

**Weathering the Storm: The Effects of Working from Home and Income  
Loss on Spousal and Mother-Child Relationships During COVID-19**

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### **Abstract**

The large-scale move towards working from home caused by the COVID-19 pandemic may increase work-life conflict and worsen relationships between family members, especially for working mothers. Income loss due to economic disruptions may also negatively affect spousal and parent-child relationships. This paper tests these hypotheses using longitudinal data on 341 heterosexual married couples with children aged below 12 in Singapore, one of the first countries hit by the pandemic. The dataset consists of three waves: a baseline survey in April-June 2018 and two follow-up waves during and shortly after the lockdown in May and June 2020 respectively. Results partially support the first hypothesis. Married women were significantly more likely to report worsened spousal relationships if they were working from home during the pandemic, but more likely to report improved relationships if husbands were working from home. Neither parent's work from home status was significantly associated with changes in mother-child relationships. Women's income loss was associated with improved rather than worsened relationships with their children. Moderation analysis suggests that relationships in families with younger children were generally more stable but also more sensitive to mothers' income loss. The results point to tensions between mothers' roles at home and in the workplace, with working mothers shouldering a greater proportion of care burdens when working from home.

*Keywords:* COVID-19; spousal relationships; mother-child relationships; working from home; income loss

## **Weathering the Storm: The Effects of Working from Home and Income Loss on Spousal and Mother-Child Relationships During COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted family life all around the world, and studies are just starting to uncover the extent and persistence of these changes. While media headlines have largely focused on how the pandemic is damaging families, ranging from spikes in intimate partner violence (Bradley et al., 2020; Mazza et al., 2020) to the “Corona divorce” phenomenon (Prasso, 2020; Ryall, 2020), other observers argue that resilient families can not only withstand and rebound from disruptive life challenges, but even display growth through adversity (Prime et al., 2020; Walsh, 2020).

This paper explores the effects of two major pandemic realities on the family lives of heterosexual married couples with children aged below 18. First, there has been a large-scale move towards working from home. Unlike past telecommuting and other flexible work arrangements which affected a minority of the working population, usually in contexts carefully controlled by the employer (Kelly & Moen, 2007), the lockdowns that form part of most countries’ COVID-19 responses have called for a vast majority of the population to work from home, in many cases enforceable by law (Ogden, 2020). This paper tests the hypothesis that working from home during the lockdown is associated with increased work-life conflict, especially for working mothers, leading to worsened spousal and mother-child relationships.

Second, economic disruptions triggered by COVID-19 have resulted in income loss for a substantial fraction of the population. Income loss can take several forms, including enforced no-pay leave, salary cuts, reduced shifts for workers earning hourly wages, and retrenchment, and has been tied to increased stress during the pandemic (Shen et al., 2020). Therefore, the second hypothesis is that income loss is also associated with worsening of family relationships.

### **Work and family relationships**

Work and family life are intricately interconnected, creating the potential for conflict and tension (Kanter, 1977, 1989). In the context of marriage, “cross-over effects” may arise whereby one spouse’s job conditions predict psychological distress of the other spouse (Barnett & Brennan, 1997). Conversely, a spouse can also “buffer” their partner by helping them to withstand job stress (Wethington & Kessler, 1989).

Previous findings establish that work is strongly associated with family functioning. Barnett’s (1998) review of the evidence shows that long work hours are associated with dissatisfaction and marital tension between spouses by excluding the worker from undertaking unpleasant household tasks, forcing spouses who work shorter hours to shoulder more burdens. The impact of women’s work hours may be greater, with one study finding that men’s long work hours were not associated with marital love, perspective-taking, or conflict (Crouter et al., 2001). Beyond work hours, pressure, insecurity, and negative social interactions at work can spill over into marital dissatisfaction (Hughes et al., 1992; Story & Repetti, 2006), while nonstandard work schedules are associated with poor parenting (Strazdins et al., 2006).

### **Working from home and family relationships**

In the past two decades, the number of large corporations offering telecommuting and flexi-work arrangements to workers has multiplied, raising questions about the viability of working from home. One landmark study monitored the productivity of individual workers at a 16,000-employee Chinese travel agency and found that call center workers who were randomly selected to work from home had a productivity increase of 13%, of which 9 percentage points were from working more minutes per shift (fewer breaks and sick days) and 4 percentage points were from completing more calls per minute (Bloom et al., 2015). Following the success of the trial, the company made working from home optional for all

employees. Interestingly, after employees were allowed to self-select into telecommuting, productivity gains from working from home rose to 22%, suggesting that working from home is more effective for some groups.

Family dynamics are an important reason for why working from home benefits some employees more than others. Halford (2006) notes that working from home collapses the spatial boundaries between home and work. On the one hand, it enables working fathers to engage more with the rest of the family; on the other hand, the success of such flexi-work arrangements requires wives to “police” the new boundaries between home and work, for example by taking the children out when necessary. In families with young children, working from home may be burdensome or frustrating for the other spouse, and may be an additional source of conflict among dual-income parents. Hence, although working from home may increase work productivity and allow for more time with other family members, it can generate marital conflict among couples of young children. Moreover, it may also imperil work-life balance, with some individuals finding themselves unable to unwind when surrounded by the trappings of work (Wapshott & Mallett, 2011), leading to lower quality of family interactions.

