1 **Fathers' involvement in childcare, children's education and housework**
2 **during the COVID-19 lockdown**

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Fathers' involvement in childcare, children's education and housework during the COVID-19 lockdown

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has transformed daily life across the world and affected multiple social institutions. It may also have modified parents' gendered division of labour. Current research on family functioning during the pandemic has provided mixed evidence on the influence of at-home work and at-home schooling on mothers' and fathers' involvement in childcare, child's education and housework. In this paper, we use data from 1359 Russian mothers to study whether fathers' participation in these activities was influenced by the increased need for parental help in schooling and more opportunities for help due to remote work during the lockdown. We find that fathers' involvement was higher if they worked remotely during the lockdown and if the child needed much additional help with schooling after school closures. These results hold true even after controlling for fathers' pre-pandemic involvement. In line with conditional fatherhood theory, mothers' engagement with remote schooling was almost unrelated to their employment status and work arrangement. Overall, our evidence supports the 'needs exposure' hypothesis that additional family needs in combination with switching to remote work can increase fathers' involvement. However, evaluating the duration of these changes and their long-term influence on families' functioning would require further research.

Keywords: childcare, housework, COVID19, gender, fathers' involvement, remote work

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic and related lockdown have influenced the functioning of multiple social institutions, including the family. One of the questions posed by family scholars is what impact at-home schooling, at-home work and self-isolation have had on a gendered division of housework and childcare. On the one hand, due to school closures, the need for parents' involvement in childcare and children's education has increased. At the same time, due to the lockdown and the switch to remote work, fathers have been more exposed to family needs, as both children and fathers got to spend more time together at home (*needs exposure* hypothesis, Shafer et al., 2020). Therefore, fathers' involvement in childcare, education and housework could have grown. On the other hand, established attitudes towards a gendered role division in the family, masculinity and fathering could have impeded changes in the fathers' involvement in these activities. During the second part of the last century, men's involvement in routine housework and childcare had increased (Altintas & Sullivan, 2016) and gender stereotypes have become less common; however, these stereotypes are still strong (Ellemers, 2018) and women continue to be the primary caregivers in most Western countries (Evertsson, 2014; Hamplová et al., 2019; Steinbach & Maslauskaitė, 2020). Moreover, it is claimed that the tertiary sector of the economy has been more severely affected by the pandemic, especially healthcare and pharmaceuticals, education, hospitality, tourism, aviation, sports and food industries (Nicola et al., 2020). As women prevail in these sectors (Gender | Data - World Bank, n.d.), it can be supposed that women, who have become disengaged from the paid labour force, became more involved in the roles traditionally allocated to women in household activities, such as taking care of children and cleaning, while men's involvement in these activities decreased or remained the same (*stagnation hypothesis*, Shafer et al., 2020).

Research results for women's and men's division of routine housework and childcare during the pandemic are mixed. Some studies indicate that the division of household labour became slightly more equal (Amuedo-Dorantes et al., 2020; Shafer et al. 2020; Schieman et al., 2020; Yerkes et al., 2020), whereas others show that this unpaid labour became more gendered as women had to take responsibility for a greater share of domestic tasks than before (Fodor et al., 2021; Hjálmsdóttir & Bjarnadóttir, 2020; Hipp & Bünning, 2021; Landivar et al., 2020; Orefice & Quintana-Domeque, 2020). Moreover, dissatisfaction of working mothers with the work-life balance during lockdown has increased more than that of fathers (Craig & Churchill, 2020; Feng & Savani, 2020). A possible explanation is that the additional hours of childcare performed by women were less attuned to their employment than in the case of men, which meant that many women had to combine work with a lot more childcare (Andrew et. al., 2020; Sevilla & Smith 2020). Mothers of young children (aged 0-5) found working during this period especially challenging (Bol, 2020).

