Family Structure and Intergenerational Transfers

Nan Marie Astone

H. Elizabeth Peters

Julia Gelatt

Center for Labor, Human Services and Population

The Urban Institute

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INTRODUCTION

The consequences for children of the drastic changes in family structure that have taken place over the last fifty years have been extensively documented and discussed (McLanahan, Tach and Schneider 2013). Many would argue that the family's most important function is to promote the well-being of society's children and protect them from harm so this emphasis is understandable. Nevertheless, the family has other functions and the consequences of family change for these other functions have been less explored, but may be profound. In fact, Seltzer and Bianchi (2013) argue that given the transiency of marriage and cohabiting partnerships, the parent child bond is the most enduring familial tie in the U.S. and describe ways in which demographic change in the family may affect this tie.

In the proposed paper, we will examine transfers of both time and money from adults to their parents and whether or not it differs by the family history of the parent and child. Our analysis owes much to an earlier analysis by Furstenberg and his colleagues (1995) who examined whether or not divorce was associated with intergenerational transfers using data collected in the late 1980s. Our analysis uses more recent data.

Furstenberg and his colleagues found that divorce is associated with lower transfers from adult children to their fathers and higher transfers to mothers. This findings suggests that because children are more likely to live with their mothers after a divorce, their relationship with their fathers is less strong. It is also possible that because, on average, men are better off economically than women, the mothers need more help, particularly after a divorce.

In this proposed descriptive analysis, we will update and improve on Furstenberg and his colleagues' path breaking analysis, using new data that are available from the 2013 round of the Panel Study of Income Dynamics. Our research questions are two. First, does the propensity to transfer time and money from adult children to parents vary by family history? Second, if so, does it vary between mothers and fathers.

In what follows, we present our preliminary results.

METHODS

Data

The data for this study come from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID)**.** The PSID is an ongoing longitudinal data collection effort that began in 1968 with a core sample comprising two sub-samples: a cross-sectional sample of American households and a special sample of U.S. families that were low income in 1968. Under its auspices, data have been collected from over 7,000 families and 65,000 individuals over the last 40 years. There have been some changes to the sample over time: the core sample has been reduced and households have been added to ensure that the data are representative of people who immigrated after 1968. Data were collected annually until 1996 and biennially since then. The staff of the PSID collects extensive information about *heads* of sample households (these are men who head a household alone or in partnership and women who head households alone) and the male head's *wife* or

cohabiting partner (called a "wife" by the PSID staff[1]). Typically there is only one respondent per household, who reports by proxy on other members; but the first time that someone becomes a head or wife, they are interviewed themselves.

In addition to the main PSID files that provide data on the heads, wives and household members every other year, the PSID staff has created supplemental files for a variety of purposes. We used three of these. First, we used the *marriage history* file. This contains a record of every marriage that has been reported among individuals in the PSID, including PSID identifying information if the spouse is a PSID respondent. Second, we used the *childbirth/adoption history* file which contains information on every child that has been reported among individuals in the PSID including PSID identifying information if the child is a PSID respondent. Third we used the 2013 *Rosters and Transfers file*. In 2013 the PSID staff gathered a roster of all living parents and children over age 18 of the 2013 heads and wives.

Our unit of analysis is a dyad or tryad consisting of either: 1) a 2013 head with his or her parent or parents (dyad if this is a head and a parent; tryad if this is a head and his or her parents who are a couple); or 2) a 2013 wife or "wife" with her parent or parents (dyad if this is a wife and a parent; tryad if this is a wife and her parents who are a couple). The heads or wives are called Generation Two (G2 hereafter) and the parent/parents of the heads or wives are called Generation One (G1 hereafter). Each G2 could report up to two parents alive. We focus here on transfers from the G2s to the G1s.

We first selected 2013 respondents (G2s) who reported that they or their wives had at least one living parent (this is everyone in the rosters and transfers file). Then we selected dyads where both the G1 and the G2 were PSID respondents and for whom we could, using the marriage history file and the childbirth/adoption history file construct a family history variable that summarizes the G2s family structure with respect to that G1.

The PSID is a genealogical sample, and all respondents are related, in some way to the original PSID families who were interviewed in 1968 or to families that were sampled later to make the sample more representative of immigrants. It is possible to identify which PSID family each respondent belongs to.