### **Income loss and family relationships**

Income loss, a form of economic stress, has long been shown to adversely affect family relationships. Critically, the amount of stress suffered depends on families’ subjective views of their job security (Sverke & Hellgren, 2002). Economic stress is associated with hostile and cooler marital interactions, lower relationship satisfaction, and hostility toward children (Conger et al., 1994; 1990; Falconier and Epstein, 2010). Men and women may also react to economic strain differently, with wives becoming more demanding and husbands withdrawing, creating a communication mismatch (Falconier and Epstein, 2011).

The concept of family resilience, defined as the ability to achieve “good outcomes in spite of serious threats to adaptation or development” (Masten, 2001, p. 228), explains why some families might adapt well to income loss while others struggle. Specifically, family resilience refers to “capacities in family functioning to withstand and rebound from disruptive life challenges in adversity”, with the potential for transformation and growth (Walsh, 2020, p. 11). Family resilience has been identified as an important factor in dealing with crises (McCubbin & Patterson, 1983; Orthner et al., 2003; Patterson, 2002). In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, family resilience could be fostered by shared beliefs to make meaning of the crisis, regain a positive outlook supporting active agency, and transcend hardship through values and spirituality (Walsh, 2020). Zvonkovic et al. (2013) point out that family relationships may benefit from income loss due to a calmer pace of life and greater focus on the family.

### **The present study**

Singapore was one of the earliest countries to be hit by the pandemic and reported its first confirmed case on 23 January 2020. Following a surge in the number of daily new cases, the government declared a stay-at-home restriction order, locally known as a “circuit breaker”, between 7<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020. During this period, schools conducted home-based learning only and all non-essential workers were required to work from home. Non-essential services were closed and dining-in at restaurants and food centers was prohibited. Residents were allowed to leave their homes only to buy necessities and to exercise. The lockdown witnessed a surge in domestic abuse cases and calls for help regarding family violence (CNA, 2020a; Iau, 2020). After the lockdown ended, strict work and movement restrictions were still in place until 19<sup>th</sup> June 2020, when schools resumed fully and dining-in as well as small social gatherings of up to five people were permitted. To ameliorate the impact of the pandemic and lockdown on heavily affected industries and households, the government introduced the Jobs

Support Scheme, which subsidized up to 75% of employees' wages during the lockdown (CNA, 2020b), and the Self-Employed Person Income Relief Scheme, which provided monthly payouts of up to SGD 1,000 (USD 743) for nine months from April 2020.

Early evidence suggests that the pandemic led to a massive disruption to family life in Singapore, with mothers more likely than fathers to suffer from poorer work-family balance and higher parenting stress (Chung et al., 2020). The disproportionate impact on mothers reflects underlying gender imbalances in the allocation of care work and household chores despite the prevalence of dual-earner families, resulting in higher prevalence of physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion among Singaporean married women compared to married men (Aryeel, 1993; Jones, 2012).

### **Sample**

Our longitudinal dataset consists of three survey waves. The first wave of data was collected between April and July 2018. A total of 660 female participants were recruited using street intercept at the five main geographical regions of Singapore (Central, East, North, Northeast and West). Participants met the following inclusion criteria: currently married; aged 25-34 in 2018; either a Singaporean citizen or married to a Singaporean citizen, and able to read, write and speak in English. Each recruited participant received up to SGD 120 (USD 88) for their participation in the first wave. Of the 3,038 potential participants who were approached, 660 (21.7%) met the inclusion criteria and were recruited, 558 (18.4%) did not meet the inclusion criteria, and 1,820 (59.9%) declined to participate (1,143 declined prior to introduction and 677 declined after introduction to the study). Of the 660 participants, 500 consented to be re-contacted for follow-up surveys. 416 (83.2%) completed a follow-up online survey in May 2020 in the midst of the lockdown, and 399 (79.8%) completed the third wave in mid-June 2020 after the easing of restrictions. Recruited participants received SGD 25 (USD 18) in total for their participation in the second and third waves. Due to the survey incentive structure, only respondents who completed the second wave were invited to complete the third wave. For the purposes of this paper, couples who divorced or did not have a child by the second wave are excluded from analysis, yielding a final sample size of 341. The study was approved by the [anonymous] Institutional Review Board.

### **Measures**

The key dependent variables are married women's self-reported changes in relationships with a) their husband and b) all children as a group during the lockdown. Respondents were asked the following question: "How has your relationship with your respective family members been affected by the circuit breaker?" After the easing of restrictions in June 2020, respondents were asked the following similar question: "How has your relationship with the following people changed after the circuit breaker ended?" Responses for both questions were recorded on a five-point scale ranging from "much worse" to "much better", and the question was repeated for husband and children. To take into account the asymmetry between improved and worsened relationships, responses were recoded into three categories: improved relationships, no change, and worsened relationships.