Evidence on the division of labour at home during the first wave of the pandemic in spring 2020 comes from a limited number of countries (mostly from North America and the European Union), which poses a risk of underestimating the diversity of pandemic influences on families in various cultures, societies and communities. In particular, gender contracts vary substantially in different countries, which can influence the changes in fathers' involvement in childcare and children's education after the beginning of the pandemic. Moreover, across the world remote learning was organized differently (World Bank, 2020). In some countries and regions, remote learning was almost independent of teachers or peers, and mostly involved watching educational videos and home assignments (Human Rights Watch, 2021). In other countries, schools also provided online lessons, which most closely resembled the usual classroom learning. However,

the extent to which such lessons were provided to students varied greatly. For instance, in the United Kingdom, 29% of state school children received at least one daily online lesson, while in Germany only 6% of students had online lessons on a daily basis and more than half had them less than once a week (OECD, 2020). Access to different remote learning resources could affect the need for additional help from parents and therefore affect fathers' involvement. To extend our knowledge about parental involvement in childcare, children's education and housework in countries and contexts with different educational system responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, we focus in this paper on the changes in fathers' involvement in child education, childcare, and household duties during the coronavirus pandemic in Russia. We use the results of the survey that was conducted in May 2020 among Russian parents.

Russia can be characterized as a country with the middle level of gender equality. According to Gender Gap Index 2021 (Global Gender Gap Report 2021, 2021) and SDG Indicators 2020 (Country Fact Sheet | UN Women Data Hub, n.d.) Russia provides good educational and professional opportunities, and health care services, for both women and men. However, women lag behind in terms of political representation and in the social sphere. Women are predominantly responsible for the largest share of unpaid care and domestic work. In contemporary Russia there are social policies targeting paternal involvement in childcare but fathers largely do not use these opportunities (Kravchenko & Robila, 2015). For instance, only 2% of fathers took paternity leave in 2019 in Russia (Gusenko, 2019), in contrast with Slovenia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Spain, where more than 60% of fathers use paid paternity leave (OECD Family Database, n.d.). The low proportion of fathers who take paternity leave in Russia is usually explained by the public perceptions of a father's role that have developed under the influence of Soviet family law and policy makers (Issoupova, 2012). In Soviet Russia, major childcare functions were legally reserved

to mothers and the father-child bond was symbolically connected with material financial obligations. Soviet official images of fatherhood that marginalized a father's role in childcare still influence fathering in contemporary Russia. However, the situation is starting to change. The types of fathers' involvement in childcare are becoming more heterogeneous (Åberg et al., 2018; Lipasova, 2016; Rozhdestvenskaya, 2021; Utrata, 2008) and the growth rates of fathers' involvement in parenting practices in Russia is comparable to more gender-equal European countries such as Sweden, France and Norway (Motiejunaite & Kravchenko, 2008; Kravchenko, 2012).

In relation to schooling during the spring 2020 lockdown in Russia, traditional face-to-face instruction was overwhelmingly replaced by distance education from the middle of March 2020 till the end of the school year at the end of May 2020. However, distance education was differently organized in the Russian regions due to the significant variance in readiness of schools to carry out classes in the online format (Saprykina & Volokhov, 2020). Some schools provided online lessons, some provided only homework and supporting educational materials for children. We describe what distance education families in our sample had access to in the Results section.

Apart from changes in the educational regime, there were restrictions on leaving the house during March-May 2020. The length of these measures and their severity varied between regions. In some places, people were able to spend limited time outside the home, while in the large cities people were not allowed to go out of the house at all without a pass; shopping malls, cafes, cultural institutions, and sports and entertainment venues were closed. Some people took leave of absence or even lost their jobs. A significant number of people started to work from home. Ministry of Labour data shows that 6.5 million people (3.5% of the labour force) worked remotely after the beginning of the pandemic in comparison with 30,000 people before the pandemic (Ministry of

Labour and Social Protection, n.d.). These are only official statistics (people who have distance contracts); the actual number of people who worked remotely during the lockdown is probably much higher. For instance, data from a Russian polling company demonstrates that, among college graduates who were employed in the budget sector, 60% worked fully or partially remotely (among those who worked in the commercial sector, 51%) (WCIOM, n.d.).

We analyse how fathers' working arrangements (at-home or from office) and a child's need for help from parents during distance learning were related to changes in fathers' involvement in child education, childcare and housework duties during the coronavirus lockdown. In line with the *needs exposure* hypothesis, we assume that fathers' involvement increased more often in cases when fathers worked remotely, as also when a child required more help from parents during distance learning, and in cases of younger children, because they needed more help from parents during remote schooling (Bayrakdar & Guveli, 2020; Bol, 2020; Brom et al., 2020; Del Boca et al., 2020).

