

Marital Status and Mothers' Time Use: Child Care, Housework, Leisure, and Sleep

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ABSTRACT

Assumptions that single mothers are “time-poor” compared to married mothers are ubiquitous, but variation in mothers time use by marital status is less studied than differences between mothers and fathers. We use the 2003-2012 American Time Use Survey to examine variation in mothers' time spent in housework, child care, leisure, and sleep by their marital status. We find no difference in time spent on childcare between married and single mothers, suggesting that behavioral propensities to engage in child care are similar for all mothers. Married mothers do more housework and spend less time sleeping than all other mothers. Never married and cohabitating mothers have significantly more leisure time than married mothers, although this time is mostly spent watching television. Differences in demographic characteristics explain two-thirds of the difference in sedentary leisure time between married and never married mothers. These results provide no support for the time poverty thesis but offer some support for the doing gender perspective.

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INTRODUCTION

The widespread assumption that unmarried mothers are “time poor” as well as income-poor stems from the time poverty thesis that unmarried mothers are doubly disadvantaged by the spouse “absence” effect (Craig 2005). Theoretically, married women are able to share income as well as work and family responsibilities with their spouse, resulting in more time for leisure compared to mothers living alone. Empirical studies offer some support for the absence effect: unmarried mothers spend more time in paid work, and less time in housework, but not child care, compared with married mothers (Craig 2005; Kendig and Bianchi 2008; Sanik and Mauldin 1986; L. C. Sayer, Bianchi, and Robinson 2004). However, gender asymmetrical time use changes over the past 40 years — with mothers increasing employment time but still devoting about twice as much time to housework and child care as fathers — suggests the assumption that mothers with a partner have twice as much time compared with solo parent families is flawed.

Most of the time use literature has focused on explaining gender differences in time allocation rather than differences among women. The small literature that investigates time use differences among mothers focuses on time in specific activities, like housework or child care, rather than multiple domains of time use. Research that addresses these limitations is needed because time allocation patterns are associated with mothers' economic, physical, and psychological well-being (Bird and Rieker 2008; Jacobs and Gerson 2004; Mattingly and Bianchi 2003; McLanahan 2004). Left unanswered is the vital question of whether differences in time allocation patterns flow primarily from having less time available because of the absence of a spouse or from other sources. Investigations of differences in mother's time use may reveal whether time allocations reflect gendered dynamics within couple relationships, are functions of compositional variation among mothers, or are a combination of both.

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Specifically, two mechanisms other than having less available time due to an absence of a partner could produce variation in mothers' time use. First, according to the *doing gender* perspective (West and Zimmerman 1987), partnered mothers should allocate time differently than non-partnered mothers because spending time in certain activities and the absence of spending time in other activities is one of the key ways women and men reproduce and justify gender inequality. Consequently, compared with married women, unmarried women may do less housework and child care, because their living arrangements elicit less frequent displays of their ability and willingness to engage in gendered behaviors. However, regardless of family structure, family work is gendered and single mothers, like mothers living with a male partner, adhere to norms of femininity, particularly expectations embedded in the social role of mother that require time-intensive devotion to children (Christopher 2012; Hays 1996). Single mothers may also respond to discourses that characterize single mothers as irresponsible or shiftless through increased investments in activities deemed societally valuable, like paid work and child care. This suggests single mothers may do less housework and spend less time in leisure activities and sleeping, but no less time in childcare, compared to mothers living with a romantic partner.

Second, compositional differences between unmarried and married mothers mirror sociodemographic variation in time use patterns. Single mothers are younger, less likely to have a college education, and less likely to be White, compared with married mothers (Cohn, Livingston, and Wang 2014). Single mothers are slightly more likely to be employed compared with married mothers, but stay-at-home mothers are more likely to be married, younger, less educated, and to have incomes below the poverty line than employed mothers (Cohn et al. 2014). Differential selection of women by age and education, and perhaps race-ethnicity, into marriage

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may account for some variation in how mothers spend time, independent of any spouse “absence” effect (Kendig and Bianchi 2008).

We address these potential sources of variation in mothers’ time use by analyzing nationally representative 2003-2012 data from the American Time Use Survey. We examine “gender” effects by investigating whether mothers’ time in housework, child care, leisure, and sleep varies by relationship status, and, if so, whether the effect is mediated by mothers’ sociodemographic characteristics. Our research contributes by examining the extent spouse absence, gendered interactional dynamics, and compositional factors account for variations in time allocations across four domains: housework, care work, sleep, and leisure.

