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Aim - Background - Research Questions

Aim: To investigate the effect of adult children caring for one’s parents/parents-in-law on the probability of children changing their status in employment (reducing one’s working hours or stopping work altogether).

Background

Increasing demand for care and extending working lives

- 6.4 million carers in the UK, and it’s expected 9 million by 2037 (Carers UK, 2010/12). The majority of informal carers are in their mid-life, and the main providers are partners and adult children (Evandrou and Glaser, 2003)
- 1 in 7 economically active people in the UK juggle paid work and care
- Nearly 1 in 3 carers had reduced their working hours or given up work to care (Carers UK’s State of Caring Survey, 2011)

Research Questions

- Are employed individuals more likely to cease employment if they take on caring responsibilities, provide specific types of help or intensify their support to their parents/parents-in-law during mid-life?
- Among those mid-life adult children who continue to work, are their working hours affected by the type of care provided, or whether such care provision increases over time?

Findings

Data and Methods: The data comes from the cohort study, the National Child Development Study, which started with more than 17,000 children born in 1958 in Great Britain. The analysis uses data from the last two waves, when respondents were aged 50 & 55. The sample comprises all individuals who were at risk of providing care at both ages (with parents or parents-in-law alive) and were working at age 50, with a final sample of more than five thousand individuals. The analyses are based on bivariate and logistic regression models.

Figure 1. Individuals at risk of caring at age 50 & 55 and were in employment at age 50 by change in employment status.