We also expect that fathers' involvement in children's education during that period is more dependent on work arrangements than the mother's involvement in child education. Our assumptions on the differences between paternal and maternal involvement during the pandemic are rooted in the theory of *conditional fatherhood* (Fox & Bruce, 2001). According to this theory, mothers' commitment to their children is unconditional (Fox & Bruce, 2001). In contrast, the content and extent of a father's engagement in the child's life depends on contextual variables such as work schedule or marital status. For example, research shows that fathers are more involved in parenting when they work fewer hours and their wives work more hours (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Stone & Reister, 2020; Yang, 1999). Moreover, the more flexible the father's working schedule

is, the more he is involved in parenting independently of residential status (Kim, 2018; Pilarz, Cuesta, & Drazen, 2020).

Materials and methods

Procedures and participants

The survey was conducted in May 2020. Questionnaires were distributed online among parents from 49 schools affiliated with one Russian university.¹ Schoolteachers provided all parents with links to the survey. Overall, we collected more than 1500 responses from parents from fifteen Russian regions (59% from Moscow, 29% from other large cities, others from smaller towns). Parents with two or more children were told to answer about their eldest child attending that school. Most of the respondents were women (mothers) (93%). For consistency of analysis, we filtered out all the responses not from mothers; the final dataset included responses from 1359 mothers. Most of the parents (59% of mothers and 75% of fathers) worked during the pandemic (see Table 1 for the sample description). More than a half of mothers (57%) and 38% of fathers, who worked during the lockdown, worked remotely. Their children did not go to school during the time they answered the survey, and were involved in distance learning for more than a month as face-to-face instruction was replaced by remote education in the middle of March 2020. According to the parents' answers, most of their children (87%) had access to online video classes organized by the school. On average these classes lasted 2.7 hours per day (half as much as pre-pandemic). In comparison with primary school children, a lower percentage of middle and high school students

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¹ University-affiliated schools have a collaborative agreement with the university, which allows them to organize joint events (e.g. meetings between parents of high school students and university representatives, or teacher training led by specialists working at the university). These schools provide advanced educational programmes.

were provided with online video classes (primary school, 97.1%; middle school, 82.2%; high school, 85%).

Table 1. Description of the sample

Variable	Proportion (%)
Parental levels of education (college degree)	
Mothers	87
Fathers	78
Parental employment (worked during the pandemic)	
Mothers	59
Fathers	75
Worked remotely (among those who worked)	
Mothers	57
Fathers	38
Child level of education	
1-4 grades	22
5-8 grades	41
9-11 grades	37
Child gender (girls)	49

Measures

*Fathers` involvement in education, childcare activities and housework chores.* We asked a general yes-or-no question whether the father is involved with the child`s remote learning on a regular basis (helps with homework, controls whether the child has done the homework, interacts with teachers, etc.). We also asked a more detailed question about the frequency with which fathers are doing (did) housework activities (cleaning the house, meal preparation) and three activities related

to childcare and education (play with the child, help with school subjects and with homework, help organizing the educational process by clarifying the schedule, controlling whether the child did the homework, etc.) before and during the lockdown. The participants were requested to indicate how many days per week (1-7) the father was involved in each activity. The scale also included 'less than once a week or never'.

Mothers' involvement in education. As in the case of fathers' involvement, we asked a general question whether the mother is engaged with the child's remote learning on a regular basis. We also asked how much time on average per day she spends on this help (we used an ordinal scale: 'don't spend any time', 'less than one hour', 'one-two hours', 'three hours or more'). We also estimated the frequency of different forms of mother's educational involvement during remote learning (control over school homework, help with school subjects, explaining what was left unclear after classes, help with school homework, working with the child on platforms for online learning, searching for additional educational materials). We used a 5-point scale: 'never', 'once a month or less often', 'once every 1 or 2 weeks', 'several times per week', 'everyday'.

Work arrangements were measured in the same way for mothers and fathers. We asked whether mother and father are working during the lockdown (working; temporarily not working, e.g. on maternity leave; retired; unemployed) and in what format (remotely from home, or from office).

Child's needs for help with remote learning. We evaluated the amount of adult assistance that the child required during the distance learning period based on the parent's answers. We asked how much help from adults a child needed before the school closure and during remote learning on a 7-point scale (from 1, 'no help is needed', to 7, 'a large amount of help'). We then computed the difference between these two measures to assess the 'surplus' need for help during remote learning.