TIME USE DIFFERENCES BY MARITAL STATUS

Although the lower economic well-being of single mothers compared with married mothers has been extensively documented (McLanahan 2004), differences in time resources are indicative of household disparities (Vickery 1977). Theoretically, partnered women are able to share income and labor with a spouse, while single women must devote sufficient time to both paid work and household labor. Early theories of the time poverty thesis assumed specialization in marriage, positing unmarried mothers’ disadvantage stemmed from their greater paid work hours (Vickery 1977). Even with converging labor force participation of married and unmarried women (Goldin 2006; L. Sayer, Cohen, and Casper 2004), partnered women can supposedly allocate some unpaid work to a spouse. Furthermore, compared to single households, dual-earner couples may be advantaged in their financial ability to outsource some household labor (Gupta et al. 2010).

Alternatively, how women allocate time may be reflective of *doing gender*, a way to express feminine identity and conform with cultural beliefs about gender differences (West and Zimmerman 1987). For instance, while women have made substantial inroads in the workplace,

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the family domain continues to be a highly gendered institution (England 2010). Compared to men, women do most of the housework and caretaking (Bianchi et al. 2000; Sayer 2005) and they are more likely to combine leisure time with parenting (Milkie, Raley, and Bianchi 2009).

Higher levels of gendered behavior may be associated with all types of living arrangements that include other adults, not just marital unions. If the presence of another adult is a key reason why mothers' time use varies, focusing narrowly on marital status is inadequate because close to 50% of unmarried mothers live with a cohabiting partner, related family members, or unrelated adults (Casper and Bianchi 2002). Hence, measuring living arrangements directly provides a better indicator of the presence or absence of other adults and thus a more accurate reflection of the constraints on mothers' time allocations.

Several papers on time use demonstrate differences in housework time by women's marital status but little variation in mothers' time spent on childcare. Though women do more housework than men in all family structures, single women (never married, divorced and widowed) do less housework than cohabitating and married women, with the gender gap widest between married women and men (South and Spitze 1994; Vernon 2010). Partnered mothers who are not in the labor force spend the most amount of time conducting household related tasks while employed, single mothers spend the least amount of time doing household activities (Sanik and Mauldin 1986). The small literature on child care differences by marital status suggests there is little difference in time spent with children. One older studies reports that married and unmarried, as well as employed and nonemployed, mothers spend similar amounts of time communicating with their children and attending to their emotional needs (Sanik and Mauldin 1986). More recent scholarship has found mothers who are single spend slightly less time with their children compared to married mothers, although the variation is largely accounted for by

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adjusting for other variables such as socioeconomic status and other characteristics (Kendig and Bianchi 2008). Because parenting behaviors are associated with norms of femininity and masculinity, across family types, gendered expectations and identities may produce similar levels of child care time among mothers regardless of the presence of a male partner (Biblarz and Stacey 2010; Christopher 2012; Damaske 2011).

Fewer studies have examined how leisure varies across women. Several time diary studies document less leisure among married mothers compared with single mothers (Bittman and Wajcman 2000; Mattingly and Bianchi 2003), whereas others find that compared to single women, married women have more time for leisure (Passias, Sayer, and Pepin n.d.; Vernon 2010). However, this leisure is of poorer quality, more likely to be sedentary and socially isolated, such as watching television alone (Passias et al. n.d.). We argue there should be more focus on leisure differences given it is a more discretionary use of time, a good indicator of quality of life differences, and it has the clearest implications for health. Mothers with less or lower quality leisure are more at risk for social isolation and mental and physical health disorders (Bird and Rieker 2008; Bittman 2002; Miller and Brown 2005).

SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES BY MARITAL STATUS

It is also possible that mothers who are not living with a male partner have dissimilar characteristics and thus experience different time use constraints and opportunities compared with women who live with intimate partners. Marriage is increasingly chosen more by women who are advantaged (Schoen and Cheng 2006, p 1). Although marriage rates for women in the U.S. have declined by 5%, rates for women without a high school diploma have decreased 30% and, among women who identify as Black, decreased by 25% (Gibson-Davis, Edin, and McLanahan 2005). Historically, women with more education were less likely to marry than their less-educated counter-parts, but today that trend has reversed (Esping-Andersen 2009; Goldstein

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and Kenney 2001). Cohabitation is common across all education levels and racial-ethnic groups. (Bumpass and Lu 2000). (Smock 2000), However, there is racial variation in expectations that cohabitation leads to marriage, with White and Latina women having higher and Black women having lower expectations of a transition to marriage. Non-college educated women are also less likely to transition into marriage from a cohabiting union. (Manning and Smock 2002). Some research has found cohabitators are more likely to explicitly reject gendered marriage expectations, which suggests marriage intensifies gendered behavior (Ortyl 2013). However, women increase time spent doing housework at the onset of co-residential unions, regardless of marital status (Gupta 1999). Unmarried mothers historically were more likely to be employed, particularly full-time, compared with married mothers, but differences have narrowed in recent decades (Sayer, Cohen, and Casper 2004). However, today, education as much as marital status is linked with employment, such that college educated mothers are more likely to be employed than noncollege educated (Cohn et al. 2014).