We consider two main independent variables of interest: a) working from home during the lockdown, and b) income loss. Each variable is computed separately for each spouse, and also for two periods – during and after the lockdown. Working from home was measured on a five-point scale ranging from "I work only outside of home" to "I work only from home", and recoded into a binary variable equal to one if respondent answered "I work only from home" (including paid and unpaid work). Data on income in December 2019, May 2020, and June 2020 were collected retrospectively in June 2020, measured on a linear scale from 0 to 11 (0 = no income, 1 = monthly income less than SGD 1,000 and 11 = monthly income SGD 10,000

or more). Income loss is coded as a binary variable equal to one if monthly income shifted to a lower bracket relative to the preceding period.

We control for the following variables: age, education, and income of both spouses, years married, number and age of children, and wife's ethnicity using information collected in all three waves. Education is coded as a binary variable equal to one if the respondent had a college degree. Income is measured using retrospective data for December 2019 to approximate socio-economic status prior to the pandemic. Children's ages are represented by a dummy variable equal to one if all children were too young for entry into the national educational system beginning from kindergarten (below 5 years). Wife's ethnicity is measured as a dummy variable equal to one if she was Chinese, which is the majority ethnic group in Singapore.

### **Analytic plan**

Descriptive statistics are computed for all dependent, independent, and control variables. Multinomial logit regressions are used to test for associations between changes in relationships during the lockdown and the two main independent variables, working from home and income loss. All regressions include the full set of controls. To compare the effects for families with school aged and younger children, the base analysis is repeated after bifurcating the sample by age of the oldest child (below 5 years versus 5 or older). Lastly, the analysis is repeated for the period shortly after the lockdown, in relation to during the lockdown. All estimates are adjusted using sample weights to obtain a more representative sample with respect to the age, racial and educational distributions of married female residents in this age range, based on published statistics from the 2015 General Household Survey conducted by the Singapore Department of Statistics.

Several robustness tests are carried out. We repeated the main analysis while restricting the sample to dual-income couples, i.e. excluding families with non-working parents, whose situations are more likely to be affected by the lockdown. We also check for interactions between wife and husband's work from home status, and between wife and husband's income loss. Next, we repeat the main analysis but allow for a wider range of outcomes for the dependent variables (much worse, somewhat worse, no change, somewhat better, much better). Lastly, we test for differential effects of income loss categories, as the impact of large income reductions could be more serious than a minor pay cut.

## **Results**

### **Descriptive**

Table 1 displays descriptive statistics. Respondents were slightly more likely to reported improved relationships with their husbands (22%) than worsened relationships (20%), and much more likely to reported improved relationships with their children (49%) than worsened relationships (12%). The majority of couples had at least one spouse working only from home, with wives more likely to report working only from home (65%) compared to husbands (43%). Husbands were more likely to suffer income loss (22%) compared to wives (16%).

The table also reports the summary statistics for all control variables. The mean ages at the time of lockdown were 33 years for wives and 36 years for husbands. Wives were more likely to have a college degree (51%) than husbands (42%), but husbands had a higher mean income (SGD 4,000 to 4,999) compared to wives (SGD 3,000 to 3,999). The mean length of marriage was 7 years, and the mean number of children was 1.88. In 48% of families, all children were aged below 5 years, with the oldest child in the sample aged 18 years. 72% of wives were of Chinese ethnicity.

Figure 1 illustrates descriptive trajectories in spousal and mother-child relationships during and shortly after the lockdown. For spousal relationships, 58% of married women

perceived no change during the lockdown; of this group, 68% further reported no change after the lockdown. Interestingly, a large proportion of those who reported improved relationships during the lockdown also reported further improvements after the lockdown (50%), while a large proportion of those who reported worsened relationships during the lockdown also reported further worsening after the lockdown (47%), suggesting persistent effects even after movement restrictions were relaxed.

For mother-child relationships, almost half (49%) reported an improvement; of this group, 73% reported further improvement after the lockdown. Again, among those who reported no change during the lockdown (38%), a large proportion reported no change shortly after the lockdown (62%), while those who reported worsened relationships during the lockdown (12%) were also more likely to report further worsening after the lockdown (58%).

### **Multivariate**

Table 2 presents base regression results. Wives' relationships with their husbands during the lockdown were significantly more likely to worsen if the wife was working from home ( $p < 0.05$ ), but more likely to improve if the husband was working from home ( $p < 0.1$ ). Mother-child relationships were not associated with either parent's work from home status. Conversely, changes in spousal relationships were not associated with income loss, while wives' income loss (but not husband's income loss) was positively associated with improved mother-child relationships ( $p < 0.01$ ).

Table 3 presents regression results by age of children. Wives were less likely to report changes in spousal relationships ( $p < 0.1$ ) if all children were too young for entry into the formal educational system. However, the opposite was true if the wife experienced income loss; wives were more likely to report both worsened ( $p < 0.5$ ) and improved ( $p < 0.1$ ) spousal relationships if all children were below 5 years. Similar trends were observed for mother-child relationships. Wives were less likely to report improvement in mother-child relationships ( $p < 0.5$ ) if all children were below 5 years, but if they experienced income loss, more likely to report worsened ( $p < 0.1$ ) and improved ( $p < 0.5$ ) mother-child relationships if all children were below 5 years. Husbands' working from home and income loss did not display any effects moderated by age of children.

