The take-up and quality of part-time work among men

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Introduction

Within most advanced societies patterns of employment are changing as a consequence of a flexibilization of the labour market (Raess and Burgoon, 2015), a trend which has, in turn, led to growing heterogeneity in the employment experiences of both men and women (Wilson *et al*, 2016). However, irrespective of a shifting context for work and employment legislation providing men and women with the right to request to work flexibly, the evidence to date shows that women are still much more inclined to utilize flexible working practices than men (CIPD, 2013, EHRC, 2013). Patterns of part-time employment remain deeply gendered, while the quality of part-time work among women is often poor (Fagan *et al*, 2012:23; Wheatley, 2017). Part-time work refers to working reduced hours, usually under 30 hours per week, although definitions vary in the upper limits which are considered to reflect working part-time. Of the 32.3 million recorded people in employment in the UK in 2018 (January to March) only 13.1% of employed men reported working part-time compared with 41.5% of employed women (ONS, 2018). In part, these patterns are a product of most flexible working arrangements, and part-time employment in particular, being commonly considered as a work pattern ideally suited to those combining paid work with domestic and/or caring responsibilities (Atkinson and Hall, 2009:659). Although a substantially smaller proportion (and numerical total) of men work part-time, compared to the proportion and volume of women working part-time, this form of employment nevertheless accounts for approximately 1.7 million male employees in the UK (ONS, 2018) and is a growing phenomenon.

Past evidence has tended to centre on part-time work as something men actively choose at particular points in their lives, notably as students and young men setting out in careers, and as a preferred way of

'winding down' to retirement or continuing to work, post-retirement, in older age groups (Delsen, 1998; Gregory and Connolly, 2008). However a significant rise in the last twenty years, from around 1-in-20 to 1-in-5, of men in low paid employment working part-time questions the extent to which men are entering part-time work voluntarily and willingly. As Bellfield *et al* (2017) highlight, the combination of low pay and low hours of work is particularly undesirable, and so it would be reasonable to assume that, for some at least, this permutation is borne from compromise rather than active choice. Green and Livanos (2015:1226) concur, suggesting that low pay and low hours inevitably results in the under-employment of some workers.

Developments in paid work, including the shift from employment in production to services and associated move from occupations requiring manual to cognitive and interpersonal skills (Glover and Kirton, 2006), are considered, at least at the level of job creation, to have resulted in a more favourable climate for women to increase their participation in paid work. For men, these changes potentially represent both a rise in involuntary part-time employment (reflecting under-employment) and simultaneously, greater opportunities for them to choose different work patterns, and for couples and families to reshape traditional gendered notions of working, living, caring and leisure. At a macro level the wider distribution of part-time work across male groups and thus a greater proportion of men working shorter hours can be positioned as a positive development which has the potential to rebalance gender inequalities, both at work and in the home. Set against this context, and amidst predictions that men's take-up of part-time work is expected to increase by around 20 per cent in the period to 2024 (Wilson *et al*, 2016) it is timely to explore the relative quality of part-time work among men, their reasons for working part-time, and their experiences of this particular mode of working.

The chapter begins with a brief discussion of the gendered nature of flexible working, and part-time work more specifically, acknowledging the widespread use of part-time work by women as a key way of combining paid work with domestic and/or caring labour (see for example Fagan and Walthery, 2011;

Lewis and Humbert, 2010; Plantenga and Remery, 2010; Wheatley, 2017). We move on to recognise changes in the context of employment in recent decades and consider the impact on men and masculinity. Next we consider the extant literature surrounding the quality of part-time work, referred to as job quality, and explore the extent to which part-time jobs offer autonomy, variety, skills acquisition, and training and development. The relative pay and job security associated with part-time work also forms part of this discussion. The chapter subsequently briefly describes the methodology underpinning our research into men's uptake of part-time work and the quality of part-time work among men, before presenting our key empirical findings, conclusions and associated implications for policy and practice.

The gendering of part-time employment

Flexible working is a familiar and much researched topic (see Atkinson and Hall, 2009; Davies and Freedland, 2007; Fagan et al, 2012; Wheatley, 2017); there is, however, less recognition of tacit assumptions regarding the gendering of flexibility (Lewis and Humbert, 2010:242). Since 1997, successive UK governments have promoted flexible working, initially using the term 'family-friendly working practices' and latterly with reference to 'work-life balance'. The *Flexible Working Regulations*, introduced in 2003, for parents of young and disabled children, have been incrementally extended and broadened, most recently in 2014, such that they now apply to all workers with 26 weeks' service.[1] In addition, Shared Parental Leave (SPL) regulations were introduced in December 2014, presenting greater options for parents of babies born after 5th April 2015 to determine how to structure work and caring responsibilities, including the possibility for men to take up to 50 weeks of parental leave (Gov.uk, 2016). While legislation has forged ahead, research carried out by the Department of Business Innovation and Skills (Jordan *et al*, 2014) prior to the introduction of SPL revealed considerable scepticism on the part of

[1] The Flexible Working (Procedural Requirements) Regulations, SI 2002/3207, and Flexible Working (Eligibility, Complaints and Remedies) SI 2002/3236 are amendments to the Employment Act 2002, s47, consolidated in the Employment Rights Act 1996, ss80F–80I.

employers that male employees would take advantage of their soon to be, new, entitlement given it was 'not the culture for men to take large amounts of leave' (2014:40). This cynicism has turned out to be well founded. The law firm, EMW, suggested only 8,700 couples used the scheme between April 2016 and March 2017, amounting to just 1 per cent of eligible couples; the Department for Business was slightly more optimistic in its calculations putting the figure at closer to 3 per cent of those eligible (BBC, 2018).