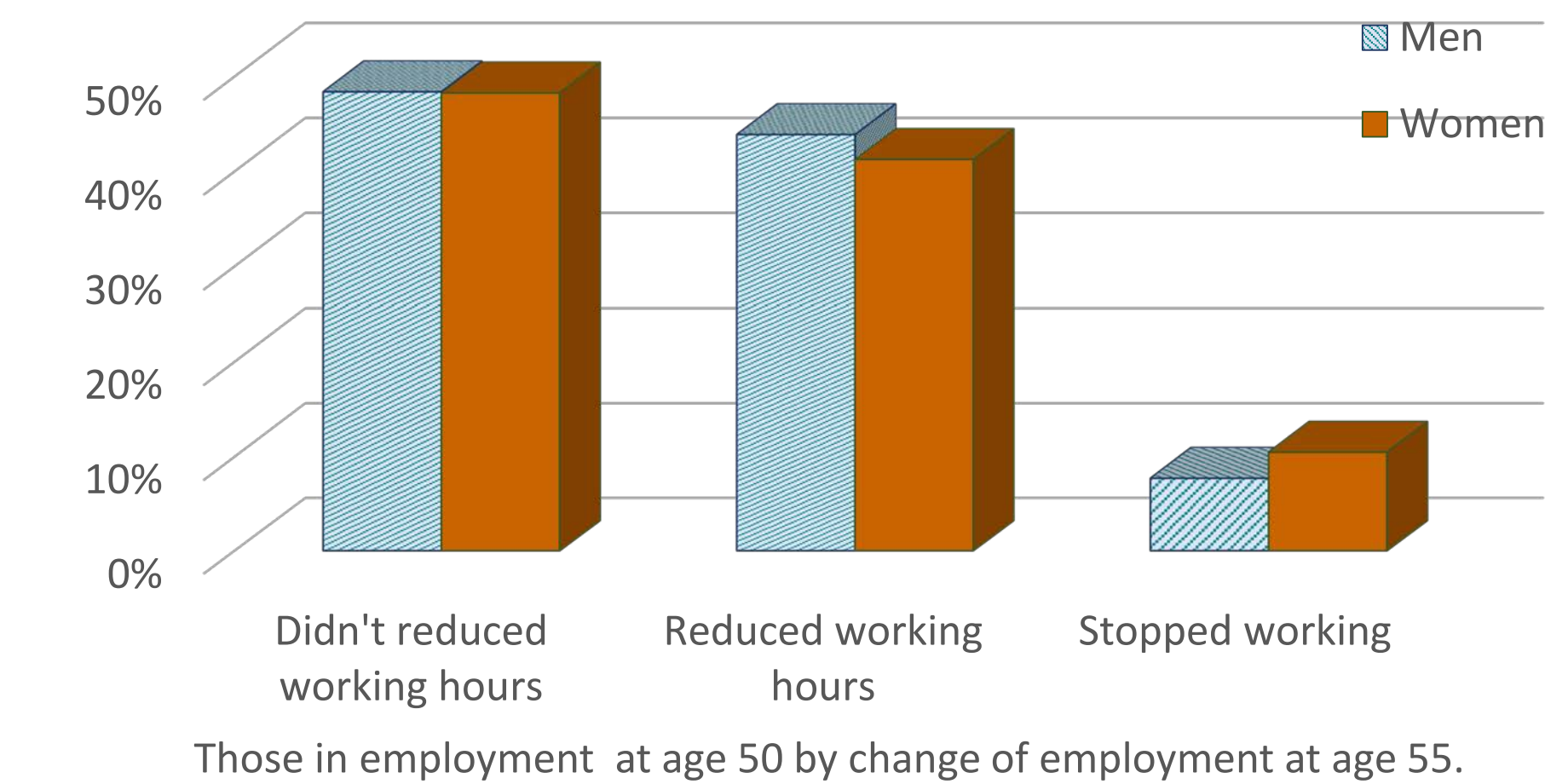


Figure 2. Individuals at risk of caring at age 50 & 55 and were in employment at age 50 by change in caring status.

