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**Does Money Matter?
The Effects of Wealth and Class on Child Caretaking by Fathers**

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts

in

Sociology

by

Natasha D. Hagaman-Cummins

Committee in charge:

Professor Irene Beattie, Chair

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Professor Laura Hamilton

2018

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2018

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ABSTRACT

Does Money Matter? The Effects of Wealth and Class on Child Caretaking by Fathers

by Natasha D. Hagaman-Cummins

Master of Arts in Sociology
University of California, Merced 2018

Professor Irene Beattie, Chair

Fathers are taking an increasingly involved role in parenting. Most previous research has focused on education and household income in relation to which parent stays at home to take care of children, but the impact of wealth on fathers' child caretaking time investment has not been thoroughly considered. Prior research has not considered the child caretaking time of parents who remain engaged with the workforce. The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of wealth and class on father child caretaking time. Results show that household wealth is not significantly associated with father caretaking time. However, when wealth and father's educational attainment levels both increase, father caretaking time also increases. Conversely, father caretaking time also increases when fathers have lower educational attainment paired with debt. It appears that wealth and class do make a difference, but only if there is congruence between wealth/debt and educational attainment.

Introduction:

“Look guys, take it easy on Daddy. Remember, he's a rookie” (Mother in the film “Mr. Mom” who goes back to work while father stays home). Scholars and other writers use the term “stay-at-home” parent to describe a parent (usually mothers) who takes a primary role in caring for the children of a household (Kramer and Kramer 2016; Kramer, Kelly, and McCulloch 2015; Dunn, Rochlen, and O’Brien 2013; Latshaw 2011; Zimmerman 2000). One assumption in this scenario is that one parent (traditionally the father) will act as the family’s breadwinner, while the other parent takes care of the home front, which includes both child caretaking and household maintenance. Times have changed; now fewer families are willing or able to subsist on one income (Bidwell 2014). Although women have increased their workforce participation steadily (Kalleberg 2011), the majority have not been able to achieve equality in the division of household and child caretaking duties (Sayer 2005; Wharton 1994; Hochschild 1997).

There is ample literature exploring the unequal household division of labor (Cha 2010; Bianchi, et al. 2000; Coltrane 2000; Presser 1994), which considers who performs household tasks such as cleaning, cooking, and other domestic chores, but a limited number of studies consider the question of how often fathers take care of their children. Most of those studies consider stay-at-home fathers, rather than fathers who remain engaged in the workforce to some degree (Kramer and Kramer 2016; Kramer et al. 2015; Dunn, Rochlen, and O’Brien 2013; Latshaw 2011; Zimmerman 2000). Previous research has examined the link between income/employment and child caretaking (Shows and Gerstel 2009; Pyke 1996; Sullivan 2006; Deutsch 1999), but these studies have not considered wealth.

While income appears to positively affect child caretaking by fathers (Raley et al. 2012), a new aspect that merits consideration is if family wealth interrupts the traditional division of labor in terms of the allocation of child caretaking duties. Income may vary over time if circumstances change, while wealth remains more constant. Therefore, wealth may provide a family with increased flexibility in terms of family organization and the division of child caretaking duties due to alleviating financial constraints.

Additionally, ideas about what it means to be a man and a father are evolving. Some men are prioritizing family involvement and demonstrating a nurturing and involved parenting style (Petts, Shafer, and Essig 2018; Maume 2016; Kaufman 2013). Other men who are unable to enact their ideals due to workplace constraints are reporting more conflict than fathers of previous generations (Cooper 2000). As ideas about masculinity and fatherhood change and a “new fatherhood ideal” emerges (Petts, Shafer, and Essig 2018), fathers may see more choices available to them in how involved they are in parenting their children. Perhaps household wealth provides these fathers with access to options which allow them to be more involved fathers by alleviating financial pressure and/or allowing them to disregard the ideals of hegemonic masculinity.

Also, the “new economy” of today “offers more precarious, low-hour, non-standard and low-paid work” (Maume 2016:45). Maume has found that men without strong work attachments are those most likely to act as child caretakers (2016). Therefore, fathers may be increasing their child caretaking responsibilities even as they remain employed, facilitated by the new economy. If families have wealth, are fathers better able to avoid relegation to the breadwinner role? Or do they use wealth to “buy out” of performing less desirable child care tasks? Wealth may increase the options available to parents in a variety of ways, or it may intensify pressure to conform to traditional norms. “Wealth” is defined here as the net value of what a family owns (Keister 2000), not including home value. This project attempts to identify what impact family wealth has on the involvement of fathers in child caretaking.

not including home value. This project attempts to identify what impact family wealth has on the involvement of fathers in child caretaking.

Moreover, social class may influence how much time each parent spends child caretaking. Depending on where a household falls on the spectrum of class – working class, middle class, or upper class – may impact decisions regarding child caretaking, such as which parent does how much. This study considers how class, measured by education and income, affects fathers' time spent acting as the primary child caretaker. Fathers with more education and income may be employed in positions which have more flexibility, allowing fathers to increase time spent caring for children. Research has also shown that fathers participate more with their children when they work different shifts than their spouses, which is more common in working class families (Wright, Raley, and Bianchi 2008).