Therefore, differential time use patterns by marital status could be a consequence of these compositional differences. Mothers who are younger, who have less than a college education, and who are employed full-time report lower levels of child care time compared with older, college educated, and non- or part-time employed mothers. Younger age, college education, and full-time employment also reduce time in housework, and the latter two reduce time in leisure activities. White and Black women do less housework such as cooking and cleaning compared to Asian and Latina women (Sayer and Fine 2011). Hence, the greater share of single mothers who are younger, Black, less educated, and employed suggests single mothers should do less housework and child care compared with married mothers, although the lower education levels of single mothers is also highly correlated with underemployment and unemployment, which

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may increase time in housework, child care, and perhaps leisure. How race-ethnicity affects child care and leisure time is unclear because existing analysis have not yet disentangled influences of race-ethnicity from those of education. Research does indicate that race and education affect the quality of leisure, such that Black, Hispanic, and less educated mothers have higher levels of sedentary leisure like television compared with White and college educated mothers (Passias et al. n.d.). Research also suggests that women have more sleep than men, especially among those women who have a partner or children (Burgard and Ailshire 2013). Yet, the increase in sleep time may be an indication of interrupted sleep to provide care, ultimately resulting in lower quality sleep (Burgard and Ailshire 2013). Our paper's contributions include disentangling influences of compositional factors and gendered behaviors on mothers' time use, and investigating the associations of marital status on a broad spectrum of time in household and care work, leisure activities, and sleep. This focus addresses gaps in the literature about mothers' time tradeoffs between activities and the contribution of compositional versus behavioral differences in accounting for disparate patterns of daily time. We investigate the gaps in knowledge about mothers' time in housework, child care, leisure and sleep using data from the 2003-2012 American Time Use Survey. First, we test hypotheses derived from the spouse absence and doing gender perspectives. Specifically, we evaluate whether married and cohabitating mothers do less housework and childcare than never married and divorced/separated mothers, as the time poverty hypothesis predicts they should; or instead do partnered mothers do more housework and childcare compared with single mothers, as the doing gender perspective suggests. As a test of these perspectives, we attend to whether the presence of another adult in the household is associated with higher levels of gendered behavior or if an additional adult appears to act as an added time resource for mothers. Second, we analyze the extent marital status differences in

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sociodemographic characteristics account for differential time use patterns among mothers. We pay particular attention to time use in leisure activities because its discretionary nature makes it a good indicator of quality of life differences that flow in part from behavioral preferences.

METHODS

Our analysis uses time diary data from the 2003 through 2012 American Time Use Survey (ATUS). The ATUS sample is drawn from outgoing rotations of the Current Population Survey (CPS) and the survey is specifically designed to gather nationally representative data on how adults allocate time to paid work, unpaid work, self-care, and leisure (U.S. Census Bureau 2014). ATUS data are collected by computer assisted telephone interviews in which respondents report their activities in the previous 24 hours. We pool data from the 2003-2012 surveys to maximize sample size and minimize noise from random fluctuations in time use. Sensitivity analyses (not shown) indicate differences are similar for single years of data, and when data are divided into pre-recession (2003-2007), recession (2008-2009), and post-recession periods (2010-2012). Response rates over this time period range between 52.5 and 57.8 percent each year (U.S. Census Bureau 2014). Our sample consists of 21,647 mothers ages 25 to 54 with co-residential children under age 13. We limit the sample to White, Black, and Hispanic mothers and exclude Asian and other race mothers, as well as widows, because of the small number of mothers in these categories.

Dependent Variables

Our primary dependent variables are four summary measures that indicate minutes per day mothers report in housework, child care, leisure, and sleep on the diary day. Housework activities comprise time cooking, cleaning, doing laundry, grocery shopping, household paper work (bill paying, banking) and exterior cleaning, yard work, and household maintenance. Childcare activities include physical care (feeding, bathing, soothing young children), general

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supervision, children's health care, helping and teaching, reading and playing, and driving children to activities. Sleep time includes sleeplessness and time asleep.