The resulting variable varies between (-7) (a large amount of help needed before the lockdown, but no help needed during the lockdown) and 7 (no amount of help needed before the lockdown, but a large amount of help needed during the lockdown); in other words, the larger the number, the more additional help a child needed during the lockdown.

We also measured paternal and maternal education levels, whether father/mother co-resides with the child, child's gender and educational level (primary school, middle school, high school), academic performance (average maths grade and Russian language grade). We also asked several questions about the organization of remote education that was provided by schools (whether there were online classes and, if yes, how many hours per day).

Table 2. General statistical description of the main variables

Variable	Proportion (%), during the lockdown	Proportion (%), before the lockdown
Parental involvement with remote learning on a regular basis (general yes-or-no question)		
Mothers	85	-
Fathers	34	-
Mothers' involvement in different activities (at least several times per week)		
Control over school homework	78	74
Help with school subjects	60	53
Explaining what left unclear after classes	57	49
Help with school homework	49	47
Working with child on platforms for online learning	33	29

Searching for additional educational materials	38	28
Fathers involvement in childcare and the child's education		
Play with the child		
Less than once a week or never	34	31
1-2 days a week	28	31
3-7 days a week	38	38
Help with school subjects and with homework		
Less than once a week or never	45	54
1-2 days a week	27	25
3-7 days a week	28	21
Help organizing the educational process		
Less than once a week or never	58	60
1-2 days a week	16	17
3-7 days a week	26	23
Cleaning the house/meal preparation		
Less than once a week or never	40	41
1-2 days a week	24	27
3-7 days a week	36	32
Child's needs for help with remote learning		
No or almost no help is needed (1-2)	31	54
3-5	22	37
Large amount of help (6-7)	36	8

Results

Parental involvement in children's education was high despite most of the schools providing some online classes. A majority of mothers (85%) helped their child with remote learning. Fathers' involvement was lower: only 34% of fathers were engaged in a child's distance learning. The proportion of children who were helped by a parent was especially high among primary school (96%) and middle school students (93%) in comparison with high school students (71%).

First, we examine how mothers' and fathers' involvement in the child's remote learning during the spring 2020 lockdown was associated with their work arrangements. Then we focus on paternal involvement, and describe how it changed with the spring 2020 lockdown. On average, there were almost no changes (see Table 2), except in the case of helping with school subjects and homework. However, the lockdown could have affected paternal involvement in various ways, depending on work arrangements, changes in the child's need for help and whether or not the mother worked. Later on, therefore, we analyse whether fathers' involvement during the lockdown is related to these factors, controlling for their pre-COVID-19 involvement and contextual variables.

Mother's and father's involvement in the child's remote learning and their work arrangements

We find that the involvement of mothers in their children's education during school closures only partially depended on their employment status and work arrangements. Among those mothers who worked, 83% helped their children with their studies and, among those who did not work, 86%. This difference is nonsignificant ($p\text{-value} = 0.22$). There is also no significant difference in the proportion of those who helped children with their studies, depending on whether the mother worked remotely (83.5%) or not remotely (83.1%; $p\text{-value} = 0.98$), see Table 3.

For all different forms of maternal involvement in education, there are significant (p-values <0.05) but small differences in the proportion of mothers who performed these activities at least several times per week, depending on whether they worked or not (see Table 4), and no significant differences with regard to the format of work (whether a mother worked remotely or from office).

In addition, there were differences in time spent on helping children with their studies between mothers with different employment status (see Table 5). Mothers who did not work spent more time on this activity than working mothers: the proportion of those who did not spend time at all was significantly higher among working mothers (28% vs 23%); conversely, the proportion who spent more than 3 hours was higher among non-working mothers (p-value = 0.0005). There are no significant differences regarding the format of work (remotely vs office).