This paper develops a new framework for considering parental child caretaking by including fathers who remain engaged with the workforce in the analysis, unlike much previous research. I use this framing to consider the research question: do wealth and class impact father's child caretaking time investment? I utilize the NLSY97 to answer this question.

Definition of Terms:

To thoroughly consider the impact of wealth and class on child caretaking by fathers, we need to think more expansively regarding how we think about fathers as child caretakers. In this research, I consider the father a child caretaker for the amount of time he assumes the primary caregiving role for a child or children in the household. In this project, I operationalize this as the number of hours children spend under their father's care. Previous studies have attempted to understand the recent uptick in stay-at-home fathers (SAHF), from 2.0% of all household types in 1976-1979 to 3.5% in 2000-2009 (Kramer et al. 2015). These studies utilize a restrictive definition of such households necessitated by measurement issues, limiting their samples to households where the husband did not work for income at all, and the wife worked 35 plus hours and provided the sole source of household income (Kramer and Kramer 2016; Kramer et al. 2015; Dunn, Rochlen, and O'Brien 2013; Latshaw 2011; Zimmerman 2000). However, many primary child caretakers, male and female, may be connected to some degree with paid work. This could occur through participating in flexible work options such as contract, freelance, part-time, and telecommuting, all of which can happen when children are not home, are asleep, or being cared for by another adult (Latshaw 2011; Doucet 2004). When stay-at-home parents are defined as not being employed in the prior year, fathers are 16% of all SAH households (Livingston 2014). However, what would this number look like if we included parents who have received some income in the previous year? In 2011, 21.4% of fathers with children under 5 were the main source of care for their children (U.S. Bureau of the Census). Additionally, among families with a working mother, 34% of fathers regularly provided care for their kids in 2011, compared to 29% in 2005 (U.S. Bureau of the Census). In this project, I examine fathers' hours spent on child caretaking across all work statuses, to better capture today's reality of combining work and family care.

“Wealth” is defined here as the net value of what a family owns (or owes), or their assets at particular points in time (for this study, at age 30) (Keister 2000). This includes financial (stocks, bonds, bank accounts) and non-financial assets (real estate, businesses, vehicles) minus all debts, except house value (equity or debt). Since the NLSY 97 sample is relatively early in their working lives, house debt is likely high and equity low, which would possibly skew results. Additionally, net financial assets are generally considered to indicate “command over future resources,” while net worth (which includes home equity) “provides a more accurate estimate of

the wealth likely to be inherited by the next generation” (Oliver and Shapiro 2006:60, 62). Wealth is separate from income, which includes wages or salary a person makes from working, pension interest/dividends, or government payments (Keister 2000).

Wealth and class likely influence family decisions regarding allocation of child caretaking responsibilities. Understanding these influences will enable us to structure policy and social supports to give families choices rather than prescriptions.

Theorizing Child Caretaking Involvement:

The theoretical frameworks I use to formulate hypotheses about how wealth and class impact fathers’ child caretaking intensity are cultural schemas, gendered expectations, and masculinity, through the lens of intersectionality.

The theory of cultural schemas may help explain how much time fathers spend on child caretaking. Cultural schemas are widely held beliefs about how things ought to be and “what is appropriate for men and women to do” (Haveman and Beresford 2015). According to Blair-Loy, there are competing cultural schemas of devotion (2003). These schemas of devotion are “cognitive maps” which help us shape how we think about things, and that provide moral and emotional frameworks (Blair-Loy 2003:5). They are established by societies over time, and become the basis for social organization and structures, while also influencing our personal “aspirations, identities, and desires” (Blair-Loy 2003:5). There are two main schemas that affect families: the family devotion and the work devotion schemas (Blair-Loy 2003). The family devotion schema places responsibility for family and the home on women, while the work devotion schema expects that men will give much of their time and energy to their career (Blair-Loy 2003:6-7). Blair-Loy’s study examined two groups of women: one group had executive-level positions in the financial sector, and the other had left their ascending positions to care for their families full-time (Blair-Loy 2003). She found that decisions about family structure were not made based on maximizing household income, but through the lens of the two devotion schemas “definitions of a moral and worthwhile life” (2003:14). The devotion schemas indicate what we should spend our emotions and energy on, and are strongly gendered. Although the devotion schemas are not a good fit with the reality of families today, many of which have two working parents, the schemas still provide cultural ideals that some strive to meet despite this lack of fit. Under this theoretical framework, even when women are working, they will still maintain primary responsibility for the home and children. With this framework, I expect that the presence of family wealth will not affect the traditional household division of labor.

Hypothesis 1: *A family’s wealth will not increase child caretaking hours of the father.*

Cultural schemas also impact gendered practices at home, such as the child caretaking division of labor, which can perpetuate inequality or counter it. Challenging traditional gender expectations could be facilitated in families possessing wealth, for wealth can provide the freedom to make choices. Is wealth enough to counter interactional power dynamics in the home regarding the “appropriate” division of labor? The gendered expectations perspective argues that “decisions about the allocation of housework and paid work go far beyond rational choice and couple-level decision making” (Kramer et al. 2015). Instead, it is a gendered performance of social ideas of appropriate masculinity and femininity (Tichenor 2005; Hirschfeld and Machung 1989). This may help explain why other studies have found that even when the wife is the breadwinner and the husband is not employed, household chores, particularly child caretaking duties, may still be performed by the wife (Tichenor 2005; Coltrane 2000). When gendered expectations are violated, the husband is more likely to “have significantly less human capital and

income than his wife” (Kramer et al. 2015). This may help explain why some men with less education and income than their wives do not increase their child caretaking involvement. The resource imbalance threatens their masculinity, and they are attempting to reassert their masculinity by avoiding traditionally feminine tasks. From this perspective, men with fewer class resources may reinforce a traditional family structure in the home by performing less child caretaking.