Finally, Table 4 presents regression results on changes in family relationships after the lockdown, relative to during the lockdown. Results overwhelmingly point to the persistence of trends after lockdown; for both spousal and mother-child relationships, those that worsened during the lockdown were also more likely to worsen after the lockdown ( $p < 0.01$ ), and those that improved during the lockdown were also more likely to improve after the lockdown ( $p < 0.01$ ). Wives who reported income loss were less likely to report further improved relationships with children ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating a more limited timeframe for family resilience.

Robustness checks show that restricting the sample to dual-income couples does not significantly change the size or direction of coefficients from the main model (Table A1). Interactions between wife and husband's work from home status, as well as wife and husband's income loss, are statistically non-significant (Table A2). When changes in spousal and mother-child relationships are coded with five instead of three outcome categories, coefficients are no longer statistically significant for spousal relationships but remain significant for mother-child relationships (Tables A3-A4). Wives whose husbands were working from home during the lockdown were less likely to report "somewhat better" mother-child relationships ( $p < 0.1$ ), and interestingly, wives who experienced income loss were more likely to report both "much worse" ( $p < 0.5$ ) and "much better" ( $p < 0.01$ ) mother-child relationships, suggesting that some families struggle with income loss while others appear to bond over it. Lastly, specifications using more categories for income loss (Table A5) suggest that relatively minor losses of below SGD 2000 in wives' income was significantly (and positively) associated with improved

mother-child relationships ( $p < 0.01$ ), but heavier income losses of either spouse was not associated with improvements or worsening of family relationships.

### **Discussion**

This paper presents evidence of the impact of the pandemic on family life in married households with children aged below 18, using data on perceived changes in spousal and mother-child relationship collected during and shortly after the lockdown in one of the earliest countries to be affected. It tests two hypotheses: that working from home during the lockdown and income loss both lead to worsened relationships.

#### **Working from home and family relationships**

In partial support of the first hypothesis, wives' working from home was associated with deterioration in spousal relations. On the other hand, husbands' working from home was associated with improved spousal relationships, possibly due to more help with childcare from the husband (Halford, 2006). The results point to a strong gender dimension to parents working from home, whereby women who do so face much higher housework expectations than men (Barnett, 1998; Wheatley, 2012). As a result, women may face higher tensions between the competing time demands of employment and housework (Wheatley, 2012) and increased difficulties in psychologically separating the spheres of work and family (Wapshott & Mallett, 2011).

While parental work from home status was generally not associated with perceived changes in mother-child relationships, moderation analysis by age of children suggests that mothers with younger children were marginally more likely to report worsened relationships with their children if they worked from home during the lockdown. This points to mothers' struggles in managing the simultaneous demands of formal employment and caring for younger children, who tend to spend much more time with their mothers than with fathers relative to older children (Yeung et al., 2004). For example, studies during the UK lockdown found that mothers were more likely to supervise home schooling and engage in feeding, washing and dressing children (Hall, 2021).

#### **Income loss and family relationships**

Contrary to the hypothesis, regression results suggest that wives' income loss was associated with improved mother-child relationships during the lockdown. Husbands' income loss was not associated with family relationships at a statistically significant level in any of the regressions. Importantly, the presence of government income support schemes may have helped to dampen any negative effects of income loss. After the lockdown ended and the income support schemes were moderated (CNA, 2020b), wives' income loss was negatively associated with probability of further improvement in mother-child relationships.

While a minority of families appeared to have been adversely affected, potentially by stress that spills over into interactions (Conger et al., 1990; Conger et al., 1994; Falconier & Epstein, 2011; Hughes et al., 1992; Story & Repetti, 2006), most women experiencing income loss did not report worsened relationships with spouses or children. The positive association between income loss and improved mother-child relationships may point to underlying tensions between work and family life, which may have diminished with lower work demands. While the association between wives' working from home and worsened spousal relationships points to gender disparities in household division of chores, the positive relationship between wives' income loss and relationships suggests that many families displayed resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic by not only withstanding the crisis but emerging stronger from it (Walsh, 2020).



### Limitations

One important limitation of the study is that data were collected only from wives, which does not allow for cross-verification using husbands' responses or to examine the impact of the pandemic on father-child relationships. While data on perceived changes in spousal and mother-child relationships were collected from married women at various points of the pandemic, the measures are highly subjective and may reflect emotional and cognitive biases. Third, while the findings in this paper provide insights into the global impact of the pandemic on family lives, the generalizability of the results to other policy contexts with different levels of gender inequality in division of household labor and government income support during the pandemic is not clear.

### Implications

During the pandemic, mothers working from home tended to be at risk for deterioration of spousal relationships, while the opposite was true if their husbands were working from home. In addition, wives who reported a fall in income loss were more likely to report improvements in relationships with children. The findings point to longstanding tensions between work and family life, with a substantial gender gap in the allocation of household chores. While there has been a gradual rise in the availability of flexible work arrangements globally, a trend which received a massive boost during the COVID-19 pandemic, the results suggest that when wives are forced by lockdown conditions to work from home, they may struggle to manage the conflicting demands of employment and household chores with the blurring of spatial boundaries between the two. Interestingly, wives' perceptions of spousal relationships improve when husbands work from home, suggesting that flexibility of work arrangements should be targeted at husbands in order to minimize the experience of role conflict among married women.