The practical, ground-level response to the introduction of SPL is an illustration that despite use of gender neutral language and persistent effort to rally inclusiveness and universalism of access to leave arrangements and patterns of working that are more conducive to work-life balance, there is still a stubborn underlying presumption that the business of accommodating paid work and caring/domestic labour rests predominantly with women (Lewis and Humbert, 2010). Not surprisingly therefore evidence to date demonstrates that, as a group, women are much more inclined to utilize flexible working practices than men (CIPD, 2013, EHRC, 2013; Wheatley, 2017). Part-time work, as perhaps the most traditional and well-recognized form of flexible working, remains dominated by women.

Viewed in contrast to its well documented use among women, part-time work is still less common among men as already outlined, but is particularly unusual within senior roles and the professions. In the UK only 3.8 per cent of male directors, managers and senior officials are employed part time for example, and just 5.9 per cent of men in professional occupations use this mode of working (ONS, 2017). The equivalent figures for women are 15 per cent and 26.3 per cent respectively. Work is infused with cultural meanings. Work, but specifically full-time, permanent employment is considered to hold central importance for men and be a defining feature of male identity. The domain of paid work has long been inextricably linked, not just to men but to the performance of masculinity (Cockburn 1983; Guerrier and Adib, 2004). As a rule, men have been expected to adopt the breadwinner role, supported by women whose primary allegiance is to the home (Connell, 2009). For men, being in a position to do this is regarded as a signifier of manliness and masculinity, and the loss or erosion of this role diminishes

masculine identity and power (Besen, 2007). Work, therefore, has been considered an important space in which men trial and demonstrate their masculinity (Gaylin, 1992), and achieve credibility and legitimacy as men. Biologically men are predisposed to this pattern of employment, not hampered or hindered by childbirth. Indeed men's careers are often taken more seriously, propelled and strengthened by the onset of fatherhood, whilst motherhood has a 'scarring effect' on women's careers. Full-time, permanent work has developed as the normative, and assumed gender neutral, career model, yet as Sheridan (2004) notes, it is, in reality, saturated with male values. Hegemonic masculinity is not just associated with work, but it is more acutely associated with work that entails long hours and behaviours to demonstrate prioritisation of the needs of the employer over and above personal and family time (Lewis and Humbert, 2010); necessarily full-time work. The resultant employment pattern is that, '*women predominate in a raft of low-paid jobs, especially part-time, whilst men are better represented in full-time and higher paid jobs'* (Kirton and Greene, 2016:20).

Men who work part-time fail to conform to the dominant masculinized career model and usual experience of male paid work. Past evidence has described men's usage of part-time employment as 'U-shaped', as a way of highlighting the pronounced spikes in the incidence of part-time employment among young men and young male students on the one hand, and older men approaching retirement on the other (Delsen, 1998:64, Gregory and Connolly, 2008:F4). However the recent, and expected continued, growth in part-time work among men is more diverse in nature. It is not only a product of increases among young and older workers, but is also found among middle-aged men, single men, married men, and those with and without children (Belfield *et al*, 2017:5). These changes appear to be signalling an end to the relatively static patterns that have even until recently characterised men's participation in part-time work. In the period 2002-2011, for example, men's participation in part-time work increased by just three percentage points (EHRC, 2013). A new male cohort of part-time workers is fast developing in employment, arising not it seems as a result of progressive, 'father friendly' parental leave and flexible working arrangements, but largely because of the rising flexibilization of paid work, and continued job growth in sectors

traditionally dominated by women, such as retail and hospitality where part-time jobs are commonly found (Raess and Burgoon, 2015; UKCES, 2016). The extent to which these new patterns of work among men are driven by choice and agency is debatable.

Contextual change

The UK has witnessed changes in the nature of employment and in the occupational structure of the labour market in recent decades, attributable to a host of factors including, but not limited to, globalisation, competition, changes in consumer demand and rapid technological developments. A notable example is the declining relative importance of manufacturing which has meant that, over time, the volume of occupations associated with manufacturing has similarly declined, while the share of occupations associated with the delivery of business services, and retail for example has increased. Sissons (2011) claims that over the longer term the economy will shift away from routine production towards a knowledge base, causing new jobs to be created in large numbers in high-skill, high-wage managerial and professional occupations. However, the last decade or so has also seen substantial growth in lower-wage service occupations, combined with a reduction in middle-wage occupations as advances in technology and the forces of globalization 'hollow out' demand for routine workers, semi-skilled work in administrative and secretarial, and process, plant and machine operatives (Wilson et al, 2016). The term 'hourglass economy' has been coined to reflect this changing occupational structure. In essence, the routine tasks that can be replaced by technology are neither the managerial roles at the top nor the low-skilled ones at the bottom, such as cleaning, bar work or shelf-stacking. The roles that are most vulnerable are in fact those in the middle of the occupational structure, including blue collar/manual work, and it is these jobs that are being scaled back. Concern is expressed that an hourglass-shaped economy will result in stark polarisation between high-wage 'lovely' occupations and low-wage 'lousy' occupations (Holmes and Mayhew, 2012), this is a concept that we return to later in this chapter, in relation to the quality of part-time jobs.

