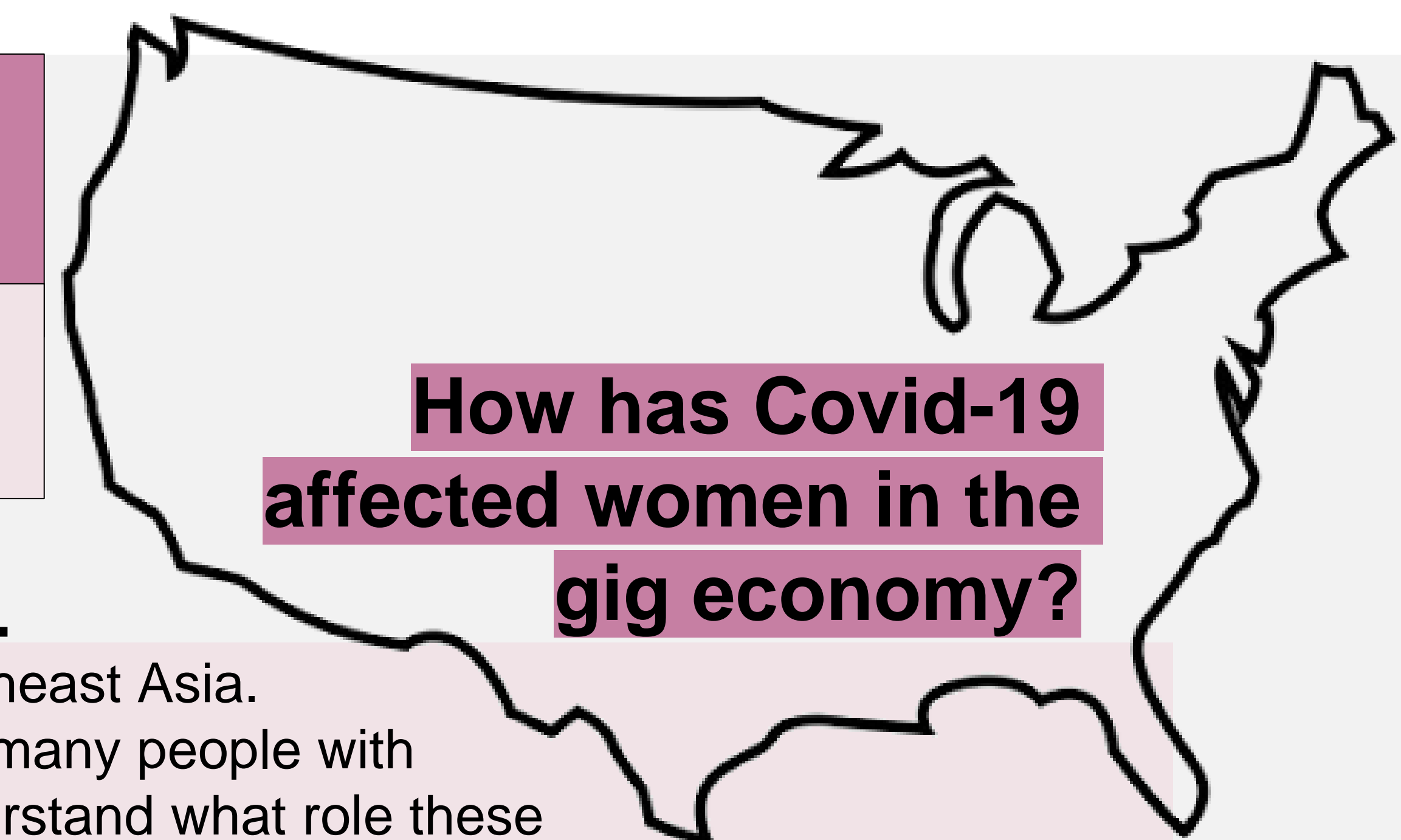


# Women Mean Business

## Gender and the Gig Economy in the COVID Context: An Exploratory Study

Arizona State University – Madelynne Greathouse



How has Covid-19 affected women in the gig economy?

What is it?

### The Gig Economy

A flexible work economy based on connecting with clients or customers through an online platform. In an increasing digital world, the platform economy has given many the ability to work with the flexibility they could not before.

### What is Happening in Countries Today?

What sparked this research was a larger study focused on Southeast Asia. The gig economy is still a progressing industry that is providing many people with work in informal economies and research is being done to understand what role these platforms play in this sector of work. To test the methodology for the larger study, my research was done as a pilot study to test survey and interview material in its functionality as well as see if there are any early conclusions that could be made.

### Who Does this Affect?

#### Interview #1 – [ Beginning Stages ] Etsy Shop that launched in February 2021 that sells Eco Conscious Bath Products.

It began as a side hustle and is not currently generating income. The mission behind her work was to share a bath time ritual she developed during covid and do it ecofriendly. She got the idea to open an Esty shop when she was looking to support small businesses during covid. Platforms made it possible for her to feel empowered to share her passion with the community.