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**Table 1***Descriptive statistics for families with children during the lockdown (N=341)*

<b>Control variables</b>		
Wife's age in 2020	33.13 (0.24)	
Husband's age in 2020	36.46 (0.45)	
Wife has college degree (%)	50.58	
Husband has college degree (%)	41.75	
Wife's income in Dec 2019	SGD 3,000 to 3,999 (mean bracket)	
Husband's income in Dec 2019	SGD 4,000 to 4,999 (mean bracket)	
Years married in 2020	7.21 (0.21)	
No. of children in May 2020	1.88 (0.09)	
Oldest child under 5 in 2020 (%)	47.99	
Wife is Chinese (%)	71.73	
<b>Dependent variables</b>		
	<u>During lockdown (May 2020)</u>	<u>After lockdown (June 2020)</u>
Relationship with husband improved (%)	22.38	27.46
Relationship with husband worsened (%)	19.61	14.65
Relationship with children improved (%)	49.46	51.46
Relationship with children worsened (%)	12.06	9.97
<b>Independent variables</b>		
	<u>During lockdown (May 2020)</u>	<u>After lockdown (June 2020)</u>
Wife working from home (%)	64.86	52.15
Husband working from home (%)	42.53	29.42
Wife had income loss (%)	16.37	4.35
Husband had income loss (%)	22.20	6.13

*Notes.* Mean & linearized standard errors (in brackets) provided for continuous variables.

**Table 2**  
*Multinomial logit regressions of change in wife's relationships during May 2020 lockdown*

	(1)		(2)	
	Wife's relationship with husband		Wife's relationship with children	
	Worsen	Improve	Worsen	Improve
Wife working from home	1.074** (0.541)	0.359 (0.393)	-0.342 (0.503)	-0.017 (0.390)
Husband working from home	0.153 (0.504)	0.546* (0.325)	0.037 (0.478)	-0.456 (0.378)
Wife had income loss	-0.260 (0.640)	0.791 (0.503)	1.091 (0.873)	1.624*** (0.580)
Husband had income loss	0.315 (0.519)	-0.272 (0.407)	-0.149 (0.624)	0.013 (0.426)
Wife's age	-0.206* (0.107)	-0.066 (0.090)	-0.238* (0.143)	0.004 (0.106)
Husband's age	0.119** (0.059)	0.098** (0.047)	0.108* (0.064)	0.033 (0.050)
Wife has college degree	-0.156 (0.540)	-0.453 (0.408)	0.185 (0.504)	0.555 (0.472)
Husband has college degree	-0.440 (0.589)	0.491 (0.399)	0.904 (0.577)	0.377 (0.473)
Wife's income	0.185* (0.106)	0.074 (0.081)	-0.080 (0.110)	0.197** (0.098)
Husband's income	-0.001 (0.111)	-0.087 (0.069)	-0.175* (0.101)	-0.054 (0.082)
Years married	-0.047 (0.143)	-0.021 (0.079)	0.030 (0.118)	0.000 (0.097)
No. of children	-0.461* (0.245)	-0.365 (0.293)	-0.333 (0.330)	-0.376 (0.247)
All children < 5 years	0.026 (0.572)	-0.353 (0.514)	0.123 (0.681)	-0.493 (0.417)
Wife is Chinese	-1.108** (0.552)	0.177 (0.618)	0.705 (0.775)	-0.753 (0.562)
Constant	1.937 (3.357)	-1.887 (3.211)	3.251 (3.864)	-0.539 (2.960)
	N:	341	341	
	Pseudo-R <sup>2</sup> :	.13	.11	

Notes. Estimates are adjusted for sample weights. \* p < .10. \*\* p < .05. \*\*\* p < .01.

**Table 3**  
*Multinomial logit regressions of change in wife's relationships during May 2020 lockdown moderated by age of oldest child*

	(1)		(2)	
	Wife's relationship with husband Worsen	Improve	Wife's relationship with children Worsen	Improve
Wife working from home	1.163 (0.771)	0.515 (0.584)	0.500 (0.862)	0.523 (0.530)
Husband working from home	-0.503 (0.770)	0.452 (0.476)	0.135 (0.783)	-0.698 (0.505)
Wife had income loss	1.035 (0.785)	1.497** (0.720)	2.504* (1.331)	3.186*** (1.037)
Husband had income loss	0.792 (0.722)	-0.254 (0.504)	-0.303 (0.864)	-0.074 (0.616)
All children < 5 years	-2.922* (1.657)	-1.825* (1.010)	-2.806 (1.893)	-3.331** (1.311)
*Wife working from home	-0.066 (1.012)	0.264 (0.775)	1.698* (1.027)	1.169 (0.723)
*Husband working from home	-0.798 (0.905)	-0.036 (0.642)	0.357 (0.950)	-0.156 (0.687)
*Wife had income loss	3.102** (1.401)	1.727* (0.972)	2.622* (1.546)	2.990** (1.251)
*Husband had income loss	0.798 (1.030)	-0.068 (0.797)	-0.319 (1.144)	-0.228 (0.800)
Wife's age	-0.195** (0.099)	-0.050 (0.091)	-0.198 (0.133)	0.047 (0.102)
Husband's age	0.107* (0.055)	0.086* (0.047)	0.080 (0.061)	0.008 (0.047)
Wife has college degree	-0.361 (0.540)	-0.460 (0.413)	0.140 (0.511)	0.531 (0.472)
Husband has college degree	-0.532 (0.589)	0.458 (0.410)	0.832 (0.587)	0.301 (0.466)
Wife's income	0.210** (0.098)	0.075 (0.075)	-0.064 (0.103)	0.212** (0.084)
Husband's income	0.036 (0.112)	-0.071 (0.067)	-0.148 (0.104)	-0.029 (0.081)
Years married	-0.032 (0.125)	-0.006 (0.079)	0.037 (0.122)	0.015 (0.097)
No. of children	-0.685*** (0.250)	-0.424 (0.278)	-0.382 (0.345)	-0.479* (0.267)
Wife is Chinese	-1.117** (0.562)	0.195 (0.643)	0.785 (0.769)	-0.749 (0.560)
Constant	1.981 (2.915)	-2.260 (3.509)	2.145 (3.803)	-1.441 (2.954)
	N:	341	341	
	Pseudo-R <sup>2</sup> :	.15	.14	