In parallel to changes to the occupational structure, the TUC (2015) highlight labour market shifts in favour of more low-paid, short hours, casualised and exploitative forms of employment, designed to provide employers with optimal flexibility, a lean cost base and consequently greater potential to leverage competitive advantage. Men's employment has not been insulated in the midst of these changes. On the contrary, Philpott (2011), reflecting on the deep economic recession triggered in 2008, uses the term 'mancession' to describe the way in which men were more acutely affected than women, as a result of blue collar job losses in the private sector, notably in construction and manufacturing. The effects of the recession and its aftermath still reverberate in the economy, as employers pursue employment strategies designed to minimise costs, maximise adaptability and thus strengthen their resilience to economic decline.

The nature and pace of change described within this section has arguably created a more difficult environment for men to maintain the breadwinner role and for men themselves, couples and families, to rely on the notion that men will engage in full-time paid work throughout their careers. Traditional working class based masculinities constructed around manual labour, grit and muscle are threatened when the structural base of manufacturing and production industries within which they have developed and flourished is eroded (Glover and Kirton, 2006). Men's assured status as the breadwinner is no longer intact (Besen, 2007), however, it could be argued that women's greater presence in paid work provides new freedoms and wider choices for men and means they need not necessarily adopt the breadwinner role (Kelan, 2009). Alongside change in the public sphere, within the private sphere of the home too, male patriarchal authority is no longer automatic as divorce and separation force a re-consideration of masculine identity. Such changes impact on men and construct men in a multitude of ways (Hearn, 1999). As Kelan (2009:6) has argued, '*gender as a practice can take different shapes when the economy itself is transforming*'. It is against this changing economic and social backdrop that we seek to develop a more advanced understanding of men's patterns of participation in part-time employment, their motives for working part time, and the quality of the part-time jobs they occupy.

The quality of part-time work

The quality of work, often referred to as job quality, reflects the characteristics of paid work which have positive (good characteristics) and negative (bad characteristics) impacts on a worker, including to physical and psychological well-being (Green, 2006). Characteristics of high quality job are usually considered to include: autonomy, variety, skill, training and development, better pay and security, and work-life balance policies including flexible working arrangements (Holman, 2013:477-78). In contrast, bad or low quality jobs exhibit low levels of autonomy, skill, pay, and training and are often associated with highly flexibilized, precarious, employment including zero hour contracts and agency work (Gregory and Milner, 2009:123). A number of taxonomy's of job quality have been developed (see Bartling, 2012; Karasek and Theorell, 1990; Connell and Burgess, 2016; Holman, 2013; Vidal, 2013). Consistent in these different taxonomy's is that good jobs exhibit higher levels of task discretion and autonomy, higher pay and job security, and opportunities for training and development (Bartling *et al*, 2012). Salient to a discussion of part-time employment, Choi *et al* (2008:436) suggest that the ability to choose where and when to work is more common where there is a highly skilled and 'high discretion' workforce, who can be trusted to use autonomy yet remain dedicated to the work role (Bartling *et al*, 2012). It should, though, be noted that jobs rarely fit neatly into one or other category, as recognized in Vidal's taxonomy which has 18 sub-groups (Vidal, 2013:600). High quality jobs may, for example, exhibit negative characteristics including intense working routines (high demand) and work-family conflict (Kalleberg, 2012:433).

The increased flexibility that part-time employment offers is perceived as a positive development since it can be an effective way of organizing work both from an employer and employee perspective (Fagan *et al*, 2012, Plantenga and Remery, 2010). Part-time employment enables employers to use workers more effectively to navigate peaks and troughs in demand and reduce costs accordingly, while it simultaneously offers opportunities for those who wish to work non-standard hours. Rubery *et al* (2016:236), however,

argue that flexibility is not the panacea it is often depicted to be, rather it '*has a way of biting back*', giving rise to issues that cannot be predicted and are difficult to ameliorate given the tide of contemporary labour market conditions. Rubery *et al* (2016) plot the major forms of flexible working arrangements using the standard employment relationship (SER) as a benchmark, where the SER is described as predictable, regular and usually full-time hours with the ability to voluntarily work additional hours for additional reward (overtime), and where terms and conditions of employment, at least, meet statutory minima and reflect sector and occupational norms. The model positions a range of flexible working arrangements using a horizontal axis, representing at one extreme employer-oriented temporal flexibility and at the opposite end worker-oriented flexibility, and a vertical axis, where the highest point denotes high labour costs and the lowest point, low labour costs. The SER is set centrally at the intersection between the two axes. The majority of flexible working arrangements are plotted in the lower half of the model, demonstrating the low costs to employers of adopting flexibility as a resourcing strategy. Most part-time employment is located in the bottom right hand quadrant with employees accepting poorer pay and terms and conditions in exchange for a degree of employee-oriented flexibility, while a smaller proportion of part-time employment is set inside the bottom left hand quadrant, recognizing that for some part-time workers, hours and patterns of employment are less employee friendly and primarily organized to suit the employer's needs. In such cases part-time work is seen as analogous with other low quality forms of employment, such as zero hours and agency working (Gregory and Milner, 2009, 123). The quality of part-time work is much debated, and diverse as can be seen by the taxonomy summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Taxonomy of part-time employment (Haines *et al*, 2018)