We provide details on which variables came from each file below in the variables section. We were able to assemble complete data on 7085 dyads/tryads (for ease of expression we use "dyad" alone in what follows). This represents data from 5334 G2s (could be either a head or a wife) and 1633 PSID families.

The data for this abstract come from the 2011 versions of the main PSID files, the marriage history file and the childbirth/adoption history file. We also use a preliminary version of the 2013 rosters and transfers file. The data for the PAA presentation will come from the 2013 round of the PSID and the final version of the rosters and transfers file *if it is released in time*.

Outcome Variables

[1] For brevity and pleasing prose, we will use wife in what follows, but we always mean wife or "wife."

We took our four outcome variables from the rosters and transfers file. The first is a dummy variable scored one if the G2 gave that parental unit any time and zero if they did not. We created a similar dummy variable scored one if the G2 gave the G1 any money.

Among those G2s who gave time there is a measure of how many hours which we recoded into a measure of how many hours per week. We top coded any responses that were higher than 56 (8 hours per day) to 56.

Among the G2s who gave money there is a measure of how much which we recoded into a measure of how many dollars per year. The latter was top coded to a maximum of $43,800 per year and the actual outcome variable was log transformed.

The distribution of our outcome variables are provided in Table 1.

Independent Variables

Our independent variable is an indicator of a G1's marital status with respect to the correspondent G1's birth. This was constructed by merging data from the childbirth/adoption history file and the marriage history file and comparing the dates when the G2 was born to the dates of the G1's marriages. From this comparison we were able to distinguish among nine statuses the G1 parent unit could have with respect to his or her G2 in 2013:

1. two G1s married at G2's birth and still alive and living together in 2013[2];
2. a G1 father who is not living with the G2's mother in 2013 and who was never married to the G2's mother;
3. a G1 father who was divorced from G2's mother;
4. a G1 father who was widowed from the G2's mother;
5. a G1 father who is not living with the G2's mother, but where it is impossible to tell the exact situation because the G1's marital history lines up with the G2's birth differently for the G2s mother than for him[3];
6. a G1 mother who is not living with the G2's mother in 2013 and who was never married to the G2's father;
7. a G1 mother who was divorced from G2's father;
8. a G1 mother who was widowed from the G2's father; and
9. a G1 mother who is not living with the G2's father, but where it is impossible to tell the exact situation because the G1's marital history lines up with the G2's birth differently for the G2s father than for her[4];

The distribution of this variable is in Table 2.

Control Variables

[2] This includes 150 cases where the parents were never married to each other but are living together in 2013 and 116 cases where our calculation indicated that the parents were divorced or widowed but were living together in 2013.

[3] This could happen if one of the G2's parents' went non-response to the PSID or went non-response earlier if they both did. If one G1 went non-response before a divorce was final, he or she would be coded as continuously married for the G2's life, while the other G1 reports on the divorce. We will attempt to resolve as many of these discrepancies as we can before PAA 2015. For this abstract, we keep them in a separate category.

[4] See footnote 2.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE G1 All the characteristics of the G1 in the current analysis are taken from the rosters and transfers file. For the present analysis, these characteristics were reported by the G2 (for the rosters and transfers file). Since our study sample includes only G1-G2 Dyads where the G1 is a PSID respondent, it will be possible for us to substitute many of the G1's own reports on these characteristics when the 2013 data become available. G1 characteristics included in the analysis are age of the G1 or of the younger partner if a couple (younger than 65, 65 to 74, 75 to 84, and older than 84), G1 income category (under $50,000, $50,000 to 74,999, over $75000), G1 employed or at least one employed if G1 is a couple, (yes or no), G1 is in good, very good or excellent health or one of a couple is in good or very good health (yes or no). The first panel of Table 3 has the distributions of these variables for the entire rosters and transfers file and for our study sample.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE G2 With one exception, we took the characteristics of the G2 from the 2011 family file. The exception is number of siblings (none, one, two, three, four or more), which came from the rosters and transfers file.

The characteristics of the G2 that we include are age (younger than 30, 30 to 49, 50 to 64 and older than 64), sex, race/ethnicity (Latino of any race, non-Latino African American, non-Latino white, and all others), whether or not the G2 is living with a partner, G2 education (less than high school, high school graduate, some college, BA or more), and G2 total family income. In the multivariate analysis the latter is log transformed. The second panel of Table 3 has the distributions of these.