Notes. Estimates are adjusted for sample weights. \* p < .10. \*\* p < .05. \*\*\* p < .01. Asterisk indicates interaction with "Oldest child 5+".

**Table 4**  
*Multinomial logit regressions of change in wife's relationships after lockdown, relative to during lockdown*

	(1)		(2)	
	Wife's relationship with husband Worsen	Improve	Wife's relationship with children Worsen	Improve
Worsened during lockdown	2.538*** (0.669)	0.400 (0.573)	3.690*** (0.624)	0.505 (0.598)
Improved during lockdown	-1.062 (0.960)	1.581*** (0.403)	0.543 (0.704)	1.762*** (0.403)
Wife working from home	-0.097 (0.672)	0.113 (0.352)	-0.127 (0.589)	0.014 (0.433)
Husband working from home	0.021 (0.789)	0.392 (0.322)	-0.871 (0.615)	-0.301 (0.442)
Wife had income loss	-0.291 (1.175)	0.160 (0.739)	-1.482 (0.930)	-2.893** (1.129)
Husband had income loss	-0.658 (1.462)	0.066 (0.665)	1.505 (0.961)	-0.088 (0.647)
Wife's age	0.324*** (0.104)	0.222* (0.113)	-0.127 (0.138)	0.016 (0.103)
Husband's age	-0.051 (0.072)	-0.166*** (0.054)	0.104* (0.055)	0.036 (0.045)
Wife has college degree	0.370 (0.704)	-0.511 (0.500)	-0.217 (0.671)	-0.137 (0.489)
Husband has college degree	-0.348 (0.742)	0.519 (0.421)	1.095* (0.637)	1.053** (0.431)
Wife's income	0.029 (0.100)	0.033 (0.062)	0.186* (0.108)	0.149** (0.072)
Husband's income	0.029 (0.105)	0.007 (0.068)	-0.073 (0.119)	-0.038 (0.070)
Years married	0.128 (0.131)	0.103 (0.087)	0.250 (0.163)	-0.010 (0.105)
No. of children	-0.083 (0.424)	0.226 (0.287)	-0.398 (0.498)	0.137 (0.252)
All children < 5 years	0.729 (0.770)	-0.082 (0.460)	0.705 (0.697)	0.094 (0.461)
Wife is Chinese	-1.044* (0.619)	-1.305** (0.589)	-0.069 (0.697)	-1.166** (0.562)
Constant	-11.791*** (4.219)	-3.176 (3.124)	-4.254 (3.590)	-2.342 (2.638)
	N:	341	340	
	Pseudo-R <sup>2</sup> :	.24	.28	

Notes. Estimates are adjusted for sample weights. \* p < .10. \*\* p < .05. \*\*\* p < .01.

**Table A1***Multinomial logit regressions of change in wife's relationships during May 2020 lockdown for dual-income couples*

	(1)		(2)	
	Wife's relationship with husband Worsen	Improve	Wife's relationship with children Worsen	Improve
Wife working from home	0.994* (0.549)	0.045 (0.406)	-0.981 (0.600)	0.284 (0.412)
Husband working from home	0.137 (0.518)	0.628* (0.378)	0.069 (0.665)	-0.640 (0.444)
Wife had income loss	-0.124 (0.722)	-0.009 (0.594)	-0.241 (1.094)	1.546* (0.843)
Husband had income loss	0.817 (0.534)	0.504 (0.462)	0.521 (0.657)	-0.089 (0.539)
Wife's age	-0.158 (0.107)	-0.042 (0.104)	-0.282* (0.159)	-0.013 (0.123)
Husband's age	0.099* (0.054)	0.083* (0.050)	0.111* (0.059)	0.051 (0.048)
Wife has college degree	-0.021 (0.535)	-0.695 (0.481)	0.134 (0.703)	0.664 (0.561)
Husband has college degree	-0.719 (0.635)	0.543 (0.467)	1.643** (0.690)	0.542 (0.537)
Wife's income	-0.017 (0.110)	0.079 (0.111)	0.133 (0.159)	0.154 (0.151)
Husband's income	0.007 (0.115)	-0.117 (0.094)	-0.308** (0.143)	-0.185** (0.091)
Years married	-0.029 (0.152)	0.022 (0.094)	0.018 (0.152)	-0.015 (0.107)
No. of children	-0.664** (0.285)	-0.605** (0.279)	-0.115 (0.361)	-0.294 (0.288)
All children < 5 years	0.790 (0.656)	0.231 (0.541)	0.604 (0.838)	-0.314 (0.459)
Wife is Chinese	-1.697** (0.738)	-0.328 (0.843)	0.049 (0.871)	-0.286 (0.707)
Constant	2.340 (2.942)	-1.488 (3.474)	4.231 (4.294)	-0.285 (3.332)
	N:	267	267	
	Pseudo-R <sup>2</sup> :	.18	.12	

