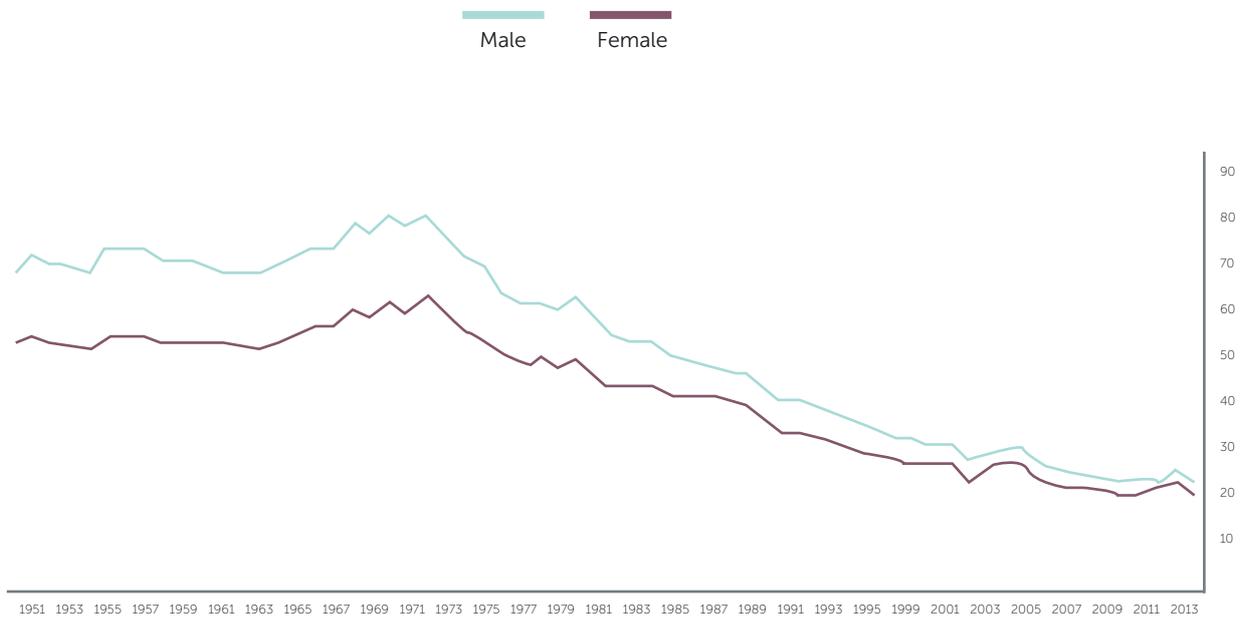
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7. Appendix I

Marriage rates by gender 1863-2013



*Data obtained from the ONS

Marriage rate defined as persons marrying per 1,000 unmarried male/female population aged 16 and over.

Rates are quoted for opposite sex couples

8. Appendix II

The three cases presented to the participants were:

Case A

(A case of financial incentive)

Person A works primarily to earn enough money to support their life outside of work. If Person A did not need the money they would not continue with the current job, but prefer to do something else instead. Work, for Person A, is basically a necessity of life, as much as breathing or sleeping and they often wish the time at work would pass more quickly. Person A lives for weekends and holidays and if they could have their life again, would probably not do the same job or encourage their children and friends to pursue their line of work. Person A is very anxious to retire.

Case B

(A case of career progress)

Person B basically enjoys their work but does not expect to be in the current job for more than five years, the plan being to move on to higher-level work. Person B has several goals for the future related to the positions they would eventually like to occupy. Sometimes the job seems like a waste of time, but Person B knows how to manage the current position well enough to move forward and aspires for promotion. For Person B, a promotion is recognition of work well done and a sign of their success in competing with co-workers.

Case C

(A case of meaning and pro-social aspects)

The work of Person C is one of the most important aspects of their life. This person is very happy with their profession. Because what Person C does for a living is a vital part of who they are, it is one of the first things spoken about by Person C, who tends to take work home and also on holiday. Most of the friendships are from the place of employment, and various work-associated clubs and organisations. Person C has good job satisfaction due to loving the work and because of a feeling of making the world a better place and would encourage friends and children to enter their profession. Person C would be quite upset if forced to stop working and is not in a hurry to retire.

9. Appendix III

The three cases presented to the participants were:

Case A

(A case of resignation)

Person A is engaged in household chores primarily due to a lack of opportunity to train and get a good job outside of the home. Person A would not continue with their present role if given the choice and would rather do something else. Work of the home for Person A is basically a necessity of life, as much as breathing or sleeping. Housework is seen as routine and boring, but Person A does not have enough training to work outside the home and often wants time to pass more quickly and for the children to grow more independent. Person A would probably not work full time in home if given a choice and would not encourage children and friends to engage in household chores.