#### Covid Lens:

Working from home with her full-time job, made it possible for her to start this side passion project. She is not able to share her products at a store front or a farmer's market due to covid conditions, so she must get creative advertising through social media.

#### Interview #2 – [ Middle Stages ] Shopify Store that began August 2020 that sells Cosmetics.

This women began her side hustle during Covid alongside her full time Job. She works for another online platform that resells clothing, but her hours are very flexible which enabled her to start her side gig. She seeks to not only inspire but empower women and girls like her daughter that loving yourself is so important and you do not have to conform to beauty standards that are forever changing. She really strives to make a genuine connection with each of her customers, because she knows what it is like to be a consumer.

#### Covid Lens:

This began as a side gig during covid, so sharing the products is based heavily off photos and videos to get a feel for the cosmetics.

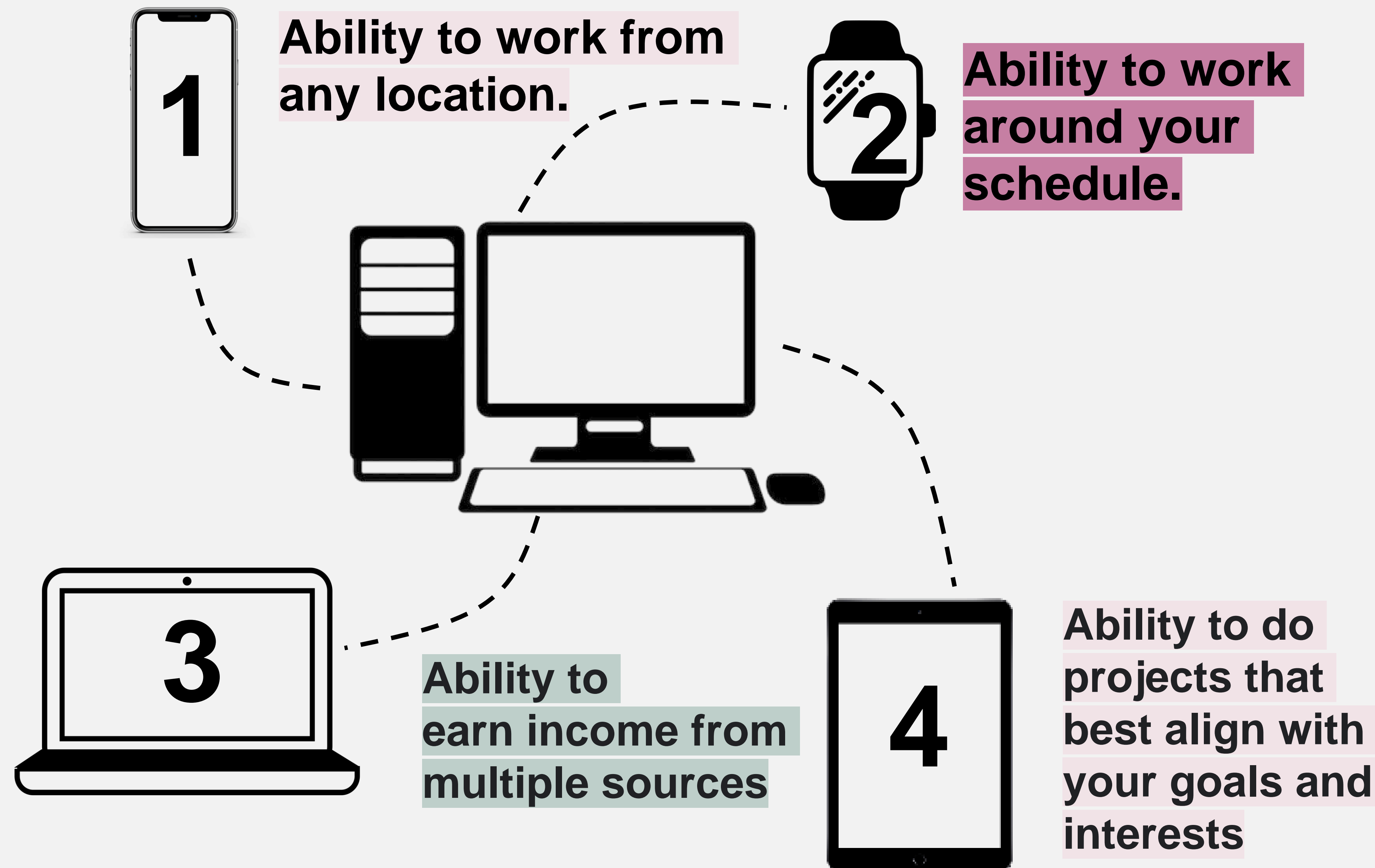
#### Interview #3 – [ Fully Developed Stage ] Full time Herbalist, teacher, and consultant that began in 2016.

This women is very passionate about what she does and wants to share it with the rest of the world. She has been teaching classes and selling products since 2004 but started her online endeavor many years later. She has a Facebook group that created this community of herbalists. The platform has allowed her the flexibility to work as much or as little as she wants and can share information quickly.