We construct a summary measure of all leisure, and also disaggregate leisure into three sub-categories: 1) Social activities, including socializing with others and going to entertainment and arts events 2) Active leisure, such as physical exertion (e.g. exercising) and cognitive exertion (e.g. reading); and 3) Sedentary leisure that mostly consists of television viewing, but also includes relaxation activities such as listening to music. We subsequently isolate television viewing and distinguish between total time spent watching television and time spent watching television alone because the solo or shared nature of television watching provides insight into how the time is linked with social isolation and well-being.

Independent Variables

Marital status is the independent variable of primary interest. We classify mothers into four distinct categories: never married (11%); cohabiting with a romantic partner (4%); divorced or separated (10%); and currently married (76%). Never married mothers are the reference group for our regression analyses. Race-ethnicity is divided into three mutually-exclusive categories: White (66%), Black (12%), and Hispanic (21%). We limit the age range to 25 – 54 years old to focus on adults in prime work and family life stages. The other independent variables represent demographic characteristics that research shows affect time use allocations (Kendig and Bianchi 2008). Education is constructed as a categorical variable: less than a high school degree; high school degree; some college education or an associate's degree; and bachelor's degree or more. Mother's employment status is divided into three groups: employed full-time, employed part-time, and nonemployed. We classify part-time employment as working 34 or fewer hours per

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week and full time employment as 35 or greater hours per week. Mothers are considered nonemployed if they are either looking for work or not in the labor force.

We include two dichotomous family structure variables: presence of an extended adult family member and presence of a child under the age of 3. Other adult family members could affect time use depending on whether the adult contributes time to housework or child care, and thus is resource, or if instead they require care. The presence of young children increases housework and child care time, while decreasing leisure and time sleeping. We also include a continuous measure of the number of children in the household to further account for the increased demand more children make on household work time. We control for completion of the time diary on a weekday or a weekend to account for time variation on the weekends.

Plan of Analysis

First, we present regression analyses of mothers' time use in four primary activities: childcare, housework, sleep, and leisure. We analyze both total leisure time, and because we are interested in marital status differences in the type and quality of leisure, estimate separate regressions predicting time in social, active, and sedentary leisure, and time in solo and shared television viewing. Our focus is how mothers' time varies by marital status and whether compositional differences mediate associations of marital status with child care, housework, sleep, and leisure. We then conduct a Blinder–Oaxaca decomposition analyses to identify the contribution of compositional differences and behavioral differences in explaining variation in leisure time by marital status. Using the Blinder-Oaxaca model estimates, we make counterfactual predictions of single, cohabiting, and divorced/separated mothers' leisure time as if they had married mothers' demographic characteristics. We compare the counterfactual

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predictions with actual differences to highlight compositional versus behavioral differences in mothers time use patterns.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows means of all variables by marital status, with the time use variables listed on the first 9 rows. The bivariate results show married mothers spend more time in housework (about 3h) and childcare (2h) and the least amount of time in leisure (3h 20m) and sleep (8h 20m) compared to all other mothers. Never married mothers do the least housework, about 2h, of all mothers, and divorced mothers report the least childcare time, 1h 20m, or about 38 minutes less than married mothers. On average, never married and cohabitating mothers spend about 4h in leisure activities, compared to 3h 30m among married and divorced mothers. All mothers report about 50m of social leisure time. Married mothers report the most active leisure, about 30m, whereas single and divorced mothers report the least, about 20 m. For all groups, however, the majority of leisure time is sedentary, with never married and cohabiting mothers averaging about 3h, compared with divorced mothers 2h 2m, and married mothers 2h. Never married mothers also report more sleep (about 9h) compared with other mothers.

Compositional differences by marital status are as expected. Seventeen percent of all mothers have an extended family member living in the home. Never married (32%) and divorced mothers (27%) are the most likely to live with an adult extended family member. The average number of children per household is two, with about 20% of households having children under the age of two. Never married mothers are the least educated group, with 59% of single mothers holding a high school degree or less. Married mothers are the most educated, as 40% of mothers have a bachelor's degree or more. Forty-six percent of all mothers are employed full time, though a larger proportion of divorced mothers (58%) are employed full-time compared to the other mothers. Black mothers are a larger share of the never married (45%), and Whites are a

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larger share of married mothers (72%). Hispanic mothers are about 20% of every marital group. The average age of mothers in the sample is 36 years old.

< TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE >

Table 2 shows coefficients from OLS multivariate regressions of child care, housework, leisure and sleep. Results indicate no significant differences in childcare time between married and single mothers, once we adjust for compositional differences, indicating both report about 2h 28m (see constant). However, cohabitating and divorced mothers spend 8 to 12 fewer minutes per day in childcare activities than married mothers. Single and divorced mothers spend nearly 20 minutes less per day than married mothers doing housework, but differences between cohabiting and married mothers are not significant (both never married and cohabitating mothers spend statistically significantly more time in leisure activities, 17m for the former, and 41m for the latter, compared with married mothers. Last, single and divorced mothers get more sleep, about 16m more for single mothers, and 11m more for divorced mothers, compared with married mothers.

As anticipated, sociodemographic variation accounts for some of the differences in mothers' housework, leisure, and sleep by marital status. The presence of an extended family member decreases time spent on housework and childcare, but has no effect on leisure and sleep. This suggests the presence of another adult is most likely to be a time resource, not a time drain, for mothers. As mother's educational attainment rises, time spent doing childcare increases but time spent doing housework or leisure activities and sleeping decreases. Demands of full-time jobs reduce time available for other activities; employed mothers do less child care and housework, and have less leisure and sleep. Nonetheless, net of compositional controls, marriage

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remains highly significant, increasing married mothers' housework and reducing their leisure and sleep time.

< TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE >

To examine the quality of leisure time, Table 3 shows marital status differences by sub-categories of leisure time, adjusting for the other model variables. In general, married mothers' leisure is higher quality: it is more social and active, and less sedentary compared with other mothers. Differences in social leisure time are modest but significant, about 8m per day or 56m per week, more compared with single mothers, and 5m per day or 35m per week more than divorced mothers. Married mothers' do about 24m of active leisure, with divorced mothers doing about 6m less. Compared to married mothers 1h 30m in sedentary leisure, all other mothers' devote more time to this type of leisure: 1h 45m for divorced mothers, 2 h for single mothers, and 2h 30m for cohabiting mothers. Television makes up the majority of sedentary leisure time. Cohabiting mothers watch television for about a half hour more per day, and never married mothers about 20m more than married mothers, but differences between divorced and married mothers are not significant. However, divorced and never married mothers are both more likely than married mothers to watch television alone, but differences between married and cohabiting mothers are not significant. The presence of an extended family member has no effect on social or active leisure, but does increase sedentary leisure time by about 11 minutes per day.

The difference in sedentary leisure time is highest for the least educated mothers. Mothers with less than a high school degree spend almost an hour more per day in sedentary leisure activities compared with mothers with a bachelor's degree. Nonemployed mothers also devote about 40m more daily to sedentary leisure compared with mothers employed full time, but they also spend about 11m more in social and active leisure, suggesting that these differences

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are due to fewer competing demands on time (e.g. from paid work). As anticipated, the presence of young children and an increase in the number of children decreases mothers' leisure time. Black mothers spend about ½ hour more time in sedentary leisure than White mothers, but there is no difference between White and Hispanic mothers' time in sedentary leisure. Overall, nonemployed, less educated, and Black mothers spend the most time watching television, with others and alone.

< TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE >

To better understand these marital status differences in sedentary leisure time, we decompose the estimated time spent in all sedentary leisure, total television time, and time watching television alone. We use married mothers' characteristics to decompose variation attributable to compositional differences in time use between marital status groups, variation due to behavioral differences, and variation resulting from the interaction of compositional factors and behavior. In Table 4, we present the total difference in average time in sedentary leisure, television time, and time spent watching television alone for single, cohabiting, and divorced mothers compared to married mothers. The characteristics line in Table 4 shows the proportion of the total difference attributable to demographic variables in the model.

For instance, the decrease of 39 minutes of sedentary leisure time for single mothers indicates that average differences in family structure, educational attainment, employment status, race-ethnicity, and age compared to married mothers accounts for 67% of the sedentary leisure gap. Comparatively, these variables explain 45% of the difference for divorced mothers and only 30% of the difference between cohabiting and married mothers' sedentary leisure. Compositional differences account for over 60% of the difference in time watching television for single and divorced mothers compared to married mothers, but only 20% of the difference between

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cohabiting and married mothers. Single mothers spend on average 34 minutes more per day than married mothers do watching television alone. If single mothers had the same characteristics as married mothers, their isolated television viewing would decrease by 17 minutes.

In Figure 1, we show average time in sedentary leisure and separate sub-categories of time watching television and time spent alone watching television for mothers by marital status. For each leisure category we show the estimates for mothers by marital status, holding all other model variables at their mean. The light grey bars depict mothers' predicted time in each category, holding constant all variables at married mothers' means. The differences between married mothers' actual estimates and the single, cohabitating, and divorced estimates adjusted by married mothers' averages represent the non-demographic difference in time use by marital status. For example, the average predicted estimate of time watching television for single mothers is nearly 2h 30m compared to 1h 40m for married mothers. The graph shows that adjusting for compositional differences is associated with decreases in the sedentary leisure gap for all mothers. In other words, if single mothers had married mothers' compositional characteristics, meaning if they had higher educational attainment, and a larger share were employed part-time instead of full-time, were older, and were White, their predicted estimate of time watching television would decrease to less than two hours a day.