Hypothesis 2: When men have fewer class resources (education and income), they will spend less time on child caretaking regardless of family wealth.

Another factor to consider in understanding the child caretaking division of labor is found in theories of masculinity. “Ideas, norms and expectations about what is and is not masculine have a resulting effect on the thoughts, choices, and actions of fathers” (Cooper 2000). The concept of hegemonic masculinity proposes that there is a model masculinity that, although many men are not able to embody it, is held up as the ideal version that men strive to achieve and that they compare themselves and other men to (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). This dominant form of masculinity practices facilitate the subordination of women and has a class component as well, with the “domination of...privileged men over lower-class men” (Pyke 1996:544; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). However, subsequent research has argued that there is not a single masculinity that all men enact; for example, men with fewer resources (monetary and social) develop alternate forms of masculinity (Schrock and Schwalbe 2009). Masculinity in all forms is not static, but rather is formed through interactions not only with other men, but with women as well, and can change situationally (Shows and Gerstel 2009; Cooper 2000). Social location can be a key determinant in which of the “multiple masculinities” are enacted, including social class and occupation (Shows and Gerstel 2009:179; Cooper 2000). Class-based masculinity theory pulls together “...interpersonal power with broader structures of class and gender inequality” (Pyke 1996:544). Cooper posits a “new masculinity” based on interviews with white-collar workers in Silicon Valley which coalesces around the unique way work is organized there in the “new economy” (2000:380). This masculinity is focused on meeting workplace expectations which leave little room for their personal responsibilities, yet the majority of fathers expressed a desire for involved parenting and an egalitarian worldview, whether enacted in their lives or not (Cooper 2000). Other fathers who choose to prioritize child caretaking while maintaining connections with work are challenging our current understanding about what constitutes masculinity, and are “creating new kinds of masculinities that join together varied configurations of masculinities and femininities” (Doucet 2004). Are men with family wealth and class resources able to “buy” more time with their children? Or does the emerging “new masculinity” only result in feelings of conflict rather than real change in fathers’ child caretaking time, even for those with the resources to make different choices?

Hypothesis 3: Fathers with family wealth and class resources spend more time child caretaking than men with less family wealth and fewer class resources.

The theory of intersectionality focuses attention on how various identity groups that we all belong to, including gender, race, and class, among others, interact and overlay with each other, helping to determine our “social outcomes, lived experiences, and opportunities” (Harvey Wingfield 2013:21). A person may belong to one group that enjoys privilege (i.e. male), and another that is disadvantaged (black) at the same time, resulting in that person experiencing privilege or disadvantage concurrently (Harvey Wingfield 2013). Previous research has found mixed results regarding the child caretaking division of labor among different racial and ethnic

groups. In general, non-White families have been found to enact more traditional gender role ideologies (Rochlen et al. 2008; Sue and Sue 2002; Abreu, Goodyear, Campos and Newcomb 2000; Gibbons, Hamby, and Dennis 1997; Levant and Majors 1997.) while other studies show that this varies based on class position (Rochlen et al. 2008; McAdoo 2007). Does wealth have a differential effect on child caretaking by race? Does child caretaking vary between men of color and white men depending on wealth, education, and income? This project explores these questions further.

Hypothesis 4: *Fathers who are men of color without wealth will spend more time on child caretaking relative to White fathers.*

Literature Review:

Wealth and Parenting

Economic reasons are most frequently cited as the primary factor in the decision for men to be primary child caretakers (Kramer et al. 2015; Dunn et al. 2013; Yoshida 2012; Legerski and Cornwall 2010). The economic climate, specifically during times of recession, appears to favorably impact the number of fathers caring for their children (Kramer and Kramer 2016; Casper and O'Connell 1998). Previous research has found that for many families with SAHFs, factors related to men's employment (inability to find work, being ill or disabled) are key determinants driving the decision for men to become the primary caretakers of children (Chesley 2011). "Structurally, fathers' availability is a key factor in determining their participation in child care" (Wharton 1994). That availability increases significantly when a person experiences job displacement. The 2008 recession affected men and women differently, with more men than women experiencing job loss (Sahin, Song, and Hobijn 2010). Although economic factors have been identified as key to men becoming stay-at-home fathers, research has not considered the role family wealth may have on fathers' child caretaking time investment.

Determinations regarding who will perform primary child caretaking may be informed by wealth. When considering the economic position of families, many studies use income as a signifier (Oliver and Shapiro 2006; Keister 2000). However, wealth as a measure "comes closer...to our general understanding of well-being" than income (Keister 2000:11). Most people use income to support daily living expenses, while (substantial) wealth "often brings income, power, and independence" (Oliver and Shapiro 2006). Income can change quickly if circumstances change, while wealth provides long-term security, facilitating the ability to make choices that are less constrained by economic considerations. This is of interest to this project, as wealth may allow households to choose a family structure that is based on preferences rather than economic considerations.

