

Living together with own adult children: does it contribute to the active ageing of Georgian elderly people?

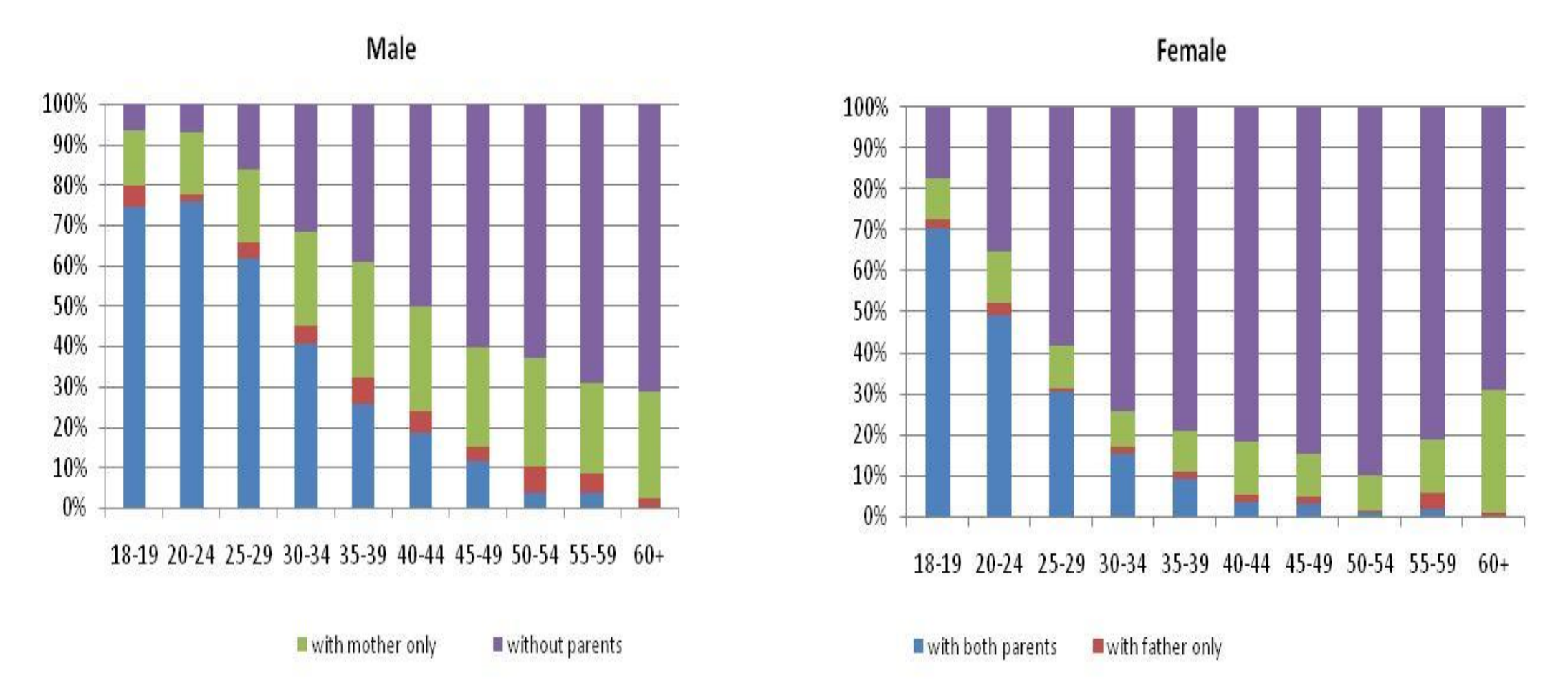
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Generations and Gender Survey in Georgia

I wave- 2006 (N=10,000)

II wave – 2009 (N=8303)