Analysis

Our study sample does not contain independent observations. A given G-2 could have two records in our sample if his or her parents are both alive and not living together. Moreover, all the PSID respondents are related, by blood, marriage or adoption to the original 1968 PSID families. For this reason, we estimate our multivariate regression using a hierarchical linear model that includes a random intercept for each G2 and a random intercept for each PSID family. As an example of our procedure, consider our outcome: number of hours per week gave to G1 among those who gave time. We will estimate a model of the following form[5]:

$$Y_{fip} = \beta_{0fi} + \beta_{1fi}\,\boldsymbol{G_{1fi}} + \mu_{fip} \qquad (1)$$

$$\beta_{0fi} = \gamma_{00f} + \gamma_{10f}\,\boldsymbol{G_{2f}} + \mu_{00fi} \qquad (2)$$

$$\gamma_{00f} = \gamma_{000} + \mu_{000f} \qquad (3)$$

where:

Y_{fip} is the number of hours of help that G_2 i from PSID family f gave G_1 p in a given week

$\boldsymbol{G_{1fi}}$ is a vector of characteristics of G_1 p

$\boldsymbol{G_{2fi}}$ is a vector of characteristics of G_2 i

[5] The three equations are presented as a heuristic (see Bryk and Raudenbush (19??); the model is estimated all at once.

To identify the form of the association between elements of G_{1fi} and G_{2fi} we ran bivariate logistic and OLS regressions that were not multi-level models. These estimates, unadjusted for the clustering of our observations or for the other variables in the analysis are not shown.

RESULTS

Our preliminary results are in Tables 4 and 5[6]. Table 4 contains bi-variate results and Table 5 multivariate. The estimates in Table 5 are presented as odds ratios (for the logistic regressions) and coefficients (for the linear models). The reference category for our independent variable is a G1 mother who is widowed in the table, but we estimated the differences between all contrasts in the model and will report on several.

Time

We found that G2s who were couples were not more or less likely to receive help from their children than G2 mothers who were widowed (Table 5) and were the most likely of all the groups to receive time help from their children; half the widowed mothers and two fifths of the couples received time help from their children (Table 4).

We compared fathers and mothers within each family history category (e.g. divorced fathers to divorced mothers[7]) and found that fathers are less likely than mothers to receive time help from their children within each category (not shown). They are also less likely to receive time help than parents who are couples (not shown). Therefore, regardless of family history, male parents are less likely to receive help from their children than female parents or parents who are couples.

Among fathers, the estimates of the association between family history group were all significantly different from each other. Fathers who were never married to the G2's mother (and who are not living with G2's mother currently) are the least likely among fathers (in fact among all the groups) to receive time help. Only 15% of these fathers receive any time help from their children (Table 4). They are only 60% as likely to receive help as divorced fathers (not shown), for example and only 16% as likely to receive time help as widowed fathers (Table 5).

Among mothers, those who were never married to the G2's father (and not living with him in 2013) were less likely to received time help from their children than G2s who were a couple or widowed mothers (Table 5). The estimate of the association between family history group and giving time help were not different for never married and divorced mothers; the latter group were less likely to receive help than parents who were a couple.

With respect to the amount of time given among those who gave time help there were few differences by family history and sex. There were only two contrasts where the estimates of the association were significantly different. One is that shown in the table: namely that never married mothers receive three hours (adjusted) more per week than widowed mothers. Never married mothers also receive just under two more hours

[6] The results of the full model are in Table A1.
[7] That is, we compared the estimate given in Table 5 for never married fathers (=.06) to the estimate for never married mothers (=.58) to see if the estimates were significantly different from each other.

(adjusted) a week than parents who are couples. These resemble the unadjusted differences (Table 4).

Money

Once again, we compared fathers to mothers within family history categories and to parents who are a couple. Male parents are less likely to receive financial help than female parents within each family history category (not shown), with one exception. Widowed fathers are as likely to receive financial help as parents who are couples (not shown); although as Table 5 shows they are less likely to receive financial help than widowed mothers.

Never married fathers (who are not living with the G2s mother in 2013) are similar to divorced fathers in terms of the probability of receiving financial help (not shown). Both divorced and never married fathers are less likely to receive help than widowed fathers (not shown).

