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Happier blokes work less

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WOMEN'S WOES

Men are happier than women, two major studies have found.

They even enjoy visiting their parents more than women do, but the reason will not surprise dutiful daughters.

While men tend to settle on the couch with dad, drink beer and watch sport, women help parents organise finances, cook or plan gatherings.

It's thought men have learned how to relax more and work less since the '60s.

Women work just as much as then, but are less content.

Princeton University economist Alan Krueger analysed surveys back to the '60s and found men had cut back on unpleasant activities.

Women had simply replaced housework with paid work.

Forty years ago, a typical woman spent 23 hours a week on chores 40 minutes more than a typical man. Today, it's still 23 hours, but men have cut back to 21 1/2 hours.

"Women have a much longer to-do list than they once did, including helping ageing parents," Krueger said.

In a second study, husband-and-wife economists Betsey Stevenson and Justin Wolfers, of Pennsylvania, found 25 per cent of men were satisfied with their lives, up from 16 per cent in 1976. The number of happy women stayed at 22 per cent.

"Women were happier because they probably had narrower ambitions," Stevenson said. "They compared themselves to each other and not men.

"Now women are more competitive but it seems it doesn't make them any happier."