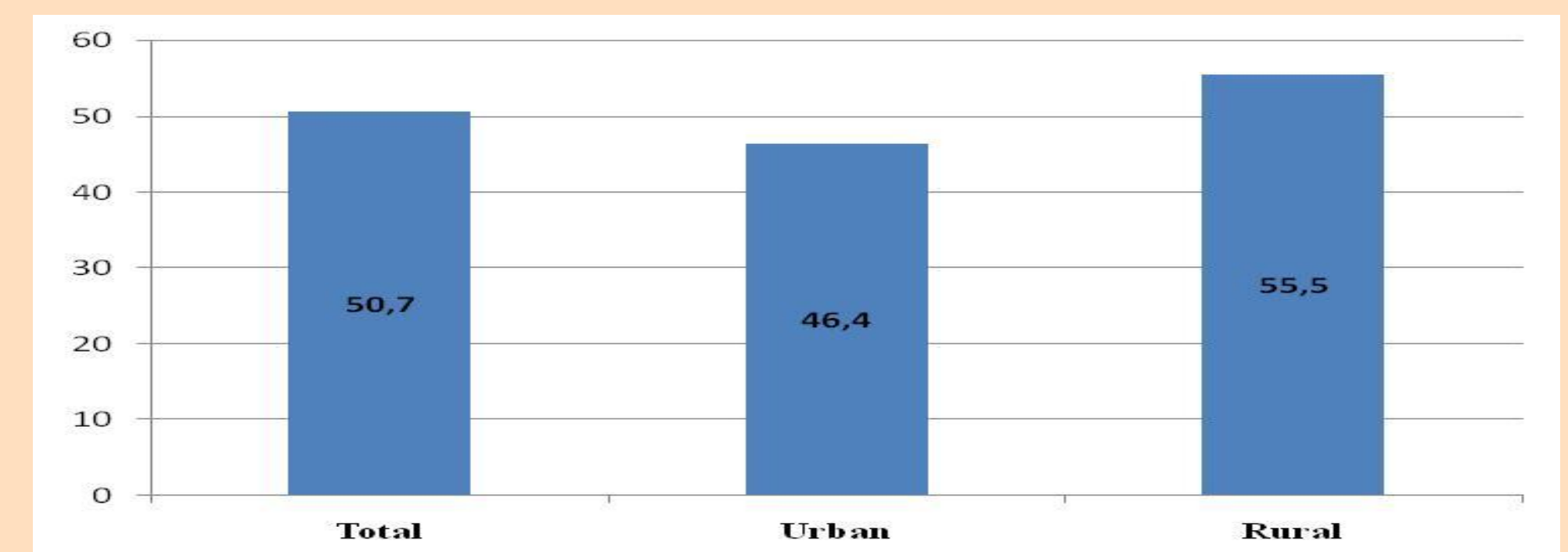
Figure 1. Distribution of respondents having at least one parent alive by living arrangements



Between 20 and 24 years 76% of males in Georgia live with both parents, 16% – live with mother only and 1% – with father only.
Concerning Georgian women, less than half of them in this age still live with both parents, 13% live with mother only and 3% – with father only.
In the age of 40-44 around 18% of males contrary to only 4% of females still live with both parents, 26% of males and 1% of females live with mother only, 5% and 13% correspondingly live with father only.
However, 30% of Georgian women aged 60 years old again live in the same household with parent(s), may be explained by the fact that Georgian women, even those having the husband and children, have to take their parents to live with them when parents are not anymore able to care about themselves.