Type of part-time employment	Employee characteristics	Job quality dimensions
Good part-time employment	• High proportion with a partner and with parenting responsibilities • More likely to have a higher household income contribution • More likely than those in other groups to report higher educational and experience requirements associated with their job	• More work hours • Supervisory responsibilities • Permanent status • More flexibility than part-time workers in other groups • Higher pay
Bad part-time employment	• High proportion with a partner and with parenting responsibilities • Income contribution also relatively high	• fewer work hours and supervisory responsibilities • lower incidences of permanent

	• lower educational and experience requirements	status • less flexibility • lower pay
Student part-time employment	• lower percentages of respondents with a partner or children • high percentages enrolled on a programme of study • contribution to household income mostly in the lowest category • very low percentages reporting having a job elsewhere • low educational and experience requirements	• few hours worked • least likely to report supervisory responsibilities • Lower percentages of individuals in this group report high levels of flexibility or permanent status.
Transitional part-time employment (likely to represent early career stage employment)	• not likely to have a partner or children • over 40% reported being enrolled on a programme of study • Contribution to household income low relative to good and bad part-time employment, but more than in the student group • Educational and experience requirements are low relative to good part-time employment, but higher than in the student group.	• The percentage of individuals in this group reporting more work hours is much higher than in the student group and higher than in bad part-time employment. • about twice as likely to report supervising or managing other employees than are individuals in bad or student groups • higher pay levels than in the student group • There is less flexibility in the transition group than in the good part-time employment group, but more than in the student group. • A higher percentage reported a permanent status in the transition group than in the student group.

Working reduced hours offers some benefits to employees, for example through enabling improved work-life balance while allowing employees to maintain an organizational presence (Lewis and Humbert, 2010:246). Benham (2018) finds for instance that part-time workers have higher satisfaction with work-life balance than full-time workers and their level of satisfaction increases the fewer hours they spend at work. Working part-time has also been shown to potentially increase job satisfaction (Gregory and Connolly, 2008), although evidence of this is conflicting (Wheatley, 2017). Meanwhile, part-time work can have positive effects through reducing the pressure associated with combining work and non-work (Russell *et al*, 2009:89). In a Swedish study for example fathers who had chosen parental part-time work reveal that part-time work represents for them a way to reconcile their separate identities as professionals and as involved fathers (Larsson and Bjork, 2017). On the other hand there is also a growing body of evidence that part-time workers and those engaging in other forms of flexible working experience work intensification. Walsh (2007) found that whilst employees in her study generally liked part-time work,

there was evidence that fragmented work schedules, mandated overtime and difficulties in taking time off work at times to suit the employee created tensions in both the work and family sphere. Kelliher and Anderson (2010) also present findings to show that employees who worked from home for part of the week and employees working reduced hours experienced work intensification.

Part-time work evidently can represent an 'accommodation' option that employees voluntarily choose to improve work-life integration. However, it can also reflect an involuntary form of employment, driven by constraint arising due to household responsibilities and/or employer demands (Fagan *et al*, 2012:23; Fagan and Walthery, 2011:273-5), in particular where employers apply these arrangements as an 'optimal staffing' mechanism for generating numerical flexibility. Data from the UK *Labour Force Survey* offers insight into the involuntary nature of part-time employment for some workers, as over 15% of those working part-time in 2015 reported doing as a result of a lack of a full-time alternative, an increase from just over 8% in 2006 (Green and Livanos, 2015:1226; ONS, 2015). As a result of the often highly flexibilized and involuntary nature of part-time work, it is often perceived as a poor quality and temporary form of employment (Fagan *et al*, 2012). Part-time work imposes costs on the employee through work intensification and lower pay (Lewis and Humbert, 2010:246). Other low quality characteristics range from lack of responsibilities and reduced opportunities for development and promotion, high work intensity associated with part-time workers completing full-time workloads and/or not taking breaks, and poor workplace support (McDonald *et al*, 2009:153-4). Overwhelmingly, it is involuntary part-time workers who experience poorer job quality with reference to key job quality dimensions such as training opportunities, career development, job insecurity, and autonomy at work (Kauhanen and Natti, 2015).

