The development of children’s housework performance
Evidence from German time use data, 1991–2013

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Objectives ● Background ● Context
Trend analysis of children’s participation and time use for housework in Germany over the past 20 years (1991/1992 – 2012/2013)

GAPS OF KNOWLEDGE & RESEARCH QUESTIONS
- Overall: Research on children’s contributions to housework is scarce.
- How have girls’ and boys’ participation in and time budgets for housework changed over time? Do these trends resemble those of adult women and men?
- How are parents’ and children’s time budgets for housework related? Has gender convergence changed over time?
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BACKGROUND
- "Transmission" of housework performance from parents to their children, and dependence of parental and children’s time budgets for housework

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- Conservative welfare regime, prevailing traditional gender ideologies and gendered behavior in the family
- Evidence of intergenerational transmission of gender roles and housework behavior

Data and Method
- German Time Use Study, time series data
- Time diary study, two/three days for each respondent
- Sample: Children aged 12 – 17
- Main variables: survey year, children’s gender and mothers’ and fathers’ time for housework (+ standard controls)

Conclusions
- Girls and boys do less housework than 20 years ago
- Fathers’ and mothers’ housework time is positively associated with boys’ and girls’ time housework time
- Participation declined, and (logically) average housework time declined
- Housework time for participants did not change
- Evidence for “intergenerational transmission”

Development of children’s participation in housework activities
- Girls participate more often in housework activities than boys
- Girls’ and boys’ daily participation declined similarly over the last 20 years
- Still, 81% of the boys and 93% of the girls do any kind of housework at any time over the week
- Girls spend more time doing housework than boys, approx. 15 minutes more per day in 2012/2013, this gender gap has narrowed slightly
- Girls’ and boys’ time for housework declined by almost 30%, from 19 to 28 minutes per day, respectively
- Time use of participating girls and boys, however, has not changed significantly (note: no significant gender differences in 2012/2013)

Associations between parents’ and children’s time for housework
- Sons: Positive and slightly increasing association.
- Daughters: Positive and slightly decreasing association.

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.20378/ifb-46790
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