DISCUSSION

Marriage today is a status symbol that represents achievement of a comfortable middle-class lifestyle (Cherlin 2009). Our results suggest marriage remains a potential arena in which to "do gender" as well. Using the time poverty thesis, partnered mothers are predicted to spend less time doing childcare and housework and more time in leisure activities and sleeping than unpartnered mothers who lack a spouse in which to share home labor. In contrast, the doing gender perspective posits partnered mothers spend more time in housework and childcare activities as a

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way to express their feminine identity, leaving less time for leisure and sleep. We find no support for the time poverty thesis but some evidence of the doing gender perspective. Our results indicate minimal differences in childcare time among mothers, whereas married and cohabiting mothers spend the most time on housework. These differences are not reduced to nonsignificant once we account for associations of compositional factors. Thus, although partnered mothers theoretically can share some household labor with their romantic partners, our results indicate living with a heterosexual romantic partner increases women's housework. Additionally, it is the presence of a romantic partner, not the presence of another adult, that is associated with increased housework for mothers. These results are not surprising, as the majority of research on housework shows that having a man in the household leads to more cooking, cleaning, and laundry. Cohabiting mothers also have significantly more time for leisure than married mothers, suggesting that our regressions may not be accounting for all the ways marriage as an institution elicits gendered behaviors influential on time use. This possibility is supported by our decomposition that indicates compositional differences between cohabiting and married mothers account for only 30% of the difference in leisure time, and behavior differences 70%.

Our results also suggest that never married mothers are not necessarily advantaged by the lack of a partner, in terms of time as a resource. Single mothers have more leisure and sleep time, compared with married mothers, but their leisure time is more likely to be sedentary and, for television, socially isolated. Compositional differences explain two-thirds of the variation in sedentary leisure time between never married and married mothers, with educational differences accounting for a large share. Behavioral differences, however, account for the remaining 33% of variation in leisure time, but the ATUS is limited in assessing sources of behavioral dissimilarities.

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Our results are limited in other ways: we have only a one day snapshot of time use. For activities that occur frequently, like all activities estimated in this analysis, one day diaries provide reliable, valid indicators of group differences in time allocation. But one day, cross sectional time diary analyses are not able to discern causal relationships, and thus we are not able to examine how differential pathways into and transitions out of partnered or single motherhood affects time use patterns. We draw on the literature on health, cognitive, and social benefits to differential leisure into higher quality (social and active) and lower quality (sedentary), but the time diary does not contain measures of how mothers actually experience these activities, in terms of health or social capital. Nonetheless, our results resonate with the broad literature on gendered time use allocations. Marriage is associated with more gendered time use, suggesting that more housework and less leisure remain potent ways to display gender.

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Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations of All Variables (S.D. in parentheses)