Case B

(A case of temporary circumstance)

Person B basically enjoys the housework but does not expect to dwell on it for long. The plan is to devote fully to the work of the home while the children are young and then move on to paid work outside the home. Person B does not seek training for household chores, as they do not consider it necessary, but aspires to get a job outside the home as soon as the necessary conditions are met. The work of the home, although seemingly important, to Person B is considered not a priority in life, especially if someone else could do it instead. Person B would encourage his children and friends to only partially dedicate themselves to the tasks of the home, focusing more on their professional development.

Case C

(A case of intrinsic motivation)

The work of Person C's home is one of the most important aspects of their life. Person C is happy to do housework and often looks for opportunities for training, dedicating themselves full-time to the home as a vital part of who they are and it is one of the first things they say about themselves. Although sometimes housework is a sacrifice, Person C enjoys it and considers it the best investment for life: for your loved ones and your home. Person C understands the work of the home as a service to the other family members and as an opportunity to develop competencies for their life and those of their children. A typical Person C takes prides in being a full-time homemaker and often talks about it to friends, feeling good about their work because they love it and because they consider that they are making the world a better place. Person C would encourage their friends and their children to dedicate themselves professionally to the care of the home.

About Home Renaissance Foundation:

It is an international Think Tank, based in London. Since 2006 HRF has been working to bring about change in our understanding of the professional dimension of the work of the home for a well-balanced society. With this aim in mind, HRF has promoted various initiatives in different countries throughout the world through a series of International Congresses, Interdisciplinary Research Initiatives and Training Programmes, aimed at increasing recognition of the work required to create homes that satisfy the fundamental needs of the person and the family, and highlighting its decisive role in the construction of a better society.

www.homerenaissancefoundation.org

About Mothers at Home Matter:

Mothers at Home Matter was founded 25 years ago as a pressure group (known initially as Full Time Mothers) in the face of relentless social and economic pressure on mothers to return to work. Successive governments have actively encouraged families through financial incentives to earn two incomes whilst their children are looked after by a third party. And the media too have played their part in this process by downgrading the work that goes on in the average home. We believe that these policies cause damage to both children and society. Our work is two-fold: to support those who stay at home and to campaign to give families a true choice as to who cares for their children through a fairer family based tax system, housing that is affordable and an end to the negative portrayal of mothers at home.

www.mothersathomematter.co.uk





This publication was printed in October 2017
by Print Express, Unit 5, Stonefield Way, South Ruislip, Middlesex HA4 0JS London - UK

“ In early October 2017 two seemingly unconnected stories appeared in the UK news media. One was based on reports from the annual conference of the Royal College of General Practitioners held in Liverpool. The College chose to highlight the growth of loneliness among elderly Britons, which it likened to a chronic condition, such as diabetes. In other words, having a dearth of social networks was undoing much of the good work that has seen life expectancy rise so wonderfully in recent years.

The other story, which appeared in news bulletins the same week, concerned a speech by a Government minister. She wondered aloud whether British households could learn something about eldercare from south Asian immigrants to the UK and, in doing so, help restrain the nation's rocketing social care liabilities.

Both of these items, and dozens more in the course of the year, introduce and reintroduce a subject which is at the heart of the Global Home Index. What is a 'good home' and what social ills might such an entity help cure? In relation to the two stories mentioned above, the question is pretty obvious. Namely, is a functional home one where eldercare is provided by the family or the state?

There is not a single answer to that question. But it hints at a bigger question. Is the role of the home taken seriously as an instrument of social policy. And is any robustly scientific attempt made to understand the families that populate households; their preferences, priorities and hardships.

Some of the academic ground here is beginning to be trodden. For instance, a question that is often asked is whether a 'good home' facilitates family dining. A growing corpus of data points strongly in favour of the dining table, not the TV, as the focus for family meals. Social capital is imparted, soft skills learned, inter-generational cohesion boosted.

But what about the optimal size of a household? Does running a home, and forfeiting a career, save the taxpayer money, or not? Is it possible, desirable even, to reverse the stigmatisation of home-making?

The Global Home Index takes some first steps towards addressing some of these specific questions. The methodology is simple. To listen to those at the sharp end, whose role may is often cherished by the young and old they care for, if not always by policy makers and opinion formers.”

Colin Brazier

Journalist with Sky News UK and Home Renaissance Foundation advisor

