Gender and care in later life

Indicators and experiences to improve policy and research

Ricardo Rodrigues, Eszter Zolyomi, Stefania Ilinca, Selma Kadi
Austria: 2004 pension reform
labour market outcomes

2004: Major reform(s) to the Austrian pension system

Higher employment rates, differentiated by education

Share of 55-59 years-old employed women, by education

Rodrigues and Ilinca (forthcoming), based on LFS data
Employment and caring: What do we know

- **Negative effect** of employment on informal caregiving (Michaud et al. 2012, He & McHenry 2016, Mazzotta et al. 2020)

- ... particularly for **more affluent** (Mentzakis et al. 2009, Carmichael et al. 2010)

- ... and **high intensity** in US (He & McHenry 2016), **low intensity** in Germany (Fischer & Müller, 2020)

- **Higher educated** less likely to be carers; have **smaller reductions** in hours worked (Tokunaga & Hashimoto, 2017; Hohmeyer & Kopf, 2018, Speiss & Schneider, 2003).
Research questions and hypotheses

RQ: How these changes in female employment affected informal care provision (for frail old individuals)?

Fact: Female employment increased for some educ groups

Hypothesis 1.1: Women less likely to care (probability)

Hypothesis 1.2: Women provide less care (intensity)

Hypothesis 2: Female carers reduced leisure

Hypothesis 3: Female carers have higher burden

Hypothesis 4: Men now more likely to care

Method: compare 2004 with 2015 with SHARE for Austria
No reduction of care prob (H1.1), but rather of intensity (H1.2)

* p-value < 0.1; ** p-value <0.05; *** p-value < 0.001

- H2 and H3 were not confirmed: leisure and burden remained constant
- H4 not confirmed: no shifting of responsibilities for men

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<td>1</td>
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Sample size: 409, 661, 139, 268

Rodrigues and Ilinca (forthcoming), based on SHARE data. Weighted results Logistic regression results, including controls for age, marital status, having children, employment status, household income quartile, physical and mental health status.
Gender, widowhood and care use

Widowhood and bereavement are among the most distressing life events individuals can experience, with **profound consequences on care needs and availability of care resources**

The **majority of widowed individuals are women**, many transitioning to widowhood and living alone concomitantly

Gender is an important determinants for the experience of and adjustment to late life widowhood:

- Women are more vulnerable to financial distress and poverty after the loss of a spouse
- Men experience more pronounced adverse mental and physical health effects
Our contribution to the field

RQ1: Do widowhood (the state of having lost a spouse) and bereavement (the transition into widowhood) impact long-term care use differently for older women and men?

RQ2: Does access to financial and social capital (i.e. educational achievement) intersect with gender to influence patterns of community-based care use for older women and men?
# Mediating gender effect on care use for widowed older people

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
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<tr>
<td>(State of) Being widowed</td>
<td>0.328***</td>
<td>0.438**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transition into widowhood</td>
<td>0.530***</td>
<td>-0.0244</td>
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<td>Low education</td>
<td>-0.136**</td>
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<td>Changes in Income</td>
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<td>Average Income</td>
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<td>(State of) Living alone</td>
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<td>0.513**</td>
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<td>Transition to Living alone</td>
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<td>No. of individuals</td>
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FutureGEN Data Navigator: a glimpse into intersectionality

We are often presented with sex disaggregated data, with little insight into the differences that contribute to gender gaps:

• For example, formal care use is determined not only by care needs, but also by the ability to access and pay for appropriate services

The Data Navigator is an interactive platform that offers a glimpse into gender gaps in health and care outcomes, as well as in the distribution of underlying resources and determinants.
Share of 65+ receiving Formal care (%) by ...

Gender & education

Gender & wealth
Det_Caremix: Familialism, caremix and care ideals in Austria

**RQ:** (How) is familialism reflected in the ideals of care of care dyads?

**Participants:** 24 care dyads including older person & adult child who is their main caregiver in Austria; all older people live in their homes (not in institutions); all dyads practice a caremix; gender and SES diversity of participants;

**Methods:** 48 semi-structured interviews about caregiving and – receiving; framework analysis;
4 different ideals of care

**Family care ideal:**
conditional or unconditional support from children

“`My friend always said to me ‘put her in a home, she wasn’t friendly to you either’, isn’t it? I cannot do that, she is my mother after all.” ` Carer, female, 63 years

**Personal preference ideal:**
good care depends of the wishes of the user and the wishes of the (informal) carer (place of living, bodily care)

“`Well, the current arrangement is the ideal way. You have to say that. What we sort of put together, so to speak, what corresponds to my mother.” ` Carer, female 47 years

**Involvement in decision-making ideal:**
user should be involved in decision-making in everyday life

“`We have to go to her each time, get the cards, withdraw, she wants the cash in her hands. Each month we have to go to the bank at least one extra time. That is her will, that is her autonomous decision, which I think is good, on the one side, because I don’t let anyone take that from me either.” ` Carer, female, 62 years

**Gendered care ideal:**
link between gender and (good) care

“`Well, I don’t like it that much any way, better with a woman (laughs)” ` User, male, 77 years
Familialism in the experiences of care dyads practicing a care-mix

• Those who practice a care-mix often describe a family care ideal; use of formal care does not seem to weaken the role of the family in care in terms of ideals

• examples of the explicitly gendered care ideal are rare; but there is a gender dimension to the other care ideals too

• the ideals are described across the different socio-economic status groups → different practices not due to different ideals but due to different resources
Thank you very much for your attention!

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