Method

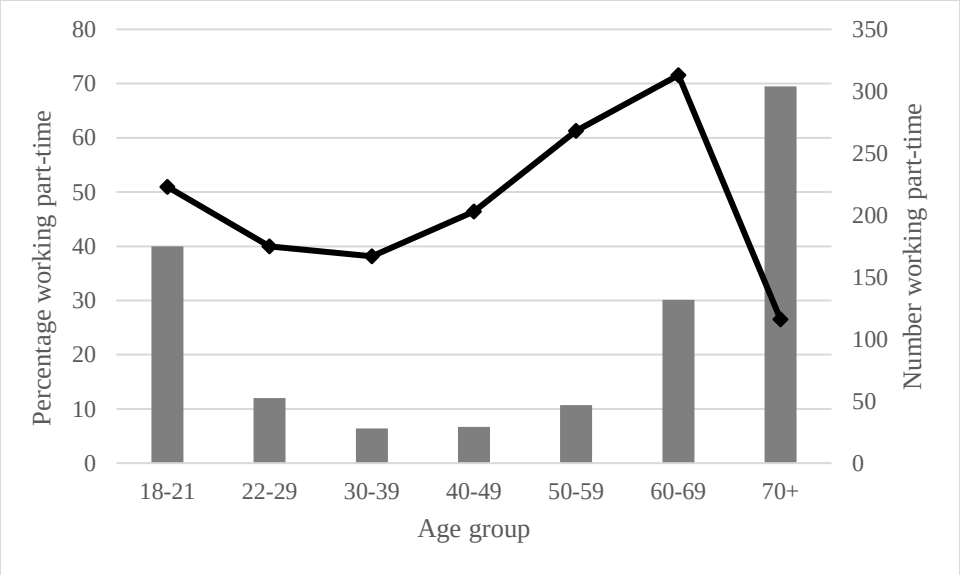
Data from wave 4 (2012-13) of *Understanding Society* is used to explore patterns of part-time employment among men and the relative quality of work these men encounter, including reported well-being derived from paid work.[2] *Understanding Society* is a multi-topic longitudinal sample survey of 40,000 households, aiming to improve understanding of social and economic change in Britain at household and individual levels (Understanding Society, 2012). The analysis focuses on men employed part-time, and as such does not include self-employed men reporting part-time hours. Exploratory analysis is conducted, using Two-Step Cluster Analysis, which focuses on the quality of work encountered by men working part-time. Cluster analysis is particularly suited to exploratory analysis. It groups cases into homogenous groups or clusters, differing from many other research techniques as it does not require any prior assumptions about the distribution of the data (Witte *et al*, 2009, 72). Two-Step Cluster Analysis is applied as it is suitable for large data-sets unlike Hierarchical Cluster Analysis it allows the analysis of both continuous and categorical variables, and it automatically fits the data to the most appropriate number of clusters rather than requiring the number of clusters to be specified (Norušis, 2012, 394-395). The analysis of part-time men generates three clusters determined by the largest increase in *Bayesian Information Criterion* (BIC) and the maximum *Ratio of Distance Measures* (1.966) i.e. the solution where clusters are most distinct (Amato and Hohman-Marriott, 2007, 627; Witte *et al*, 2009, 73-74). The exploratory cluster analysis is extended using multinomial logistic regression, comparing the three clusters using a cluster membership variable derived from the cluster analysis, and offering additional comparison with men reporting full-time employment. The regression analysis focuses on the relative quality of paid work reported by men which is reflected in the independent variables included in the model.

[2] Wave 4 (2012-13) of Understanding Society is used as the most recently available dataset at the time the research was conducted, wave 5 (2013-14), did not include the module containing questions on the quality of work including levels of autonomy.

Empirical Analysis and Findings

Approximately 13% of men in the *Understanding Society* sample report part-time employment, a marginal over-representation in comparison with UK national averages. Data from *Understanding Society*, summarized in Figure 1, is consistent with Delsen (1998) and Gregory and Connolly (2008) in showing that men are particularly likely to work part-time when they are young or when they are older, whilst men aged 30-39 and 40-49 are least likely to work part-time. It should be noted, though, that while these patterns are evident in the proportions of men working part-time the number of men working part-time, represented by the line on the secondary axis in Figure 1, reveals a more nuanced pattern. The numbers reporting part-time employment are more distributed, and while a U-shape is evident with fewer men aged 22-29 and 30-39 reporting part-time work, a notable number of middle-aged men work part-time, and the numbers working part-time grow as men enter their 50s and 60s. Part-time work may not be that common proportionally among middle-aged men, but notable numbers are nevertheless engaged in this form of employment. Male part-time workers are present in varying proportions across a range of occupation groups, however part-time work is least prevalent in highly skilled occupations, consistent with the ONS data from the *Labour Force Survey* (ONS, 2017). Men who do work part-time in highly skilled occupations are, on average, older at around 56 years of age, compared to the youngest occupation group, sales and customer service, where the average age is 31 years.

Figure 1: Patterns part-time work among men



Source: Wave 4 (2012-13) Understanding Society

Extending these broad patterns by exploring other demographics, married men are found to be less likely to work part-time (11.6%), as are those who report being divorced/separated (10.1%). These results are perhaps not surprising given the familial and other financial commitments encountered by men in these groups. However, number of children is positively associated with working part-time among men suggesting some effect may be present in some cases related to childcare. Men in part-time work report contributing more to the household as they report lengthier hours of housework (6.2 hours per week) than their full-time counterparts (5.5 hours), but this still represents only around half of the household contribution of working women. Men working part-time also report greater caring commitments for ill/elderly relatives or friends, and are more likely to possess a disability or long-term illness themselves: around 30% of men working part-time report a disability or long-term illness, compared with 22% of men in full-time employment. Overall, while broad patterns of part-time employment among men follow past research, a more nuanced and complex picture emerges when a range of demographic and occupational factors are considered, consistent with recent patterns observed by Belfield *et al* (2017). In order to explore these patterns in more detail, and gain insight into the quality of work encountered by men working part-time, cluster analysis is performed using the data from *Understanding Society*.