Wealth allows a family to consider choices that would not be viable without it. "Money, or wealth, allows you to choose whether to work or not to work" (Keister 2000:228). Since economic necessity is often cited as the reason for a traditional household division of labor, considering wealth permits us to examine if wealth allows families to make alternative choices, or if other factors have preeminence even when families have increased economic freedom. Wealth could also come with pressures to conform to class-based gender norm expectations.

Wealth is part of the economic calculus that has had mixed findings in previous research. A study in rural China found that women with a significant dowry were able to leverage that into increasing the time husbands spent on household chores (Brown 2009). In China, women retain sole control over their dowry during their marriage and in the case of divorce (Brown 2009).

Although this study does not include men's involvement in child care, it does indicate that family wealth, in the form of a dowry, appears to impact the degree of men's household participation.

A study of fathers' involvement in child care among rural and urban spouses in Uganda found the strongest association between fathers' involvement in childcare when both spouses perceive that they have "shared or equal wealth" (Nkwake 2015:114). This may reflect a more gender egalitarian perspective among these couples, indicated by viewing wealth as jointly shared, which is consistent with an increased level of father involvement in what less egalitarian couples view as women's work (Nkwake 2015). Additionally, family wealth was positively associated with fathers' involvement in their children's health care in Bangladesh (Murshid 2016). These fathers were also older and educated, which may provide them with either a more egalitarian perspective on the importance of father involvement in child caretaking activities or more flexibility in the workplace, allowing them to ignore gendered expectations.

In sum, wealth does appear to influence the amount of father involvement in child care in other countries. In families in other countries that have household or family wealth, men spend more time on household labor and child caretaking involvement, specifically when women retain control over wealth or wealth is viewed as shared or equal. In the United States, economic factors in the form of men's employment status have been recognized as a key determinant in the level of father caretaking. Conceivably, men's identity in the United States is more tied to their employment outside of the home than in other countries. Maybe expectations around hegemonic masculinity encourage men to provide for their family economically as a status indicator, or a marker of having "made it." Perhaps striving to meet the American dream, which idealizes men working and women being responsible for children, does not allow for the prioritization of child caretaking by fathers. Will the presence of household wealth disrupt the dynamics at play in how households organize their child caretaking? Research to date has not considered the role of wealth and child caretaking by fathers in the United States.

Class and Caretaking

Research is inconclusive regarding the interaction between social class and fathering. Socioeconomic status (SES) is a term used to describe the class standing of a person or group of people in relation to others (Cole 2017; Weber 1921). Social class is considered a combination of educational attainment, income, and occupation (Gallup News 2017; Crossman 2017). Pleck and Masciadrelli state there is "no consistent relationship between paternal involvement and socioeconomic variables" (2004:238). However, other studies have demonstrated that some working-class men are sharing in parenting duties, even while claiming their wives are the primary parents or portraying themselves in a "hypermasculine provider role" (Shows and Gerstel 2009:163; Pyke 1996; Sullivan 2006; Deutsch 1999). Wealth has not been included as a variable in these studies. Additionally, white-collar professionals enjoy more control over their work schedules, which has been shown to alleviate work-family conflict (Kelly, Moen, and Tranby 2011; Moen et al. 2016).

Previous research has identified the level of education of both parents as a significant factor in SAHF family structures. Mothers in SAHF families, often also the primary breadwinners, have a significantly higher level of education compared to their husbands (Kramer and Kramer 2016; Kramer et al. 2015). This could be an indicator of her higher earning potential (Kramer and Kramer 2016), and possibly greater career ambitions. Men who stay at home have lower levels of education not only compared to their wives, but also when compared to men in other family structures (Kramer et al. 2015; Chesley 2011). However, Yoshida also found that highly educated men demonstrated a higher level of daily involvement in the lives of their

children, possibly due to increased egalitarian values attained through higher education (2012), or perhaps through more flexible work arrangements.

Additionally, employment is a factor that affects father involvement in child caretaking. Previous research has found that when one parent reduces their employment, there may be a corresponding reduction in demand for involvement in child caretaking of the parent who is working more (Raley, Bianchi, and Wang 2012), since one parent will have increased availability to absorb child caretaking demands. Contradictorily, some fathers have been found to increase their involvement with their children despite working long hours, “likely by cutting back on, or incorporating their children into, their leisure time” (McGill 2014:1089). Expectations for these “new fathers” tend toward increased equality “in parenting (and other household work), spending time nurturing children and performing...caregiving activities” (McGill 2014:1090). Clearly, the results regarding employment and its association with child caretaking are mixed.

Another factor that affects who cares for children in a family is income, which, as discussed above, is distinct from wealth. Among parents with children under 13, fathers participate more in taking care of children alone when their wives work, spend more time being responsible for children when wives have been in the labor market for a longer period, and perform more routine child caretaking when their wives have a higher relative income (Raley et al. 2012), versus fathers with wives that do not work or wives who are not the primary breadwinner. When mothers contribute more to household earnings, the ratio of fathers’ child caretaking to mothers’ care increases, though it still does not exceed that of mothers (Raley et al. 2012). Traditional expectations regarding gender roles appear to trump income, though the degree lessens as mothers’ income increases. The role of wealth may follow a similar path; the influence of traditional gender norm expectations may cause families to conform despite their increased options due to household wealth.