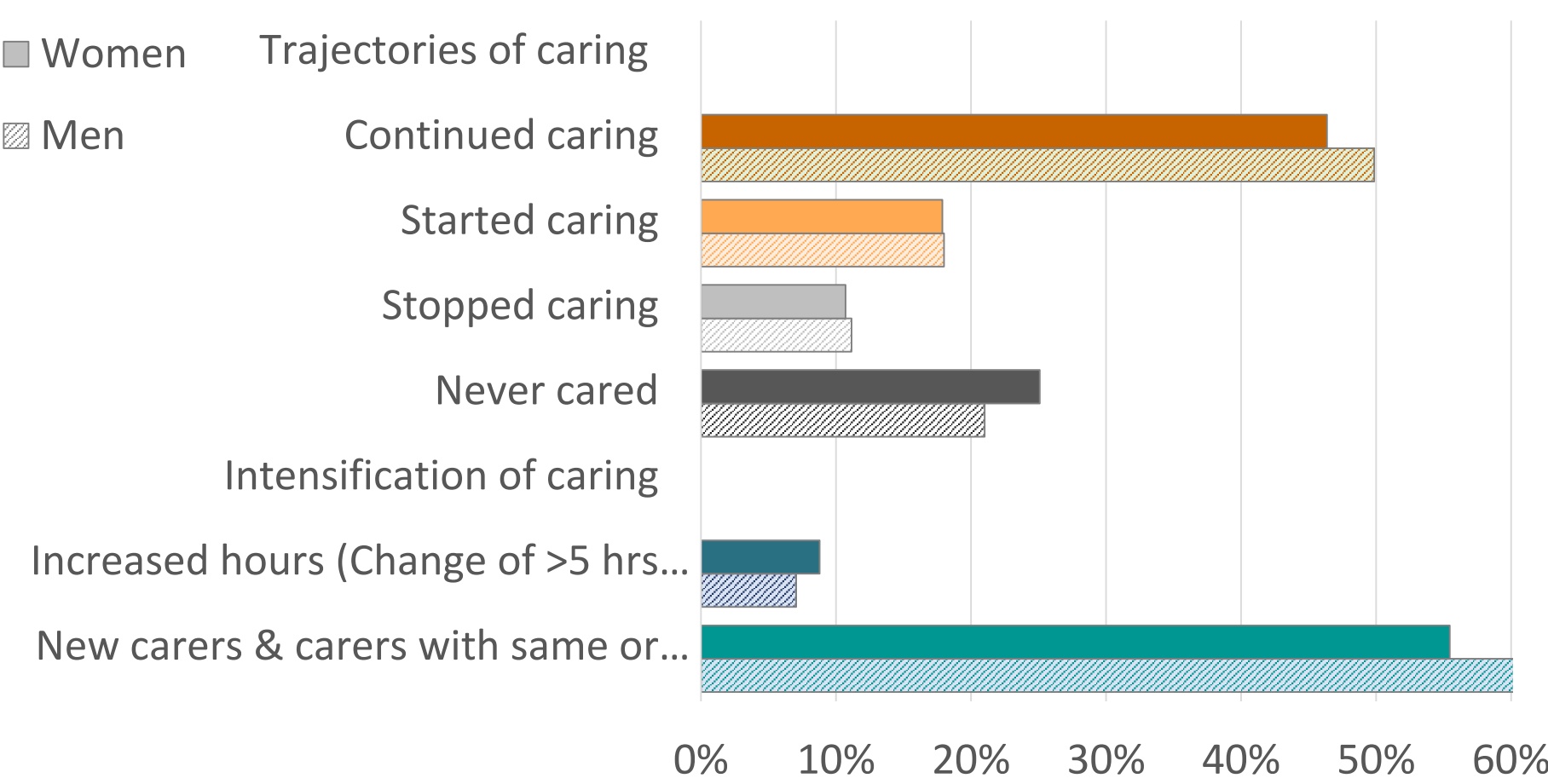


Figure 3. Individuals at risk of caring at age 50 & 55 and by type of care provided to parents or parents-in-laws.