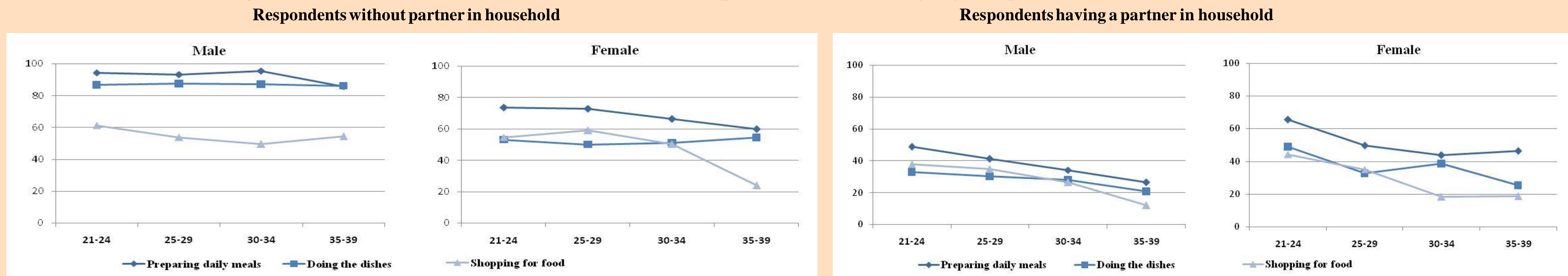
Cohabitation of distinctive generational couples in the same household is the usual manner of living arrangements in Georgia. But the situation is quite different for males and females that may be explained by the gender-specific cultural traditions toward children in the Georgian family. According to the Georgian traditions at least the youngest son should live with parents and take care of them. But woman when marry should move to the husband's family.

Figure 2. Proportion of households including at least one family member age 60 years or older in the total number of interviewed households (%)



Modern Georgian society is still characterized by the prevalence of “complex” families where representatives of different generations share the same household, jointly manage the household budget, and organize family life and by our opinion we should not expect any remarkable changes in the family structure of the Georgian population in the nearest future.

Figure 3: Percentage of families where household duties are performed mainly by respondent's mother



Gender roles in Georgian family are clearly demarcated, not only between partners, but also between parents and their adult children: until the male respondent gets married his mother takes care of him, but after a daughter-in-law comes into the family, the mother gradually delegates the family obligations to her.

For woman, her mother's involvement in the household activities does not depend very much on the partnership status of a daughter living with her. Mothers continue to perform household duties even when their daughter marries, a bit less, but still significant help.

Georgian parents, both males and females, provide also a lot of help in childcare in the family: they actually grow up their grandchildren when share the same household with them and help a lot when live separately. 40% of females and 25% of male- respondents in age 50-59 are looking for grandchildren on a daily basis; 15% more are looking after them at least several times a week and the same proportion – less frequently. Employed parents provide just slightly less help in childcare to their adult children than those- unemployed.

Presented data shows that with the increase of age of male respondent his mother supposing to become older is less involved in the household duties, but what is the most interesting she is less and less involved in the activities connected with spending of household's financial resources, for example in the shopping for food.

In the new economic reality where an old and dysfunctional social system is still found, younger generational partners find themselves in the position of main breadwinners in the household. As a result, compared with the previous generations, they may form different expectations and another orientation for their social and private lives. In distributing roles in the family they may have new approaches to the position of elderly members. In this context, the role and position of the senior generation in Georgian society might suffer and intergenerational continuity and consensus between generational partners with sharply contrasting historical experiences could become more difficult.

Figure 4. Percentage of families where decisions on routine and occasional purchases are not made by the respondent or his/her partner, but by other family members