#### Covid Lens:

This woman worked through Covid and has seen the most impact to her way of doing business. She is doing classes solely online even though she prefers to do them in person. She mentions that people these days expect a social media presence, so in a way the pandemic allowed this and when they can see the person on the other end it makes them much more comfortable with the experience.

### What are the Benefits?



### How Does Covid Play a Role?

Schools and daycares closing have made roles of families change. It raised the question: Who is now going to take on the domestic care role and take care of the children?

On the other hand, more families are working from home. When both partners are working from home, it gives them more opportunity to split domestic care. In addition, schedules become more flexible with time, allowing room for one to pursue a side gig, passion project, or their own online work.

**70%** Of women who want to go back to work, can not due to childcare.

### Why Does this Matter?

Economic Resilience (pandemic is all about resilience) and Job Security

Increasing Job Opportunities

Improving Work/Home Life Balance

How Women are Viewed in the Work Force

More Opportunity for Female Empowerment

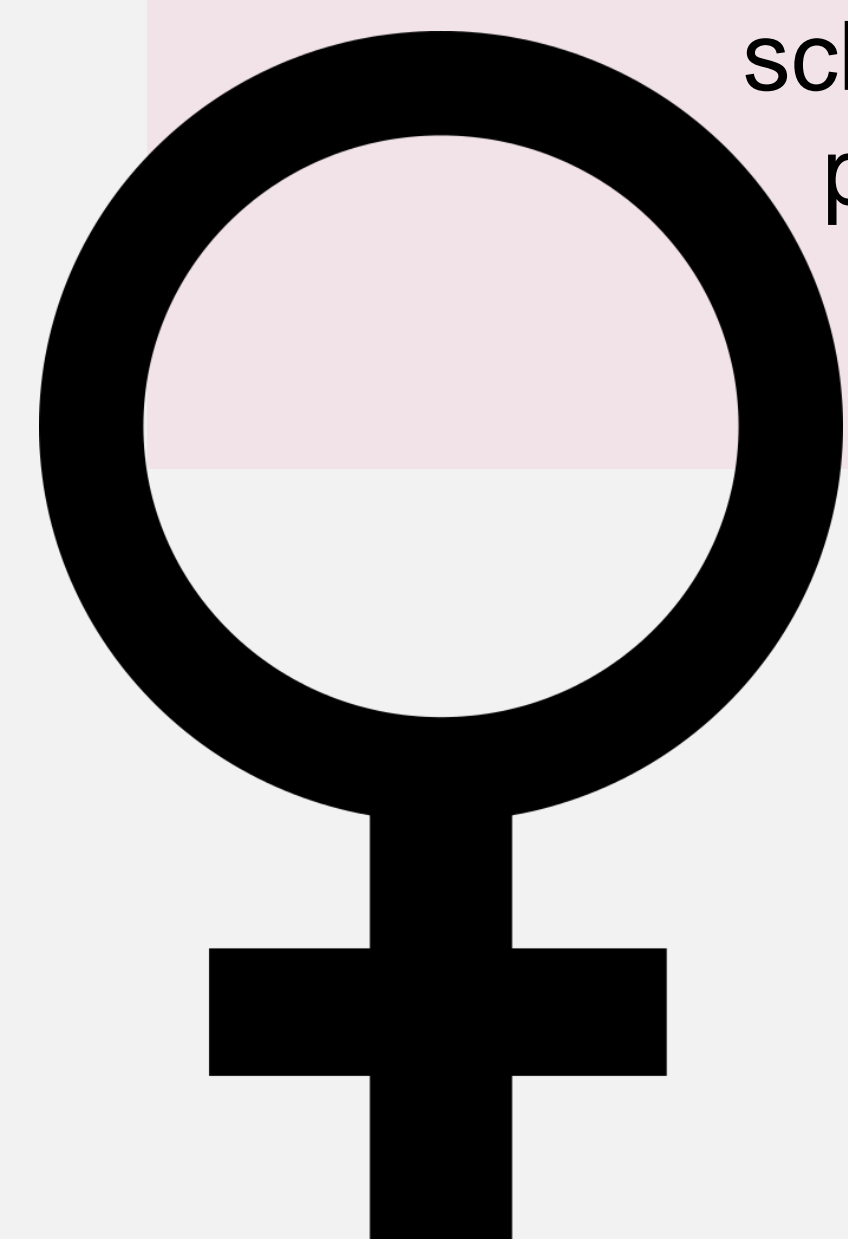
### What Should we do About it?

Room for Policy Changes

Awareness and Intentionality

Platform responsibility to provide reliable, user friendly opportunities to all.

Workers have a responsibility to seek out these opportunities and take advantage of the ability to work with such flexibility.



### W E E K L Y T I M E B R E A K D O W N

**21 hrs**

Paid Online Work

**19 hrs**

Paid Offline Work

**13 hrs**

Domestic Care