Notes. Estimates are adjusted for sample weights. \* p < .10. \*\* p < .05. \*\*\* p < .01.



**Table A2***Multinomial logit regressions of change in wife's relationships during May 2020 lockdown with interactions*

	(1)		(2)	
	Wife's relationship with husband		Wife's relationship with children	
	Worsen	Improve	Worsen	Improve
Wife working from home	0.745 (0.562)	0.161 (0.495)	-0.535 (0.590)	0.138 (0.500)
Husband working from home	-0.648 (1.073)	0.244 (0.577)	-0.200 (0.883)	-0.169 (0.663)
Wife WFH * Husband WFH	1.028 (1.165)	0.479 (0.699)	0.379 (1.032)	-0.428 (0.780)
Wife had income loss	-0.997 (1.125)	0.706 (0.606)	1.275 (1.014)	1.416* (0.730)
Husband had income loss	0.088 (0.571)	-0.322 (0.448)	0.053 (0.570)	-0.121 (0.479)
Wife IL * Husband IL	1.523 (1.502)	0.336 (0.910)	-0.608 (1.445)	0.475 (1.135)
Wife's age	-0.198* (0.107)	-0.061 (0.090)	-0.227 (0.139)	-0.002 (0.106)
Husband's age	0.122** (0.058)	0.102** (0.048)	0.113* (0.066)	0.030 (0.048)
Wife has college degree	-0.080 (0.527)	-0.439 (0.404)	0.225 (0.511)	0.545 (0.472)
Husband has college degree	-0.610 (0.569)	0.449 (0.394)	0.870 (0.574)	0.415 (0.465)
Wife's income	0.187* (0.102)	0.070 (0.080)	-0.080 (0.111)	0.198** (0.099)
Husband's income	0.006 (0.109)	-0.089 (0.069)	-0.187* (0.106)	-0.052 (0.083)
Years married	-0.066 (0.149)	-0.028 (0.080)	0.030 (0.120)	0.000 (0.097)
No. of children	-0.429* (0.255)	-0.356 (0.292)	-0.314 (0.322)	-0.361 (0.255)
All children < 5 years	0.028 (0.593)	-0.344 (0.512)	0.167 (0.678)	-0.506 (0.418)
Wife is Chinese	-1.028* (0.558)	0.205 (0.604)	0.735 (0.765)	-0.764 (0.549)
Constant	1.814 (3.230)	-2.002 (3.161)	2.747 (3.825)	-0.292 (2.903)
	N:	341	341	
	Pseudo-R <sup>2</sup> :	.13	.12	

Notes. Estimates are adjusted for sample weights. \* p < .10. \*\* p < .05. \*\*\* p < .01.

**Table A3**

*Multinomial logit regressions of change in spousal relationships during May 2020 lockdown with five outcomes*

	Much worse	Somewhat worse	Somewhat better	Much better
Wife working from home	0.485 (0.896)	0.875 (0.536)	0.435 (0.405)	0.316 (0.687)
Husband working from home	-0.259 (0.892)	0.704 (0.504)	0.536 (0.355)	0.665 (0.621)
Wife had income loss	0.797 (1.369)	-0.662 (0.622)	0.784 (0.531)	0.101 (0.723)
Husband had income loss	-0.081 (0.792)	0.459 (0.524)	-0.733 (0.493)	0.675 (0.614)
Wife's age	0.216 (0.165)	-0.303*** (0.114)	-0.048 (0.090)	-0.071 (0.164)
Husband's age	0.014 (0.149)	0.131** (0.063)	0.065 (0.050)	0.143*** (0.055)
Wife has college degree	1.246 (1.271)	-0.794 (0.622)	-0.196 (0.457)	-1.407** (0.680)
Husband has college degree	-0.286 (1.140)	-0.068 (0.622)	0.286 (0.436)	0.905 (0.584)
Wife's income	0.349** (0.156)	0.072 (0.084)	-0.036 (0.085)	0.395*** (0.133)
Husband's income	-0.228 (0.254)	0.076 (0.123)	-0.078 (0.070)	-0.091 (0.126)
Years married	0.186 (0.133)	-0.244* (0.139)	0.022 (0.100)	-0.081 (0.119)
No. of children	-0.985* (0.551)	-0.282 (0.240)	-0.860*** (0.317)	0.163 (0.511)
All children < 5 years	1.461 (1.263)	-0.763 (0.608)	-0.298 (0.568)	-0.638 (1.021)
Wife is Chinese	-1.791 (1.130)	-0.651 (0.535)	1.216* (0.707)	-1.421* (0.833)
Constant	-11.597** (5.681)	5.505* (3.329)	-1.659 (2.692)	-5.270 (6.811)
	N:	341		
	Pseudo-R <sup>2</sup> :	.22		

Notes. Estimates are adjusted for sample weights. \* p < .10. \*\* p < .05. \*\*\* p < .01.