Table 3. Mothers' and fathers' involvement in distance learning (proportion of those who took part in a child's distance education on a regular basis, among those who did not work, worked from office, worked from home)

	Proportion of those who were engaged with a child's distance education on a regular basis (%) by work arrangements		
	Did not work	Worked from home	Worked from office
Mothers	86	83.5	83.1
Fathers	34	47	28

275 Table 4. Different forms of mothers' educational involvement during remote learning depending
 276 on her work arrangements

	Proportion of those, who were engaged in the activity at least several times per week (%) by work arrangements			
	Worked from home	Worked from office	Worked (average)	Did not work
Control over school homework	75	80	78	82
Help with school subjects	58	57	58	66
Explaining what left unclear after classes	55	55	54	61
Help with school homework	52	53	52	59
Working with child on platforms for online learning	39	39	39	46
Searching for additional educational materials	32	37	33	43
N	443	329	803	542

277
 278
 279 Table 5. Time spent by mothers helping children with their studies, depending on mothers' work
 280 arrangements

Time for helping children with learning	Work arrangements		
	Worked from home	Worked from office	Did not work
Do not help	29	28	23

Less than one hour per day	27	25	24
1-2 hours per day	20	23	20
3 or more hours per day	24	24	33
N	426	320	505

Paternal involvement was not related to employment status: 34.4% of fathers who worked during the lockdown, and 34.3% of those who did not work, helped children with remote learning. However, for working fathers, there was a significant difference depending on the working regime. Among fathers who worked from office, 28% helped children with their studies. Among those who worked from home this proportion is more than 1.5 times higher at 47% ($p\text{-value} < 10^{-4}$). Work arrangements are also associated with fathers' involvement in playing with the child, organization of educational process, help with school subjects and cleaning/meal preparation: the proportions of fathers who carried out these activities at least one day per week during the lockdown were higher among fathers who worked from home than among those who did not work (see Fig.1).

Fig. 1. Changes in paternal involvement: proportions of fathers who performed different childcare/housework activities at least one day per week before the lockdown and during the lockdown, among fathers with different employment status and work arrangements. Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

Our results show that mothers' and fathers' employment status and work arrangements were related to their involvement during the lockdown, and this association was stronger in case of fathers: working-from-home fathers were more engaged than those working from an office. However, this may be due to some pre-lockdown preferences or conditions, not because switching to working from home during the lockdown allowed fathers to be more involved. For instance, fathers who prefer to be more engaged in childcare, children's education and housework could have chosen the employment which allowed them to work from home. Fig. 1 demonstrates that the proportions of working-from-home fathers who helped the child with school learning at least one day per week, and who played with the child at least one day per week, were higher than the

proportions of those among working-from-office fathers even before the lockdown. In the next section, we examine the association between work arrangements during the lockdown and fathers' involvement, controlling for their pre-pandemic involvement.

Changes in different kinds of fathers' involvement during the spring 2020 lockdown

We analyse how fathers' involvement in children's learning and in domestic chores changed after schools' closures. We concentrate on four activities: cleaning, helping with homework, help organizing the educational process and playing with children. We examine who started to participate in these activities more often during school closures. We use binary logistic regression models (one model for each activity) to investigate how the father's and mother's employment status and work arrangements, amount of additional help with education that the child needed during the school closures, and the child's educational level (primary, secondary, high school) are associated with whether the father was involved (participated at least one day per week or not) in different childcare and housework activities during the spring 2020 lockdown, controlling for father's pre-pandemic involvement in these activities. For control, we also add to the model the child's gender, academic performance (average grade in Russian language), father's education and whether the father co-resides with the child or not.

We find that, after controlling for fathers' pre-pandemic involvement, fathers who worked from home were more likely to help their children with school subjects, organization of the educational process and cleaning the house/meal preparation than those who worked from an office (see Table 6). However, there is no such relationship in the case of playing with the child. Fathers' involvement also depends on how much additional help with learning the child needed after school closures. The more help a child required, the more likely fathers were to help organize schooling.

Conversely, they were less likely to play and to help clean the house/prepare meals, probably because of additional time allocated to help with school. However, these associations are weak. Controlling for the amount of additional help, a child's educational level is not associated with the father's involvement (except in the case of helping with school subjects).

In addition, even with control of past involvement, the frequency of all types of activities is lower for fathers who do not co-reside with the child.