Two-Step Cluster Analysis

Table 2 summarizes the three clusters generated by the Two-Step Cluster Analysis. Cluster 1 is comprised of older men (averaging 54 years old), reflecting those who work part-time as part of phased or partial retirement, evident in the high proportions employed in highly skilled managerial, professional and associate professional occupations, accounting for 43.7% of this cluster, and those in bridge employment who often trade-down to less skilled elementary occupations (17.6% of this cluster). Members of this cluster more often report good jobs characterized by relatively higher levels of autonomy, the highest levels of flexibility including the ability to work at home, high pro rata pay (averaging £26,000), and high levels of job satisfaction (mean value of 5.7). Financial security is also a feature of this cluster, as just over 40% report their financial status as 'living comfortably'. Continued engagement in paid work for this cluster is likely to represent a greater degree of choice, although around a quarter do report a preference to stop paid work. Members of this cluster are also the most likely to engage in unpaid voluntary work in addition to paid work, consistent with the greater engagement in volunteering among men nearing retirement reported in other research (Hardill and Wheatley, 2017; Schlosser and Zinni, 2010).

Table 2: Two-step cluster analysis

	Cluster		
	1	**2**	**3**
	n = 471	**n = 258**	**n = 356**
Demographic variables			
Age (mean)	54.2	39.5	21.9
Marital status (%)	67.1 (married/civil partnership)	58.9 (married/civil partnership)	95.8 (single/never married)
Highest qualification (%)	41.2	36.8	43.8

	(no qualifications)	(no qualifications)	(intermediate qualifications)
Disability/long term illness (% 'yes')	38.9	30.6	9.6
Number of children in household aged 0-2 (mean)	0.0	0.2	0.0
Number of children in household aged 3-4 (mean)	0.0	0.2	0.0
Number of children in household aged 5-11 (mean)	0.1	0.4	0.0
Number of children in household aged 12-15 (mean)	0.1	0.2	0.0
Time-use variables (per week)			
Working hours (mean)	16.2	18.9	13.5
Overtime hours (mean)	0.8	0.9	1.2
Housework hours (mean)	7.0	6.6	3.8
Care (ill/elderly) hours (mean)	1.6	4.6	0.4
Volunteering hours (mean)	4.2	2.1	1.2
Occupation variables			
Private sector (%)	61.4	84.5	85.7
Major occupation group (SOC) (%)	17.6 (elementary occupations)	32.6 (elementary occupations)	45.8 (elementary occupations)
Annual personal income (mean £,000s)	26.1	15.4	6.1
Work location (%)	71.5 (employer premises)	79.5 (employer premises)	89.3 (employer premises)
Quality of work variables			
Autonomy over job tasks (%)	49.9 (a lot)	40.7 (none)	37.6 (some)
Autonomy over work pace (%)	58.8 (a lot)	32.9 (none)	35.7 (some)
Autonomy over work manner (%)	66.0	33.7	37.9

	(a lot)	(none)	(some)
Autonomy over task order (%)	59.7	33.7	32.3
	(a lot)	(none)	(some)
Autonomy over working hours (%)	34.6	63.9	53.9
	(none)	(none)	(none)
Informal flexibility (%)	55.2	58.5	48.6
	(yes)	(no)	(yes)
Would like training (% ‘yes’)	24.8	47.3	42.7
Would like new job with different employer (% ‘yes’)	17.8	66.7	58.9
Would like to start own business (% ‘yes’)	15.9	34.9	30.6
Would like to stop paid work (% ‘yes’)	25.7	24.8	6.7
Tense about job (%)	49.0	37.6	52.8
	(never)	(some of the time)	(never)
Uneasy about job (%)	69.2	32.9	79.0
	(never)	(some of the time)	(never)
Worried about job (%)	75.4	41.9	87.1
	(never)	(never)	(never)
Depressed about job (%)	90.4	47.3	93.0
	(never)	(never)	(never)
Gloomy about job (%)	82.0	39.9	84.8
	(never)	(never)	(never)
Miserable about job (%)	88.3	43.0	82.9
	(never)	(never)	(never)
Subjective financial status (%)	40.6	39.5	48.3
	(living comfortably)	(just about getting by)	(doing alright)

Satisfaction with job (mean)	5.7	4.3	5.5

Source: Understanding Society, wave 4 (2012-13)

Notes: Table shows means or most frequent responses.

Work location has four options: 'at employer premises', 'driving or travelling around', 'at one or more places', and 'work at home'.

Questions regarding autonomy levels have four possible responses: 'a lot', 'some', 'a little', and 'none'.

Questions regarding preferences for changes in paid work, e.g. would like training, have two possible responses: 'yes' and 'no'.

Questions regarding negative perceptions of paid work, e.g. tense about job, have five possible responses: 'all of the time', 'most of the time', 'some of the time', 'occasionally', and 'never'.

Informal flexibility has three possible responses: 'yes', 'some' and 'none'.

Subjective financial status has five possible responses: 'living comfortably', 'doing alright', 'just about getting by', 'finding it quite difficult', and 'finding it very difficult'.

Satisfaction with job is measured on a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 = completely unsatisfied, 4 = neither satisfied or unsatisfied, and 7 = completely satisfied.