Variable	All Mothers		Married		Never Married		Cohabitors		Divorced	
			76%		11%		4%		10%	
Housework	167.81	(146.28)	176.10	(147.47)	129.42	(129.74)	158.69	(145.27)	147.86	(145.53)
Childcare	115.99	(120.86)	123.21	(123.76)	95.83	(111.62)	106.50	(109.81)	84.58	(102.35)
Leisure (all)	207.89	(158.65)	201.33	(151.63)	238.64	(176.58)	251.62	(191.91)	209.06	(170.83)
Social Leisure	50.20	(92.57)	51.98	(92.60)	42.03	(89.72)	49.48	(100.83)	45.39	(91.45)
Active Leisure	28.44	(61.45)	30.69	(62.97)	20.13	(55.73)	24.76	(62.10)	21.20	(52.96)
Sedentary Leisure	129.30	(131.12)	118.72	(118.93)	176.50	(162.40)	177.38	(174.08)	142.49	(147.56)
Television (all)	107.62	(120.18)	99.82	(109.96)	144.74	(150.18)	144.56	(149.93)	114.23	(136.02)
Television (alone)	25.88	(67.31)	19.91	(53.46)	54.35	(111.47)	22.76	(56.48)	43.12	(90.37)
Sleep	510.31	(119.93)	504.70	(112.04)	540.14	(144.04)	517.37	(132.88)	519.25	(138.96)
Presence of Extended Family	0.17	(0.38)	0.14	(0.35)	0.32	(0.47)	0.15	(0.36)	0.27	(0.45)
Number of Children	2.18	(1.04)	2.23	(1.03)	1.97	(1.06)	2.00	(1.07)	2.12	(1.06)
Presence of Child Under 2	0.21	(0.41)	0.23	(0.42)	0.19	(0.39)	0.28	(0.45)	0.09	(0.29)
Less Than High School	0.12	(0.33)	0.10	(0.31)	0.21	(0.41)	0.18	(0.38)	0.14	(0.34)
High School	0.26	(0.44)	0.24	(0.43)	0.38	(0.48)	0.37	(0.48)	0.30	(0.46)
Some College	0.27	(0.45)	0.26	(0.44)	0.30	(0.46)	0.34	(0.47)	0.35	(0.48)
BA or More	0.34	(0.47)	0.40	(0.49)	0.11	(0.32)	0.12	(0.32)	0.21	(0.41)
Not Employed	0.35	(0.48)	0.36	(0.48)	0.36	(0.48)	0.33	(0.47)	0.26	(0.44)
Part Time	0.19	(0.39)	0.20	(0.40)	0.15	(0.35)	0.19	(0.39)	0.16	(0.36)
Full Time	0.46	(0.50)	0.44	(0.50)	0.49	(0.50)	0.48	(0.50)	0.58	(0.49)
Black	0.12	(0.33)	0.07	(0.25)	0.45	(0.50)	0.14	(0.35)	0.19	(0.40)
Hispanic	0.21	(0.41)	0.21	(0.41)	0.24	(0.43)	0.22	(0.42)	0.22	(0.42)
White	0.66	(0.47)	0.72	(0.45)	0.31	(0.46)	0.64	(0.48)	0.58	(0.49)
Age	36.02	(6.61)	36.52	(6.42)	32.44	(6.12)	33.20	(6.94)	37.05	(6.90)
Weekend Diary Day	0.29	(0.45)	0.29	(0.45)	0.27	(0.45)	0.28	(0.45)	0.30	(0.46)
N	21,647		16,473		2,284		809		2,080	

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Table 2. Time Use for Mothers (ages 25-54) OLS Regression Analysis

	Childcare	Housework	Leisure	Sleep
Marital Status (married is reference)				
Single	-3.71 (3.38)	-26.45 *** (4.20)	17.3 ** (5.57)	16.36 *** (4.15)
Cohabiting	-11.24 * (4.85)	-7.79 (6.90)	41.05 ** (13.89)	0.77 (7.61)
Divorced/Separated	-7.84 ** (2.66)	-19.14 *** (3.82)	1.72 (4.57)	11.1 ** (3.47)
Family Characteristics				
Extended Family	-13.46 *** (2.95)	-10.13 ** (3.81)	9.01 (4.64)	4.81 (3.23)
Number of Children	8.46 *** (1.07)	12.42 *** (1.28)	-6.91 *** (1.60)	-8.42 *** (1.10)
Child Under 2	86.73 *** (3.09)	-4.12 (2.91)	-21.29 *** (3.66)	-7.37 ** (2.69)
Education (BA or more reference)				
Less than H. School	-40.4 *** (3.84)	38.03 *** (5.16)	37.26 *** (5.77)	38.44 *** (4.31)
High School	-30.45 *** (2.52)	20.32 *** (3.09)	36.1 *** (3.63)	16.39 *** (2.57)
Some College	-25.65 *** (2.34)	10.68 *** (2.65)	14.83 *** (3.06)	4.62 * (2.27)
Employment (full time is reference)				
Nonemployed	52.54 *** (2.24)	78.2 *** (2.74)	59.59 *** (3.14)	28.9 *** (2.39)
Part Time	22.83 *** (2.29)	32.87 *** (2.89)	27.82 *** (4.04)	16.19 *** (2.55)
Race/Ethnicity (White is reference)				
Black	-27.21 *** (3.06)	-30.23 *** (3.70)	19.61 ** (6.68)	9.69 * (4.49)
Hispanic	-23.92 *** (2.61)	21 *** (3.64)	-25.26 *** (3.82)	14.26 *** (2.87)
Age	-1.41 *** (0.16)	2.51 *** (0.20)	-0.37 (0.24)	-1.59 *** (0.17)
Weekend Diary Day	-27.12 *** (1.66)	27.34 *** (2.23)	79.03 *** (2.55)	62.24 *** (1.84)
Constant	147.55 *** (6.59)	2.94 (8.14)	171.86 *** (9.80)	538.32 *** (7.06)
Observations	21,647	21,647	21,647	21,647
R2	0.21	0.13	0.10	0.11