In sum, class factors, such as education, income and employment status, have been found to matter in the amount of child caretaking performed by fathers, but in diverse ways at different class/status levels. The results of studies to date on this relationship have not been consistent.

Class and Masculinity

Class (measured here by the proxies education and income), can strongly influence ideals of masculinity and the associated pressures to enact that masculinity in specific ways, including fathering involvement and practices (D’Enbeau 2010). Considering “particular identities, contexts, and lived experiences as a means of specifying how broad sociocultural transformations thread through the dynamics of individual lives” allows us to see how personal intersections interact with broader patterns in society to affect the options available to individuals and households, and how those options vary over time (Coltart & Henwood 2012:50). In the U.S. today, the hegemonic masculinity model, a dominant masculinity that is constructed in relation to various subordinated masculinities (as well as in relation to women), is a white, heterosexual, rich male (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). This aligns with ideas about the male taking care of their family through being the “breadwinner,” not the child caretaker. However, research has established that “...at the same time, class experiences and practices pointed to different ways of being men, different ways of being constituted as effective social actors” (Morgan 2005:170). This indicates that at different levels of class, there will be different dominant versions of masculinity. These “ideas, norms, and expectations about what is and is not masculine have a regulating effect on the thoughts, choices, and actions of father” (Cooper 2000:394).

Some upper-middle class workers experience expectations regarding a “new masculinity” that has emerged in the new economy (Cooper 2000). This new masculinity crosses between the public and private domains, and “shapes both how they work and how they parent” (Cooper 2000:403). For example, Cooper studies knowledge workers in Silicon Valley, where this new masculinity creates “workplace practices [are] suffused with masculine qualities” (p. 403). To meet these expectations of masculinity, fathers employ various work-family strategies like remaining silent when there is work-family conflict, “which serve to give the impression, if not the reality, that work comes first” (Cooper 2000:403). However, instead of giving these fathers more work-family balance, this new masculinity simply subjects them to intense workplace pressures, even when they desire more family involvement. However, another study of white collar technology workers who were unemployed found that most of these men were comfortable taking responsibility for housework and child care while their partners worked (Lane 2009; Shirani et al. 2012). Shirani et al. argues that this suggests “a more modern understanding of masculinity as for a man to accept a wife’s support indicates an open-minded, non-sexist attitude toward changing gender roles and women’s professional achievement” (2012). It also could be a reflection of these men’s employment status at the time.

Middle class SAHF families with breadwinning wives tend to be younger parents with younger children, perhaps demonstrating a shift among the younger generation to a “weaker alignment between masculine identity and work identity” (Kramer et al. 2013:1669). Middle class households have not been as studied to the same degree as upper class and working-class families.

Some studies which consider masculinity as intersectional have found that working-class men demonstrate more egalitarianism compared to professional men in their “ideals and practices of family participation” in the United States and Japan (Ferree 2010:429; Shows & Gerstel 2009; Ishii-Kunz 2009). As mentioned earlier, some research has shown that some working-class men share in parenting duties, even while asserting that their wives are the primary caregivers or representing themselves in a “hypermasculine provider role” (Shows and Gerstel 2009:163; Pyke 1996; Sullivan 2006; Deutsch 1999). Others argue that it is “economic changes associated with the emergence of a new economy [that] have created the structural conditions that encourage men (especially those in the working class) to take part in family care work” (Maume 2016:45). A study of fathering among physicians and EMTs found that: “Whereas upper-class physician fathers replicated the conventional gender order, working-class EMT fathers were ‘undoing gender,’ using their job schedules to create more equality with their spouses....” (Maume 2016:50). Working class men seem more likely to upset the gender order in parenting expectations when compared to upper class fathers, although they may not always admit it.

The value of an intersectional lens is demonstrated by studies which also consider how these enactments of masculinity and class in parenting practices can vary depending on other aspects of social location, such as racial and ethnic identity. For example, some research has found that working class ethnic minority men enact less traditional parenting roles (Rochlen et al. 2008; McAdoo 2007). Additionally, another study found that black men develop a “caring self” as a result of their own experiences with racism and discrimination, and identify this concern for others as a “critical component of their masculinity” (Harvey Wingfield 2013:125; Lamont 2000).

In sum, current research shows that upper class men perform less child caretaking unless they are unemployed, while working class men are able to participate in family care to a greater degree. Both economic and sociocultural forces align to reinforce gender inequality (Barnes

2015:349), showing that the influence of class and masculinity should be considered together when looking at father involvement in child caretaking.

Fathering and Race

In general, some research has found that non-white families tend to have more traditional gender role ideologies (Rochlen et al. 2008; Sue and Sue 2002; Abreu, Goodyear, Campos and Newcomb 2000; Gibbons, Hamby, and Dennis 1997; Levant and Majors 1997). However, other studies show that this varies based on class, finding that working class ethnic minority males perform less traditional roles (Rochlen et al. 2008; McAdoo 2007). Coltrane found that African-American men contribute to household labor more than Caucasian men, but African-American women still do much more than their spouses (2000). This is attributed in part to more egalitarian gender ideologies and closer relative income and employment between African American spouses (Coltrane 2000). There are mixed results regarding Latinx families, where some studies have found slightly more sharing of household labor between Latinx spouses (Mirande 1997; Shelton and John 1993), and some less (Coltrane 2000; Golding 1990). This demonstrates the lack of agreement in research to date regarding the child caretaking division of labor among different racial and ethnic groups.