Cluster 2 consists of men who are engaged in part-time work through constraint, either due to the impact of unpaid work or lack of full-time labour market opportunities. Men in this cluster are predominantly middle-aged (averaging 40 years old), but with a notable degree of deviation from the mean (standard deviation of 13.5). In line with their reported age, members of this cluster are the most likely to report dependent children, in particular school-age children, and be married or in a civil partnership. They work the longest part-time hours and report significantly greater unpaid work, both housework and care for ill/elderly relatives and friends, than members of other clusters. Men in this cluster work in low skilled sales and customer service and elementary occupations, and report low quality jobs which have little autonomy and lack flexibility, resulting in low job satisfaction and higher levels of negative feelings toward work. Two-thirds of men in this cluster report they would like a new job with a different employer, supporting the assertion of some members of this cluster being in involuntary part-time employment due

to lack of an alternative (Green and Livanos, 2015; ONS, 2015). Despite working longer hours than other men working part-time, and reporting higher earnings (averaging £15,000) than members of cluster 3, men in this cluster report financial insecurity. Approximately one-third of this cluster report they are either 'finding it quite difficult' or 'finding it very difficult' to get by financially. This is likely to be a product of the greater financial pressure felt by these men as parents and/or carers for others. Despite their jobs having a number of low quality characteristics consistent with cluster 2, members of cluster 3 do report some autonomy in aspects of paid work, and relatively high satisfaction with their job, reflecting the blurred boundaries present in the quality of work (Kalleberg, 2012:433; Vidal, 2013:600). This cluster is comprised of younger, single, men (averaging 22 years old), who are in their early career and/or are likely to engage in paid work alongside education, reflecting transitional and student part-time work respectively (Haines *et al*, 2018). They work in low skilled sales and customer service and elementary occupations, and report the shortest working hours (13.5 hours per week) and lowest pay (£6,000). Part-time work for these individuals is likely to be, at least perceived as, a short-term mode of employment undertaken in order to gain experience and/or income, in some cases while studying.

Multinomial logistic regression

The multinomial logistic regression model is used to add additional robustness to the results of the cluster analysis, comparing cluster 2, which comprises those men working part-time through constraint, with the other two clusters using the cluster membership variable, and additionally includes comparison with men reporting full-time employment. Table 3 summarizes the multinomial regression model. The results of the model confirm that relative to cluster 2, men in cluster 1 work shorter hours and are more likely to be employed in highly skilled professional occupations. Moreover, men in cluster 1 report better quality jobs, reflected in statistically significant higher autonomy levels (over job tasks, work pace, and task order), flexibility measured in terms of informal flexibility, and propensity to work at home. It should be noted that cluster 2 is the least likely to report working at home. Members of cluster 1 are also less likely to report negative feelings toward paid work, captured in the regression analysis in a single composite

variable, and report greater job satisfaction than those in cluster 2. Also consistent with the cluster analysis, members of cluster 1 are significantly more financially secure.

Table 3: Multinomial logistic regression: quality of work among men working part-time

Multinomial logistic regression: quality of work among men working part-time			
	Phased retirement (cluster 1) compared to constrained part-time (cluster 2)	**Early career/education (cluster 3) compared to constrained part-time (cluster 2)**	**Full-time compared to constrained part-time (cluster 2)**
Constant	3.320**	7.265***	-50.368***
Work-time variables (per week)			
Working hours	-0.052**	-0.067**	1.828***
Overtime hours	-0.046	0.043	1.740***
Occupation variables			
Public sector	-1.446***	-0.273	-0.041
Major occupation group (SOC): reference category is elementary occupations			
Managers, directors and senior officials	1.080	-0.929	0.295
Professionals	2.034**	-19.072	1.266
Associate professional and technical	0.698	-0.239	0.212
Administrative and secretarial	2.035***	0.797	-0.230
Skilled trades	0.110	-0.835	0.808
Caring, leisure and other service	0.068	-0.236	0.238
Sales and customer service	-0.973*	-0.094	1.081
Process, plant, machine operatives	-0.034	-2.226***	-0.311
Annual personal income (£,000s)	-0.004	-0.278***	-0.016
Work location: reference category is employers premises			

At home	19.646***	18.858***	23.074***
Driving or travelling around	-0.103	-1.065*	-0.334
At one or more other places	0.328	0.564	2.215*
Quality of work variables			
Autonomy over job tasks: reference category is none			
A lot	1.169**	-0.442	1.490
Some	0.629	0.611	0.601
A little	0.625	0.868*	1.252
Autonomy over work pace*: reference category is none*			
A lot	1.749***	0.053	0.724
Some	1.546***	0.250	1.722*
A little	0.647	0.157	1.060
Autonomy over work manner*: reference category is none*			
A lot	0.976	0.526	-1.290
Some	-0.096	0.713	-1.586
A little	-0.434	0.485	-0.486
Autonomy over task order*: reference category is none*			
A lot	1.047*	0.655	1.104
Some	0.730	0.878	0.322
A little	0.333	1.266**	-0.688
Autonomy over working hours*: reference category is none*			
A lot	0.311	-1.328**	0.091
Some	0.153	-0.166	0.643
A little	0.642	0.731	1.290
Informal flexibility: reference category is none			
Yes	0.620*	1.002***	0.443
No	-0.427	0.225	0.884
Would like training	-0.691**	-0.062	0.099

Would like new job with different employer	-1.311***	-0.060	0.845
Would like to start own business	-0.742**	0.352	-0.548
Would like to stop paid work	0.964***	-0.992**	0.766
Negative feelings expressed toward paid work [a]	-3.343***	-4.551***	-1.545***
Subjective financial status: reference category is 'finding is very difficult'			
Living comfortably	2.548***	3.382***	0.319
Doing alright	1.351**	2.906***	-0.605
Just about getting by	0.488	1.194	-1.173
Finding it quite difficult	-0.163	0.474	-1.324
Satisfaction with job	0.194*	0.157	0.393*
Model diagnostics			
-2 Log likelihood	854.160		
Chi-square	8092.623		
Sig.	0.000		
Cox and Snell	0.593		
Nagelkerke	0.941		
McFadden	0.905		
No. observations	9,006		

Source: Understanding Society, wave 4 (2012-13)

Notes: Dependent variable is cluster membership variable. Significance levels of 1%, 5% and 10% are denoted by ***, ** and * respectively.