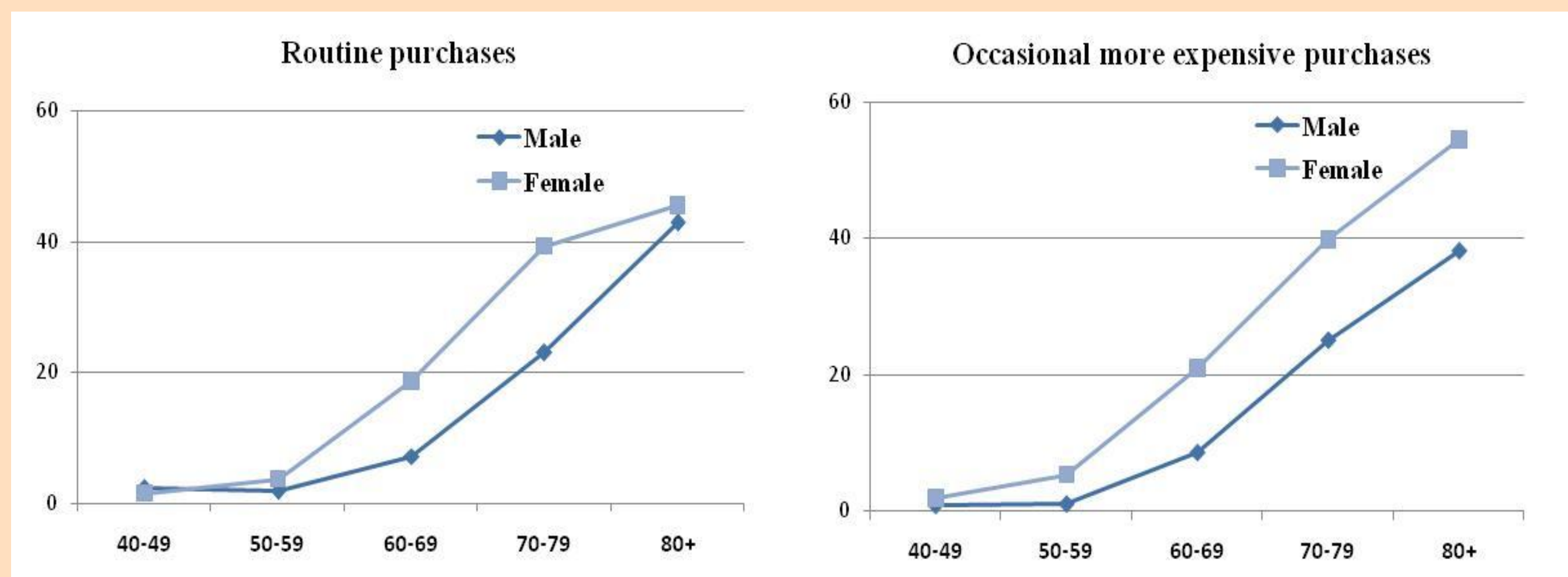


Figure 4 presents proportion of households where decisions on routine and more expensive and occasional purchases are made by other family members than the respondent or his/her partner. The data clearly show how the role of these other family members in the decision making process changes with the age of the respondent.

While the respondent is of active working age (till 60) the management of the financial resources of the family is in his or her partner's hands: there are practically no families in Georgia where decisions on routine and more expensive and occasional purchases are not made by the respondent or his/her partner, but by someone else. Then when the respondent turns 60 or older, the authority of family management gradually shifts to his/her adult children.

It appears that the most decisions on spending financial resources in a family are made by the person who contributes most to the family budget.

When parents become older their incomes usually decrease and their contribution to family budget diminishes, which consequently weakens their leading role in the family..

It is a usual situation in Georgia that parents sharing the same households with their adult children are economically dependent on them, as in the majority of cases young people in modern Georgia have more potential in terms of providing for the family.