Studies have also found significant racial and ethnic differences in wealth (Oliver and Shapiro 1995). Non-white parents are less likely to have accrued wealth during their lives, and so have less to pass on to their children both before and following their death (Clignet 1998). “Asset poverty is passed on from one generation to the next, no matter how much occupational attainment or mobility blacks achieve” (Oliver 2006: 172-173). However, non-whites with higher educational attainment experience a significant increase in net worth (Keister 2000). This pattern also holds true (to a less significant degree) for all groups, leading Keister to suggest that “perhaps those who pursue higher education are people who are also willing to postpone consumption in order to save” (2000:232). These results indicate that, in general, wealth may be distributed differently based on a family’s racial and ethnic composition.

When do Fathers Take Care of the Kids?

Having your first child later in life (considered to be late 20s) is also correlated with increased equality in the performance of child care and housework (Coltrane 2000; Pittman and Blanchard 1996; Coltrane and Ishii-Kuntz 1992; Coltrane 1990). Older parents may be more established in their careers and enjoy more flexibility in their jobs, thus allowing them to spend more time on child caretaking activities (Raley et al. 2012). Older parents may also have more flexibility in general, as they are more likely to have received inherited wealth (after the death of a parent) if it is available in their families. This would likely benefit White parents more than non-White, due to inequality in wealth accrual between different racial and ethnic groups.

Although many studies have confirmed that parenthood increases the gender difference in the household division of labor (Coltrane 2000; Johnson and Huston 1998; Cowan and Cowan 1992; Shelton 1992; MacDermid, Huston, and McHale 1990;), men have also been shown to do more housework when they have younger children than they did prior to having children (Coltrane and Ishii-Kuntz 1992). This may indicate that although men are doing more than before, women are doing significantly more following the birth of a child. Younger children also require more caretaking and supervision than older children (Raley et al. 2012), which may impact the division of caretaking labor.

Research Questions:

Despite the centrality of parenting decisions in most adults and children's lives, we know little about the relatively recent development of fathers increasing child caretaking time. This study is designed to provide additional insight into when fathers provide care for their children. This paper explores how wealth and class resources impact the amount of time fathers spend taking care of their children. Are men more likely to be primary caretakers when the family has wealth as it "buys" them out of breadwinner duties? How does wealth interact with class (income and education) in determining the amount of fathers' child caretaking time? Does wealth influence father child caretaking differently for Black fathers than White fathers? To overcome problems of undercounting involved fathers in prior research, this study uses a more expansive definition of father child caretaking than previous research. Because times have changed and fewer families have a dedicated stay-at-home spouse who is not employed at all, studying SAHP misses parents that are primarily responsible for child caretaking and also work. This study's primary purpose is to explore how wealth and class are associated with fathers' time spent on child caretaking in a household.

Method:

Data: The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97) data set is well-suited for examining how wealth and class are associated with fathers' performing a primary child-caretaking role. It is a nationally representative sample of men and women aged 12-18 when first interviewed in 1997. This cohort has been interviewed sixteen times since the late 1990s. In the first round, 8,984 individuals were interviewed. Almost 80 percent (7,141) of the Round 1 sample were included in the most recent set of interviews, Round 16 (conducted in 2013-14). The survey changed from annual to biennial data collection in Round 16. The primary focus of the NLSY97 is labor force and employment behavior. However, the National Longitudinal Survey program takes a comprehensive approach to gathering information about employment. Therefore, the NLSY97 collects detailed information not only on occupation, working hours, and compensation, but also includes information on wealth, including assets and debts, as well as on child care responsibilities.

Identifying primary child-caretaking: This study utilizes Round 15 data (N=7,423), at which time respondents were ages 26-32 (in 2011). The sample includes females that are in heterosexual relationships only, excluding male respondents. In the NLSY97, survey respondents were asked how many hours their spouse or partner cared for their children while they were at school or work; they were not asked how many hours they cared for their children themselves. Since this project is primarily interested in when fathers are the primary child caretaker, the sample was restricted to female respondents. Table 1 displays the filtering process for arriving at the final sample size.

Table 1. Sample Profile of Respondents

Sample Profile	N=
NLSY97 Original Sample	8,984
NLSY97 – Round 15 Retention Rate	7,423
Females	4,385
Married / Cohabiting	2,031
Children (under 18) living in Household	1,404
Husband/partner/co-parent relationship	1,360
Heterosexual relationship	1,354
Household Wealth at age 30*	917

*Includes only non-missing data on key variables

Household type: The sample was also limited to respondents married or cohabitating in a heterosexual relationship who had at least one child 18 years of age or younger in the home. The husband/partner category includes husbands, lover/partners, and co-parent (living in household) of respondent's child(ren). Since this project was interested in when fathers are primary child caretakers relative to mothers, same sex couples are not included in the sample. Additionally, households without two parents living together were not included in the sample, since a single parent household is not dealing with the same set of caretaking issues.

Finally, this sample also included respondents regardless of the man's employment status, to better capture fathers who are primary child caretakers who also work. This reflects the economic reality of today, where both parents are also often involved in the workforce to some degree (Kramer and Kramer 2016; Goldberg et al. 2012).

