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Multiple low-paid employment: trends and characteristics of workers

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- Does holding multiple jobs provide a route out of poverty?

- Paucity of evidence on multiple job holding, exisiting evidence suggests a gender imbalance (FRS, 2017/18):
  - For women the poverty rate does not fall with multiple jobs, whereas for men holding more than one job pulls them above the poverty threshold
  - Multiple low-paid employment is of particular interest due to the practical and logistical issues involved in managing this type of employment.

1. What is the extent of multiple low paid employment (MLPE), and how has it changed over time?

2. What are the characteristics of workers in MLPE?

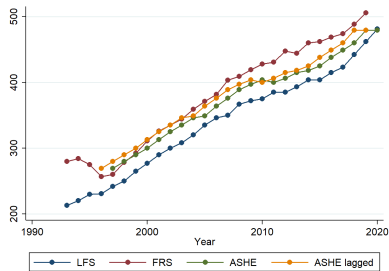3. What type of work features in MLPE?

Defining Multiple Low Paid Employment

- OECD definition is employment paid below 2/3 of median wage

- Should this be defined from median hourly wage, or median weekly wage?
  - Measurement error/non-reporting
  - Choice of hours

- How to define median wage?
  - Discrepancy between median wage calculated using different sources
    - LFS
    - FRS
    - ASHE
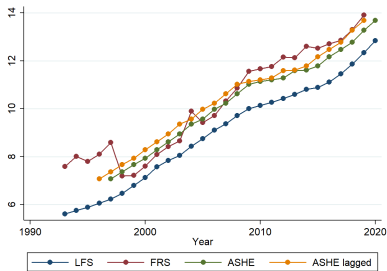
(a) Hourly wage   (b) Weekly wage
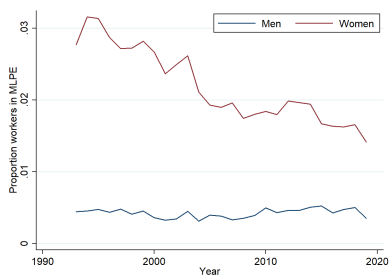
(a) Overall
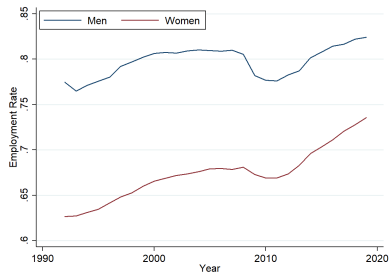
(b) By gender

(a) Overall

(b) By gender

(a) Overall

(b) By gender

- Proportion of workers in MLPE has declined over past 3 decades
  - Decrease driven predominantly by female rate
  - Increasing female employment rate over period may indicate compositional effect

- Rate of decrease slowed from mid-2000s
  - And also in comparison to decrease in low-paid employment
  - Great Recession and Austerity?

Characteristics of workers in MLPE - Family structure

	All Employment			MLPE		
	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female
Cohabitating	0.697	0.723	0.669	0.617	0.531	0.637
Never Married	0.340	0.346	0.334	0.337	0.510	0.297
Married	0.536	0.558	0.513	0.492	0.408	0.511
Formerly married	0.124	0.096	0.153	0.172	0.082	0.192
Young (U5) children	0.159	0.168	0.150	0.107	0.098	0.109
Dependent (U16) children	0.384	0.377	0.391	0.429	0.263	0.467
No. dependent children	0.747	0.750	0.744	0.874	0.558	0.946
Receipt of benefits	0.093	0.071	0.116	0.172	0.133	0.180

Characteristics of workers in MLPE - Personal

	All Employment			MLPE		
	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female
Age groups:						
18-25	0.113	0.111	0.11	0.152	0.295	0.120
26-35	0.219	0.216	0.222	0.150	0.158	0.148
36-45	0.252	0.253	0.252	0.254	0.154	0.277
46-55	0.262	0.258	0.265	0.276	0.175	0.299
56-64	0.154	0.162	0.145	0.169	0.219	0.157
Ethnicity:						
Asian	0.050	0.057	0.043	0.031	0.054	0.026
Black	0.023	0.021	0.026	0.016	0.022	0.015
White	0.901	0.896	0.906	0.934	0.902	0.941
UK nationality	0.876	0.874	0.878	0.907	0.914	0.905
Holds degree	0.420	0.390	0.450	0.361	0.419	0.348
Has long-term illness	0.268	0.259	0.277	0.368	0.385	0.365
Reports disability	0.146	0.133	0.159	0.206	0.219	0.204

- Male and female MLPE workers are different:
  - Male MLPE workers are younger, more likely non-partnered/never-married, with fewer children, no difference in ethnicity
  - Female MLPE workers are older, more likely to be formerly married, with more (older dependent) children, less likely to be from ethnic minority

- Similarities:
  - Higher benefit receipt, more likely to have long-term illness and report disability
  - High education level

Employment characteristics - Work Pattern and Contract

	All Employment			MLPE		
	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female
Works during day	0.953	0.950	0.956	0.921	0.923	0.921
Works during evening	0.047	0.050	0.044	0.079	0.077	0.079
Works at night	0.117	0.141	0.091	0.065	0.103	0.057
Works weekends	0.254	0.276	0.232	0.270	0.421	0.236
Works bank holidays	0.300	0.327	0.276	0.249	0.389	0.215
Works shifts	0.177	0.193	0.161	0.125	0.206	0.107
Zero-hours contract	0.016	0.013	0.019	0.059	0.085	0.054
Permanent (1st job)	0.945	0.950	0.941	0.875	0.819	0.887
Reports FT	0.743	0.895	0.585	0.084	0.166	0.066
Works FT hours	0.590	0.743	0.433	0.175	0.303	0.146
Total hours	35.72	40.34	30.98	24.96	29.23	24.00
Prefer more hours	0.095	0.085	0.106	0.246	0.271	0.240
Prefer fewer hours	0.388	0.421	0.354	0.147	0.182	0.140

	All Employment			MLPE		
	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female
Union job	0.238	0.204	0.273	0.172	0.115	0.185
Public sector	0.243	0.154	0.335	0.346	0.246	0.369
Main job:						
Works from home	0.152	0.179	0.124	0.0980	0.120	0.0929
Manual/elementary occupation	0.336	0.294	0.379	0.633	0.571	0.647
Second job:						
Works from home				0.298	0.356	0.285
Manual/elementary occupation				0.632	0.567	0.646

- Evening work more prevalent amongst MLPE workers, shiftwork less likely for females
- Prevalence of zero-hours contracts more than 3x that for all workers, but accounts for less than 10% of MLPE work
- High proportion of permanent jobs (1st job)
- More likely to work FT hours but report non-FT work
- Total hours worked lower than for all workers
  - More likely to report underemployment (would prefer to work more hours than currently)
  - Less likely to report overemployment (would prefer to work fewer hours)

This is the first workstream in an interdisciplinary mixed methods project on Women in Multiple Low Paid Employment

- Quantitative Analysis:
  - What is the nature and extent of MLPE in the UK and how has this changed over time?
  - What are the effects of aggregate and local labour market conditions on MLPE?
  - What are the effects of changes to social security (eg UC, austerity measures) on MLPE?
  - What is the dynamic relationship between MLPE, health and caring responsibilities?

- Qualitative analysis (informed by the quants) will investigate the lived experiences of women in MLPE to examine the mechanisms between MLPE and health, and the mediating role of care responsibilities

Thank you for your attention!

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