**Table A4***Multinomial logit regressions of change in mother-child relationships during May 2020 lockdown with five outcomes*

	Much worse	Somewhat worse	Somewhat better	Much better
Wife working from home	-2.849 (2.218)	-0.634 (0.550)	-0.153 (0.419)	0.324 (0.545)
Husband working from home	4.516 (3.171)	0.136 (0.489)	-0.776* (0.409)	0.251 (0.478)
Wife had income loss	4.799** (2.052)	0.852 (0.753)	0.839 (0.676)	2.408*** (0.644)
Husband had income loss	2.801 (4.960)	0.633 (0.539)	-0.159 (0.498)	0.102 (0.520)
Wife's age	-0.999** (0.397)	0.034 (0.132)	-0.032 (0.116)	0.059 (0.145)
Husband's age	0.639** (0.278)	-0.043 (0.062)	0.042 (0.050)	0.018 (0.066)
Wife has college degree	-10.425*** (3.035)	0.257 (0.513)	0.879* (0.513)	-0.159 (0.487)
Husband has college degree	-23.346*** (6.989)	1.026* (0.545)	0.306 (0.497)	0.457 (0.518)
Wife's income	-2.838* (1.572)	-0.061 (0.102)	0.220** (0.098)	0.152 (0.111)
Husband's income	-1.207 (0.995)	-0.141 (0.099)	-0.094 (0.082)	0.020 (0.100)
Years married	0.656 (1.152)	0.041 (0.126)	-0.018 (0.100)	0.011 (0.115)
No. of children	-9.927* (5.331)	0.300 (0.343)	-0.418 (0.313)	-0.270 (0.317)
All children < 5 years	-6.536 (5.875)	0.683 (0.765)	-0.592 (0.464)	-0.359 (0.573)
Wife is Chinese	-2.420* (1.244)	2.467* (1.290)	-0.620 (0.574)	-0.952 (0.708)
Constant	28.497** (12.590)	-4.062 (4.209)	0.452 (2.849)	-3.857 (4.921)
	N:	341		
	Pseudo-R <sup>2</sup> :	.20		

Notes. Estimates are adjusted for sample weights. \* p < .10. \*\* p < .05. \*\*\* p < .01.

**Table A5**

*Multinomial logit regressions of change in wife's relationships during May 2020 lockdown, with income loss categories*

	(1)		(2)	
	Wife's relationship with husband Worsen	Improve	Wife's relationship with children Worsen	Improve
Wife working from home	1.060* (0.540)	0.377 (0.393)	-0.369 (0.527)	0.066 (0.385)
Husband working from home	0.166 (0.509)	0.524* (0.317)	0.020 (0.483)	-0.520 (0.371)
Wife had income loss <\$2000	-0.443 (0.769)	0.849 (0.556)	1.138 (1.112)	2.092*** (0.644)
Wife had income loss >\$2000	0.211 (1.181)	0.700 (1.044)	1.457 (1.115)	0.458 (1.015)
Husband had income loss <\$2000	0.260 (0.599)	-0.361 (0.483)	-0.336 (0.813)	-0.045 (0.502)
Husband had income loss >\$2000	0.518 (0.818)	-0.101 (0.656)	0.196 (0.723)	-0.009 (0.721)
Wife's age	-0.203* (0.110)	-0.063 (0.091)	-0.237* (0.141)	0.021 (0.110)
Husband's age	0.121* (0.063)	0.097** (0.045)	0.113* (0.064)	0.026 (0.049)
Wife has college degree	-0.129 (0.547)	-0.460 (0.406)	0.251 (0.503)	0.508 (0.476)
Husband has college degree	-0.403 (0.574)	0.510 (0.398)	0.865 (0.578)	0.399 (0.474)
Wife's income	0.169 (0.110)	0.081 (0.080)	-0.107 (0.109)	0.231*** (0.086)
Husband's income	-0.020 (0.108)	-0.094 (0.075)	-0.190* (0.098)	-0.050 (0.085)
Years married	-0.042 (0.137)	-0.021 (0.081)	0.032 (0.115)	-0.009 (0.098)
No. of children	-0.459* (0.246)	-0.362 (0.290)	-0.303 (0.333)	-0.358 (0.250)
All children < 5 years	0.015 (0.546)	-0.359 (0.517)	0.101 (0.676)	-0.499 (0.417)
Wife is Chinese	-1.105** (0.552)	0.180 (0.616)	0.734 (0.770)	-0.795 (0.580)
Constant	1.836 (3.588)	-1.928 (3.217)	3.096 (3.855)	-0.915 (2.990)
	N:	341	341	
	Pseudo-R <sup>2</sup> :	.13	.12	

Notes. Estimates are adjusted for sample weights. \* p < .10. \*\* p < .05. \*\*\* p < .01.

**Figure 1**

Tree diagram describing relationship change during and shortly after lockdown