The NLSY97 was useful to my analysis for several reasons. First, the NLSY97 data were appropriate for this project because it provided detailed information about a relatively recent birth cohort (born between 1980-1984), as compared to other surveys I considered, such as the NLSY79 and the National Survey of Families and Households, where birth cohorts are older. Additionally, expectations and enactment of father involvement have changed over time (McGill 2014). Studying a relatively recent birth cohort captured how those changes may be impacting father caretaking responsibilities today. Additionally, the time period covered by the NLSY97 includes the post-recession period, allowing me to capture the effect of the Great Recession on child caretaking responsibilities. More men than women lost jobs during the Great Recession (Sahin, Song, and Hobijn 2010), leading some to perform carework when they likely would not have if they had remained in the labor force. Few other data sets collect data on respondents, their parents, and subsequently their own children. This data set includes social and economic characteristics and labor force participation.

However, the data also has some limitations. It would be helpful to know where wealth comes from, and to consider if the source of the wealth makes a difference in the allocation of child caretaking duties. However, due to the limitations of the NLSY97 data, it is difficult to determine the source of household wealth. Variables of interest, such as inherited wealth, are compiled with other variables, such as annuities, and cannot be separated.

Another limitation of the data is that respondents are not asked about the number of hours they spend taking care of children, but instead are asked how many hours children spend in the care of others, including spouses/partners, while the respondent is at school or work. To access information on *father* caretaking, the data had to be restricted to female respondents. This provided access to data on the number of hours fathers performed child caretaking work. However, what is missing in this dataset is the ability to compare the number of hours between parents.

Finally, the birth cohort is between the ages of 26-32 during Round 15. They are early in their years of family formation, as well as wealth accrual. However, patterns established in the first years of family formation can potentially provide a template adhered to in later years (Norman et al. 2014).

Variables:

Dependent Variable.

Father child caretaking. Father child caretaking is operationalized as the number of hours per week in which the father takes primary responsibility for one or more children while the mother is at work or school.

Independent Variables.

Key independent variable:

Wealth: The key independent variable is wealth. Wealth is a continuous variable measured by examining financial (stocks, bonds, bank accounts) and non-financial assets (real estate, businesses, vehicles) for the household, top coded at \$600,000. This does not include house value or house debt since house debt is likely to be high at age 30. Household wealth is calculated by adding respondents' financial and non-financial assets at the age of 30, and subtracting debt. Wealth is not logged due to the potential importance of debt as well as wealth in the choices made by parents. Logging wealth would eliminate the potentially significant impact of debt on child caretaking decisions.

Additional Key Variables: Variables to measure socioeconomic status (SES) include education, employment, and income. Race/ethnicity is another key variable of interest.

Education: Each parents' level of education is included separately. For both mothers and fathers this is measured with a dummy variable indicating whether they have a BA or higher, or not.

Employment: Each parent's work hours are included, which for fathers is categorized as full-time, part-time, or not employed. Mother's work hours is a continuous variable. These are measured differently due to the format of the NLSY97 data.

Income: Income includes each parent's level of income, coded as a logged, continuous variable. If either parent is not employed, their income equals zero.

Race/Ethnicity: Race/ethnicity is included as a series of dummy variables (White Non-Hispanic, Black Non-Hispanic, Hispanic, and Other).

Control Variables.

Demographic characteristics. The sample is limited to married or cohabitating females in a heterosexual relationship, with resident children. To evaluate differences between groups in terms of fathers' caretaking, several control variables are included. There is a continuous variable for each parent's age separately, and a dummy variable indicating if there are child(ren) in the household under 6. Refer to Table 2 for an overview of all variables. Table 3 provides descriptive statistics for the sample.

Table 2. Key Variables and Control Variables

Key Independent Variable	Other Key Independent Variables	Control Variables	Dependent Variable
Wealth (assets minus debt, not including home equity or debt)	Education, income, race/ethnicity	Respondent's employment status, age, age of children	Father primary child caretaker (hours/week)

Data Collection: The data for this project was collected from the NLSY97, which is publicly available on the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics website. The NLSY97 survey is sponsored and directed by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and conducted by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, with assistance from the Center for Human Resource Research at The Ohio State University. Validity and reliability of the data is achieved through validation reinterviews of randomly selected respondents, conducted after each round of the NLSY97 (BLS 2015).

Data Analysis: I cleaned and coded the NLSY97 data so that it was usable for my method of analysis (as specified in the Variables section). Variables with missing data were dropped from the analysis. The research design I employed in the study was an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression of relevant variables at one point in time to examine how wealth and class are associated with fathers performing primary child caretaking responsibilities. I used data from 2011-12 (Round 15), the most recent year this data is available with an expanded set of child care questions, and covariates from that year. OLS regression is used to estimate values of a continuous response variable (dependent variable) using one or more explanatory (independent) variables. It also can identify the strength of the relationships between different independent variables and the dependent variable while controlling for other influences (control variables) on the dependent variable. The base model for this project includes household wealth, mother and father's individual education, income, and race/ethnicity, with father caretaking hours as the dependent variable. This model controls for individual characteristics of the mother and father (age, work status) and if there are children under 6 in the household. Model 2 adds interaction terms for wealth and race/ethnicity categories (White, Black, Hispanic, Multiracial/Other). Model 3 is the Base Model with an interaction terms for wealth and father's educational attainment (BA or higher).