[a]Questions regarding negative perceptions of paid work e.g. tense about job have been combined into one composite index (negative feelings expressed toward paid work) due to multicollinearity concerns when variables entered separately.

Men in cluster 3, similarly to cluster 1, are more likely to work shorter hours than those in cluster 2. They also report significantly lower pay. The results pertaining to autonomy actually suggest that younger

workers may report relatively little autonomy, especially over hours, but that even 'a little' autonomy reported by younger workers may be more than the autonomy encountered by men in cluster 2. Members of cluster 3 are likely to report fewer negative feelings toward work, although the greater likelihood of reporting higher levels of job satisfaction found in the cluster analysis is statistically insignificant casting some doubt over some aspects of the differences in the relative quality of work encountered by men in cluster 2 and 3. Finally, comparing cluster 2 to men in full-time employment we find that men working full-time report higher levels of job satisfaction and fewer negative feelings toward work, reflecting the greater degree of choice, on average, present among men engaged in this form of employment. Overall, the analysis highlights the diversity of men working part-time. While some men working part-time conform to documented patterns reported by Delsen (1998) and others, some men do not fit into these broad patterns. Meanwhile, the quality of work encountered by men in part-time employment suggests quite contrasting experiences, highlighting the presence of both voluntary and involuntary part-time employment.

Conclusions and implications

This chapter facilitates a greater understanding of men's reasons for participating in part-time employment and the quality of part-time work they experience. Using data from *Understanding Society*, we have shown that patterns of part-time employment, while broadly following a U-shape (Delsen, 1998; Gregory and Connolly, 2008), are more complex and diffuse consistent with the assertions of Belfield *et al* (2017) and analogous with the typology developed by Haines *et al* (2018) embracing good, bad, student and transitional part-time work. Correspondingly, quite contrasting experiences are found pertaining to the quality of part-time work among men. The chapter illuminates the gender division in part-time work, yet in empirically focusing specifically on men's participation in part-time work demonstrates that there has been a loosening of the male breadwinner model and corollary part-time (female) worker, homemaker and carer. The experiences of men fall into both categories of part-time work identified in Rubery *et al's* (2016) presentation of flexible employment types, as some men benefit

from better quality employee-oriented flexibility, albeit at some cost in terms of pay and working conditions, while others are subject to employer-driven flexibilized part-time work which is low quality and can equate to under-employment (Green and Livanos, 2015). However, our findings also suggest that part-time work can occupy a further quadrant (top right) of Rubery *et al*'s (2016:237) model, as we find evidence of high paid part-time work among highly skilled older men. The factors contributing to men's participation in part-time employment are diverse, representing both freedom and contentment for some, including older men nearing the end of their working lives, yet for others, challenging life and/or labour market challenges which result in little choice but to work part-time. In particular, our research identifies men in middle-age groups in part-time employment, where working patterns are constrained and conflicted by an unsatisfactory array of personal, familial and external labour market factors.

Given the predicted growth and heterogeneity among men working part-time these findings have important implications for both organizations, including those seeking to recruit and retain part-time workers, and for public policy. Currently, we find that access to good quality part-time work and employee-oriented flexibility is a perk reserved for the privileged, in other words for those with superior skills, qualifications, financial and/or cultural capital to vie for the better positions and terms, and who are able to make active choices to work part-time. For many men, and many women as already reported in existing research, part-time employment represents poor pay, poor prospects and a career cul-de-sac within which it is easy to get stuck. It is the price paid in some cases for seeking to find a means of combining paid work and care, and in other cases it is the involuntary compromise forced upon workers as a consequence of the quality and availability of jobs in the economy. Part-time jobs can be high quality though, as evident in our findings. It is important for the well-being of workers and their families that future growth in part-time employment is located among good quality jobs, as opposed to the further proliferation of low quality, low paid positions which exacerbate the problem of under-employment. As such, efforts should be made by both employers and policy makers to improve the quality of part-time work. In particular, increasing opportunities for training and development, and the level of autonomy and

discretion available to workers could improve the quality of part-time work without imposing significant additional costs to the employer. In addition, perceptions regarding 'what it is to work part-time' and 'what constitutes a part-time job' need to be revisited. Organizations should place greater value on part-time work outside of the most common, stereotypical, scenarios and so begin to respond positively and responsibly to workers' diverse lifestyles, circumstances, preferences and associated working needs, irrespective of gender, age and other personal and social characteristics. Significant benefits could be realized from restructuring employment opportunities for both men and women through (re)designing jobs so that they can be encapsulated in part-time working routines.

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