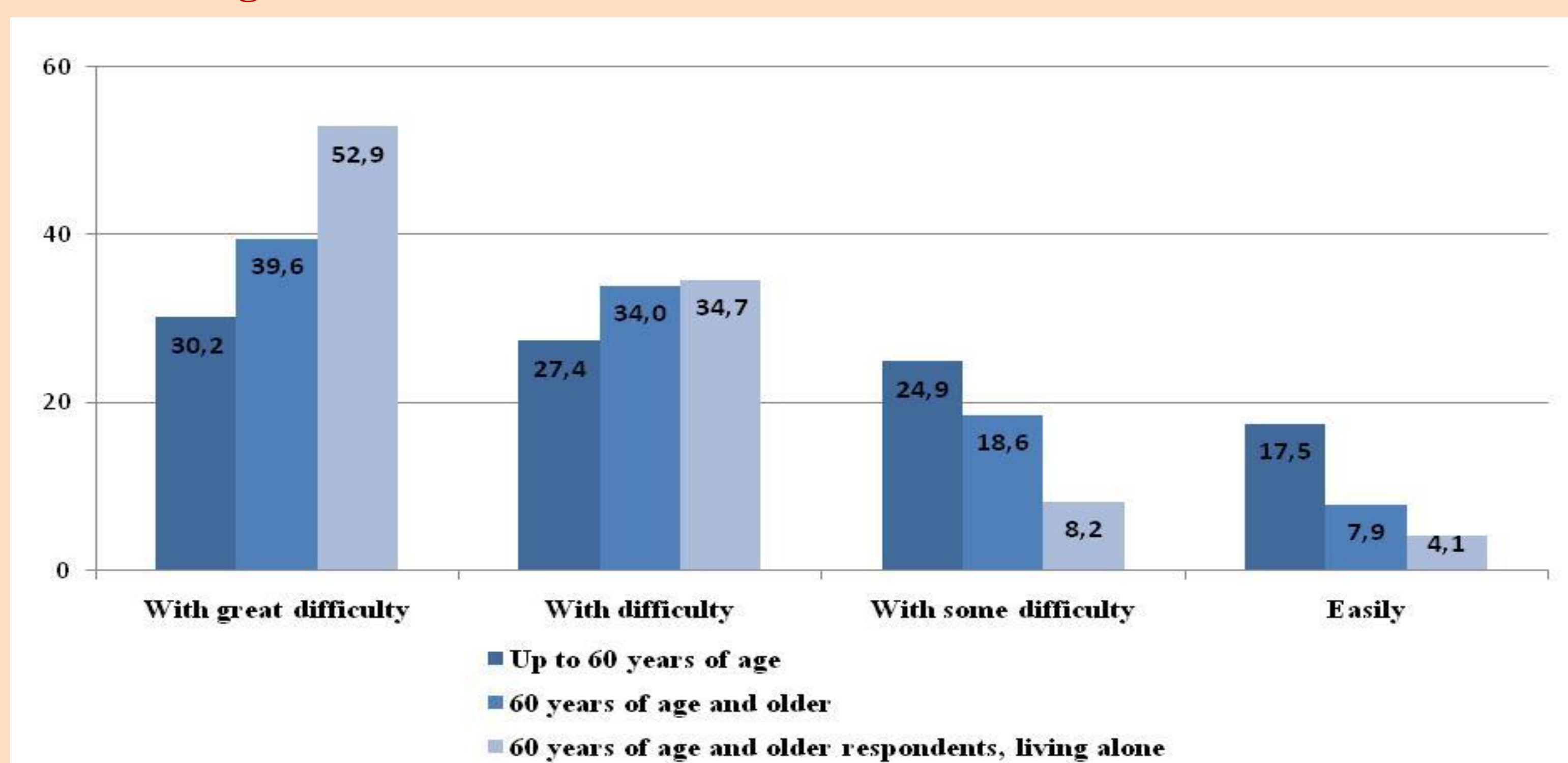
It may be that while making decisions on different family matters, especially issues concerning spending financial resources, the young ask less for advice to the older family members.

The study shows that the role of parents in the decision-making process in the family on matters related to the management of financial resources diminishes with the increased age of the respondent, i.e. the traditionally leading role of the older generation in family management in Georgia has suffered.

Transition of Georgia to a market economy has made a negative impact on the economic position of the older generations due to a fact that a state pension in this country is still below bare minimum for subsistence. This motivates many Georgians to continue a work after retirement refusing from a state pension in favour of available formal employment when require, or working in informal sector and receiving this state pension. 23% of males and 10% of females in age over 60 are employed or self-employed.

Pilot study on Active Ageing Index in Georgia, implemented by Population Unit of UNECE in 2012 has found that Georgia is showing good results in paid employment domain and capacity and ability to actively age domain (Sisen, 2012). It also showed the largest differences between men and women in paid employment, which might be explained by the fact that women in Georgia contribute significantly more to care activities in the family.

Figure 5. Proportional distribution of respondents by subjective measures of well-being



Presented data shows clearly that the majority of respondents 60 years of age and older declared that their households make ends meet with difficulty. Those living alone are in Georgia in especially difficult situations: 9 out of 10 experience economic problems.

Solidarity between generations is still a crucial feature of the Georgian family. Even when adult children live separately from their parents, they still support each other. Mutual support and assistance between family members and relatives allowed Georgians to overcome the hardship of the 1990s when the mechanisms of the state social protection were totally dysfunctional.

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