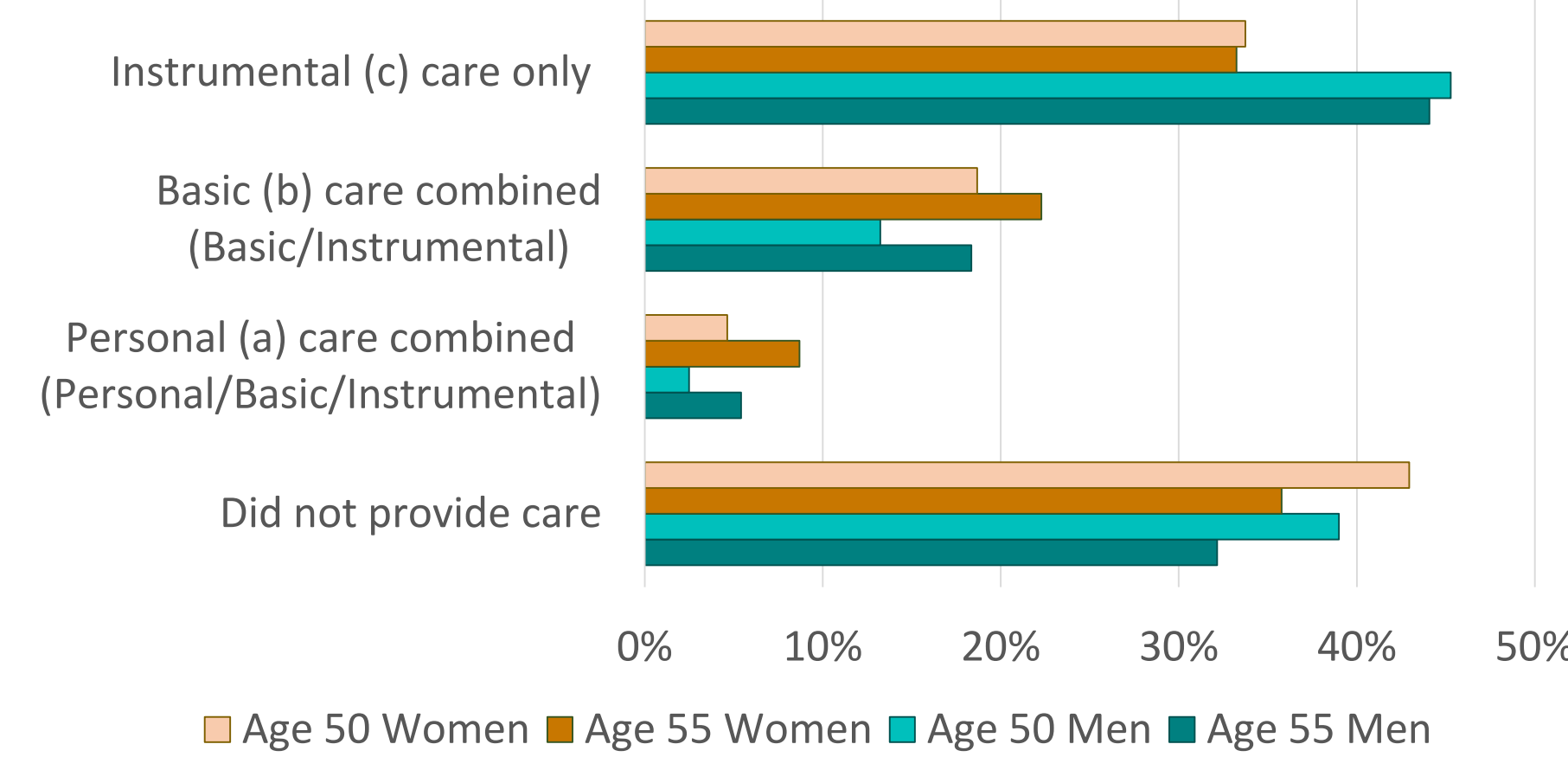


Table 1. Logistic regression models for "Exit from work" and Among those who continue working "Reduced work hours", by caregiving roles between age 50 & 55 (OR).

MEN							WOMEN						
Exit work			Reduced work hours				Exit work			Reduced work hours			
Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	
Caring trajectories (Ref. Non carer)							Caring trajectories (Ref. Non carer)						
New carers	1.03		0.96				New carers	1.06		1.07			
Continued caring	0.80		1.00				Continued caring	1.25		1.10			
Stopped caring	0.82		1.01				Stopped caring	1.19		1.06			
Type of care at age 55 (Ref. Did not provide care)							Type of care at age 55 (Ref. Did not provide care)						
Personal care combined	1.03		0.72 *				Personal care combined	1.82**		1.10			
Basic care combined	1.11		1.25**				Basic care combined	1.11		1.19			
Instrumental care only	0.83		0.93				Instrumental care only	0.98		0.99			
Intensification of care (Ref. Non carer)							Intensification of care (Ref. Non carer)						
Stopped caring		0.83			1.01		Stopped caring		1.19			1.06	
New carer or carers with same/reduced hours		0.78			1.00		New carer & carers with same or reduced hours		1.08			1.07	
Increased hours (increase of more than 5 hours/week between ages 50 & 55)		1.59*			0.89		Increased hours (increase of more than 5 hours/week between ages 50 & 55)		1.99**			1.20	

Note: (Ref) Reference category; (OR) Odds Ratios; *p<0.05; **p<0.01. Adjusted for health perceived, health limiting daily activities, co-residence with parents/parents-in-law, occupation, partner's employment status, education and housing tenure

Discussion and conclusions

- The results highlight that providing care for personal tasks, and the intensification of the caring roles are associated with exiting employment for both men and women.
- While for women more demanding types of care affect their chances of remaining in employment per se, men’s employment is more likely to be affected in terms of a reduction in the number of working hours.
- The carer’s health and their partner’s employment status both seem to play a mediating role between caring and employment.
- Our research highlights the importance of flexibility in employment in supporting carers to remain in work.

Acknowledgements

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