Standard errors in parentheses * p<.05 ** p<.01 *** p<.001

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Table 3. Mothers Leisure Activities (ages 25-54) OLS Regression Analysis

	Social	Active	Sedentary	Television	Tele Alone
Marital Status (married is reference)					
Single	-7.55 ** (2.55)	-0.56 (1.70)	25.4 *** (5.19)	17.97 *** (4.87)	23.01 *** (3.56)
Cohabiting	-2.56 (4.22)	0.14 (3.09)	43.42 ** (13.93)	31.42 ** (11.23)	0.07 (2.64)
Divorced/Separated	-4.83 * (2.23)	-5.91 *** (1.27)	12.43 ** (4.02)	4.69 (3.67)	18.13 *** (2.35)
Family Characteristics					
Extended Family	-0.72 (2.23)	-1.66 (1.59)	11.34 ** (4.10)	8.9 * (3.80)	0.42 (2.29)
Number of Children	-1.44 * (0.73)	-0.54 (0.53)	-4.93 *** (1.45)	-4.97 *** (1.27)	-2.65 *** (0.73)
Child Under 2	-0.87 (1.89)	-8.74 *** (1.18)	-11.74 *** (3.25)	-10.9 *** (2.85)	-9.51 *** (1.27)
Education (BA or more reference)					
< H. School	-4.76 (2.91)	-15.25 *** (1.92)	57.22 *** (5.28)	53.75 *** (4.82)	11.36 *** (2.52)
High School	-0.84 (1.89)	-9.73 *** (1.37)	46.65 *** (3.04)	40.11 *** (2.72)	10.7 *** (1.61)
Some College	0.7 (1.76)	-8.48 *** (1.24)	22.61 *** (2.50)	20.39 *** (2.29)	4.08 *** (1.21)
Employment (full time is reference)					
Nonemployed	10.82 *** (1.67)	10.6 *** (1.22)	38.18 *** (2.71)	32.27 *** (2.48)	9.4 *** (1.55)
Part Time	8.86 *** (1.83)	6.35 *** (1.34)	12.61 *** (3.60)	9.04 ** (3.03)	3.41 * (1.44)
Race/Ethnicity (White is reference)					
Black	-6.54 ** (2.42)	-12.11 *** (1.60)	38.24 *** (6.34)	28.86 *** (5.37)	24.23 *** (3.15)
Hispanic	-5.48 * (2.13)	-14.69 *** (1.30)	-5.09 (3.29)	-3.13 (3.02)	-5.85 *** (1.49)
Age	-0.38 ** (0.12)	0.35 *** (0.08)	-0.34 (0.22)	-0.27 (0.20)	0.38 *** (0.11)
Weekend Diary Day	44.21 *** (1.55)	8.7 *** (0.97)	26.08 *** (2.19)	23.27 *** (2.02)	-2.89 * (1.14)
Constant	53.16 *** (5.17)	23.77 *** (3.27)	95 *** (8.63)	80.34 *** (8.09)	5.63 (4.48)
Observations	21,647	21,647	21,647	21,647	21,647
R2	0.05	0.04	0.09	0.08	0.06

Standard errors in parentheses * p<.05 ** p<.01 *** p<.001

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Table 4. Decomposition of Characteristics and Behavioral Elements of Estimates of Mothers Leisure Activity (compared to Married mothers)

	Sedentary Leisure	Television (All)	Television Alone
Never Married			
Characteristics	-38.69 (6.90)	-27.7 (6.69)	-16.97 (4.95)
Behavior	-28.84 (5.87)	-20.14 (5.55)	-26.42 (4.20)
Interaction	9.75 (7.40)	2.92 (7.14)	8.95 (5.12)
Total	-57.78	-44.92	-34.44
Cohabitators			
Characteristics	-17.47 (9.67)	-9.40 (7.95)	-1.31 (2.07)
Behavior	-43.56 (13.03)	-30.93 (10.61)	-0.60 (2.65)
Interaction	2.37 (9.63)	-4.40 (7.98)	-0.94 (2.08)
Total	-58.66	-44.73	-2.85
Divorced/Separated			
Characteristics	-10.75 (3.87)	-9.06 (3.43)	-7.25 (2.19)
Behavior	-13.65 (4.26)	-5.84 (3.88)	-19.40 (2.48)
Interaction	0.63 (3.89)	0.49 (3.48)	3.43 (2.23)
Total	-23.77	-14.41	-23.21

Standard errors in parentheses

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FIGURE 1.