Among mothers, divorced mothers are less likely than all the other female groups and couples to receive help; there were no other differences.

There was only one difference by sex and family history in the amounts of financial help received among those who received help and it is the one shown in Table 5, couples receive less money than widowed mothers.

DISCUSSION

Our results are preliminary. Nevertheless, they indicate that widowed mothers and parents who are intact couples are more likely than other parents to receive time and money transfers from their children. This suggests that family change may be associated with a lessening ability to provide the kinds of intergenerational exchange that families have typically engaged in as part of their society function. Moreover, and in accordance with past research, it appears that men, in particular who never marry or divorce a child's mother, are less likely to receive help in terms of time or money from their children, as widowed fathers are more likely than divorced or never married fathers to receive help. These conclusions are tentative and we hope to be able to present more final results at the 2015 meetings of the PAA.

LITERATURE CITED

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Table 1. Distribution of Outcome Variables		
	Rosters and Transfers File	Study Sample
N	12,160	7,158
Percent Gave Time to Parents	34.7	35.8
Hours Per Week Among those who Gave		
mean	7.5	7.7
standard deviation	14.8	14.9
Percent Gave Money to Parents	15.4	15.1
Dollars Per Year Among those who Gave		
mean	2982	2769
standard deviation	9230	8728

Table 2. Distribution of Independent Variable	
N	7,312
	%
G1 Father not living with G2's mother in 2013 and never married to her	10.0
G1 Father divorced from G2's mother	13.2
G1 Father widowed from G2's mother	2.7
G1 Father inconclusive	4.2
G1 Mother not living with G2's father and never married to him	13.3
G1 Mother divorced from G2's father	15.4
G1 Mother widowed from G2's father	7.4
G1 Mother inconclusive	5.1
G1 Parents living together in 2013	28.8

Table 3. Distribution of Control Variables	
Age of Parent[a]	%
younger than 65	64.8
65 to 74	16.2
75 to 84	11.1
Older than 84	4.4
missing	3.5
G1 Income	%
under $25000	22.2
$25000 to 74,999	39.0
Over $75000	14.6
missing, refused, DK	24.2
	%
G1 employed[b]	48.9
	%
G1 in good to excellent health[c]	66.9
G2 Age	%
Younger than 30	30.1
30 to 49	37.0
50 to 64	22.8
Older than 64	10.1
	%
G2 Female	48.0
G2 Race/ethnicity	%
latino of any race	7.5
non-latino African American only	27.9
non-latino white only	46.5
non-latino all others	5.2
missing	13.0
G2 household	%
headed by couple	48.8
headed by man alone	35.0
headed by woman alone	16.2
G2 Education	%
less than high school	26.4
high school graduate	25.8
some college no degree	22.9
BA or better	24.9
G2 income	
median	45400.0
standard deviation	83818.0

[a] If G1 is a couple, this is the age of the youngest parent

[b] If G1 is a couple, this is if either parent worked

[c] If G1 is a couple, this is if at least one parent is in good health

Table 4. Outcomes by the Independent Variable.

Family History	G2 gave time to G1	Hours per week among those who gave time	G2 gave money to G1	Dollars per year among those who gave money
	%	Mean	%	Mean
G1 father not married	15.7	9.5	6.7	1481
G1 father divorced	18.3	6.3	5.8	2966
G1 father widowed	41.0	8.9	14.4	3120
G1 father inconclusive	23.9	4.9	7.5	554
G1 mother not married	43.7	10.9	26.0	2957
G1 mother divorced	38.7	8.2	17.0	2808
G1 mother widowed	52.2	7.1	20.0	2005
G1 mother inconclusive	38.8	5.3	17.1	2838
G1 married couple	41.9	6.8	16.0	3085
Total	35.8	7.7	15.1	2769

Table 4. Estimates (odds ratios and coefficients) of the association between family history and the outcomes[a]

Family History	G2 gave time to G1		Hours per week among those who gave time		G2 gave money to G1		Dollars per year among those who gave money (logged)	
	Odds Ratio		Coefficient		Odds Ratio		Coefficient	
G1 father not married	**0.06**	****	2.04		**0.05**	****	-0.33	
G1 father divorced	**0.10**	****	1.15		**0.07**	****	0.07	
G1 father widowed	**0.37**	***	1.21		**0.35**	**	0.23	
G1 father inconclusive	**0.21**	****	0.28		**0.13**	****	-0.24	
G1 mother not married	**0.58**	**	**3.05**	**	0.98		0.18	
G1 mother divorced	**0.50**	***	1.84		**0.54**	*	0.23	
G1 mother widowed	1		reference		1		reference	
G1 mother inconclusive	**0.65**	*	0.96		**0.48**	*	0.29	
G1 married couple	0.82		1.26		0.66		**0.29**	*

* p < 0.10
** p < 0.05
*** p < 0.01
****p < 0.001

[a]Estimates are net of other G1 and G2 characteristics in the model. Full model in Table A1.