Table 6. The results of linear regression for fathers involvement in different childcare and housework activities during the lockdown

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Play (1)	Organize (2)	Help (3)	Clean (4)
Play (before)	0.586*** (0.026)			
Control (before)		0.667*** (0.023)		
Help (before)			0.577*** (0.028)	
Clean (before)				0.730*** (0.020)
Mother Works	-0.025 (0.023)	0.004 (0.023)	-0.010 (0.028)	0.024 (0.020)
Father Works from Home	0.039 (0.026)	0.056** (0.026)	0.057* (0.032)	0.042* (0.023)
Father Does not Work	0.0002 (0.027)	0.042 (0.028)	-0.010 (0.033)	0.021 (0.024)
Father Has College Degree	0.033 (0.023)	0.034 (0.023)	0.038 (0.028)	0.016 (0.020)
Father Co-resides	0.125*** (0.028)	0.058** (0.027)	0.130*** (0.033)	0.088*** (0.025)
Child's gender	0.013	0.017	0.036	0.001

	(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.027)	(0.020)
Child needs more help w/ school	-0.011**	0.022***	0.003	-0.008*
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.005)
Level	-0.015	-0.009	-0.049***	0.010
	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.018)	(0.013)
Constant	0.201***	0.040	0.203***	0.050
	(0.052)	(0.050)	(0.061)	(0.044)
Observations	1,097	1,092	808	1,090
Log Likelihood	-437.465	-435.983	-354.212	-306.257
Akaike Inf. Crit.	894.930	891.965	728.423	632.513

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Discussion and conclusions

The coronavirus pandemic has transformed parental working regimes worldwide and led to widespread introduction of distance schooling. This raises a question about the impact of at-home schooling and at-home work on the gendered division of housework and childcare. In this paper, based on the theory of conditional fatherhood, we investigated parental involvement in housework and childcare during the coronavirus lockdown in Russia, in May 2020, depending on parents' employment status and work arrangements, and also the amount of additional help with schooling that the child needed.

We find that parental involvement in childcare during the lockdown was high (especially among parents of primary schoolchildren) although most of the children, whose parents took part in our survey, had been provided with online classes. Almost all mothers were somehow involved in their children's education. Meanwhile, only one-third of fathers helped their children with distance learning.

Maternal involvement in child education was only partly dependent on employment status and was not associated with maternal work arrangements. There were more noticeable differences in

the case of paternal involvement, which is consistent with the conditional fatherhood theory. Fathers were more likely to participate in their child's online schooling at least one day per week, even controlling for their pre-pandemic involvement, if they worked from home. Moreover, the likelihood of helping with the organization of learning was higher if the child had faced significant problems with education during school closures.

Although the overall changes were not substantial, and the main share of childcare during the coronavirus lockdown was still performed by mothers, our findings support the 'needs exposure hypothesis' (Shafer et al., 2020). We show (see also Fodor et al., 2020; Hank & Steinbach, 2020; Petts, Carlson & Pepin, 2021; Shafer, Scheibling & Milkie, 2020; Yerkes et al., 2020) that fathers increased their involvement in childcare and children's education in certain respects. In particular, in urgent situations, fathers could share childcare duties with mothers and lighten their burden.

There are important limitations of our study to be considered. First of all, we compared paternal and maternal involvement in children's education based on mothers' reports. However, previous research demonstrates that mothers underestimate the degree of paternal involvement in childcare or fathers overestimate it (Coley & Morris, 2002; Kamo, 2000; Mikelson, 2008). We decided to base our conclusions on the mothers' answers because fathers constituted the minority of our sample and the number of their answers were not numerous enough to make statistically valid evaluations.

Secondly, we did not measure parental involvement in child education on the same sample before the pandemic, and therefore had to rely on retrospective answers about their pre-COVID-19 involvement. Although that was the only means for us to assess changes in parental involvement in education, we understand that the results could be biased. However, both recent research and classical studies (Bornstein et al., 2018; Yarrow et al., 1970) show that, although inaccuracies in

parental retrospective recall exist, the drawbacks of such retrospective measurements are minor and do not mean that these measurements should not be used at all.

Thirdly, it should be noted that our sample of parents could not be treated as representative in terms of Russia in general. Additional research is needed to evaluate whether changes in parental involvement during COVID varied by regions. This variety could be present due to the regional diversity of attitudes to familial childcare chores and gendered role division (Lipasova 2017). Furthermore, the participants in our survey have, on average, a higher socio-economic background; vulnerable social groups were underrepresented due to the non-random sample design. According to non-Russia-based studies (Fegert et al., 2020) such groups suffered particularly seriously from the coronavirus lockdown and we could suppose, therefore, that comparable social groups in Russia also experienced extreme difficulties during this period.

Although our study demonstrated that fathers during the coronavirus pandemic increased their involvement in certain household activities, the longevity of this change is questionable and could be evaluated in the future studies.

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