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Table A1. Odds Ratios and Coefficients from Multilevel Model of Exchange on Predictors.

Predictor	G2 gave time to G1		Hours per week among those who gave time		G2 gave money to G1		Dollars per year among those who gave money	
	Odds Ratio		Coefficient		Odds Ratio		Coefficient	
G1 Sex and Family History								
G1 father not married	**0.06**	****	2.04		**0.05**	****	-0.33	
G1 father divorced	**0.10**	****	1.15		**0.07**	****	0.07	
G1 father widowed	**0.37**	***	1.21		**0.35**	**	0.23	
G1 father inconclusive	**0.21**	****	0.28		**0.13**	****	-0.24	
G1 mother not married	**0.58**	**	**3.05**	**	0.98		0.18	
G1 mother divorced	**0.50**	***	1.84		**0.54**	*	0.23	
G1 mother widowed	reference		reference		reference		reference	
G1 mother inconclusive	**0.65**	*	0.96		**0.48**	*	0.29	
G1 married couple	0.82		1.26		0.66		**0.29**	*
Age of G1[a]								
younger than 65	reference		reference		reference		reference	
65 to 74	0.99		-0.22		0.79		0.10	
75 to 84	**1.82**	****	0.00		0.72		0.18	
Older than 84	**3.08**	****	0.82		**0.43**	*	0.38	
missing	**0.38**	***	1.90		**0.20**	***	0.03	
G1 employed[b]	0.99		**-1.61**	**	0.91		-0.10	
G1 in good to excellent health[c]	0.88		**-1.37**	**	**1.33**	*	-0.08	
G1 Income								
under $25000	reference		reference		reference		reference	
$25000 to 74,999	**0.66**	***	-1.01		**0.35**	****	-0.15	
Over $75000	**0.48**	****	-1.21		**0.37**	****	-0.25	
missing, refused, DK	**0.36**	****	**5.22**	****	**0.21**	****	-0.12	
G2 is female	1.01		0.09		1.04		0.02	
G2 Race/Ethnicity								
latino of any race	1.18		0.57		1.00		-0.02	
non-latino African American only	reference		reference		reference		reference	
non-latino white only	1.05		-0.57		0.98		-0.08	
non-latino all others	0.91		-0.32		1.33		0.25	
missing	**1.90**	***	0.29		1.37		0.48	
G2 household headed by a couple	**0.19**	****	**-3.47**	****	**0.29**	****	**-0.25**	**
G2 Education								
less than high school	reference		reference		reference		reference	
high school graduate	1.06		0.97		1.37		0.20	
some college no degree	1.20		0.29		1.18		0.17	
BA or better	1.05		1.27		1.53		0.13	
missing	1.53		0.01		0.67		-0.38	
G2 Siblings								
none	reference		reference		reference		reference	
one	0.85		0.64		0.62		-0.14	
two	0.74		0.10		0.74		0.08	
three	0.81		1.62		1.14		-0.03	
four or more	0.76		1.93		1.44		-0.10	
missing	0.77		0.62		0.73		0.10	
G2 Age								
Younger than 30	reference		reference		reference		reference	
30 to 49	1.01		0.45		0.63		0.06	
50 to 64	0.91		-1.23		0.72		0.03	
Older than 64	1.03		-0.01		1.35		-0.05	
G2 logged total family income	0.98		-0.06		1.05		-0.01	
Constant	**4.11**	**	**8.25**	**	**0.02**	**	**6.39**	****
N	7085		2538		7085		1072	
Percent of Variance by PSID Family	13.3%		15.5%		19.6%		13.0%	
Percent of Variance by G2	86.7%		54.2%		80.4%		66.5%	
Percent of Variance by G1	na		30.3%		na		20.6%	