STATA is one of the accepted software packages for conducting statistical analysis in the field of sociology, and this project used version 14. This study examined how wealth and class are associated with fathers' acting as primary child caretakers in 2011-12. I chose this research design because it allowed me to capture the effect of wealth and class resources on father child caretaking, while holding other relevant variables constant.

Results:

Table 4 presents the results of three regression models examining factors determining the number of hours fathers spend as the primary caretaker of their child(ren) at age 30¹.

Model 1 is the base model and includes wealth and its effect on hours of father caretaking (dependent variable), while controlling for characteristics of both the mother and father separately (age, income, education, race/ethnicity, and work status) at age 30 (Table 4). At age 30, wealth is not significantly associated with father caretaking time. Father caretaking hours also decrease with mother's educational attainment, the first indicator of class resources, which is significant and negative. There is a 1.07 hour drop when the mother has a BA compared to mothers that do not, once individual characteristics are accounted for. However, father's educational attainment is not significant. The second indicator of class resources, income, is not significant in this model. Model 1 supports Hypothesis 1, which posits that family wealth does not increase the child caretaking hours of the father. It does not support Hypothesis 2, since the findings regarding men with fewer class resources (education and income) are not significant in this model. Although not the focus of this study, several control variables were significant. Age is significant and negative for both mothers and fathers; father caretaking time decreases 1.91 hours with each year of age of the mother, and decreases to a lesser degree, 0.12 hours, with each year of age of the father. Having a child(ren) in the household under 6 is also significant and positive; fathers spend more

¹ Results were also analyzed at age 25. Results were weak and inconsistent, perhaps due to the fact that few families have accumulated wealth by that age. It is likely that those that have wealth at age 25 have inherited it, with different effects from those that have earned wealth. Therefore, they were not included in this analysis.

time as the primary child caretaker when there is a young child in the house. As indicated by the R^2 , this model explains 7% of the variance in father caretaking time.

{Insert Table 3 here}

Model 2 again includes wealth and its effect on hours of father caretaking (dependent variable), while controlling for characteristics of the both the mother and the father separately (age, income, education, race/ethnicity, and work status) at age 30 (Table 4). This model adds interaction terms for wealth and race for each of the following racial categories: Black, Hispanic, and Other/Multiracial. This model is substantially similar to Model 1 in the findings of significance and their direction. The interaction terms, intended to capture whether there are racial differences in the association between wealth and father caretaking, are not significant. Model 2 does not support Hypothesis 4, which predict differences in child caretaking by Black, Hispanic and Other/Multicultural fathers compared to White fathers. Again, although not the focus of this study, Model 2 does show that the work status of the mother is significant and positive, meaning that for every hour that a mother works, the father's child caretaking increases by .01 hour. As indicated by the R^2 , this model explains 7% of the variance in father caretaking time.

Model 3 continues to include household wealth, mother's and father's characteristics, and adds an interaction term for wealth and father's educational attainment (having a BA). Model 3 indicates that when fathers have a BA and their household wealth increases, their child caretaking hours increase in a significant and positive direction. Fathers increase their child caretaking time when they have a BA and wealth increases, controlling for other characteristics. Figure 1 displays the substantive effects of the interaction. For fathers with a BA, moving from 1 standard deviation below the mean of wealth to one standard deviation above increases child caretaking by .4 hours. When the effect of wealth and educational attainment are combined, we see that they act differently and result in increased time spent on child caretaking by fathers. This supports Hypothesis 3, showing that when fathers have both household wealth combined with class resources (in the form of educational attainment), their father caretaking time increases. Among fathers without a BA, child caretaking decreases as wealth increases. Men with mixed class status appear to retreat to traditional gender roles; men with a BA but higher levels of debt are performing less child care, as are those without a BA who have wealth. Consistent class location across education and wealth is linked to higher child caretaking hours, while disagreement is linked with lower care hours. Model 3 has an R^2 of 7%.

{Insert Figure 1 here}

Discussion:

Roles of parents have expanded in the United States in many ways, with women's roles extending into the workplace and a "new masculinity" increasing the work-family conflict felt by fathers (Cooper 2000). As Friedland states, "By examining family strategies we can reconstruct the ways in which family decisions were made in response to external economic opportunities and constraints, and the ways in which the family's internal values, which guided these choices, interacted with external, societal values" (1990:216). This study shows that wealth has no direct effect on father's child caretaking, but instead interacts with men's educational attainment. When wealth is paired with class resources (in the form of fathers' educational attainment), it can provide fathers with both the resources and flexibility to increase the time they spend taking care of their children. However, men without a BA and with debt also perform more child caretaking.

The congruence between wealth and educational attainment appears to influence father caretaking time.

This study expands on previous research by exploring the connection between hours spent by fathers as the primary caretaker of their child(ren) and family wealth and class resources. While we see growth in the number of SAHF families, from 2% in the 1970s to 3.5% in the early 2000s (Kramer and Kramer 2016), this doesn't mean the traditional family structure is obsolete. Other research on class and masculinity has found that working class men perform more child caretaking than upper class men. This study indicates that father involvement is influenced not only by class status, but instead interacts with wealth/debt and educational attainment. It appears that fathers are only able to overcome "external constraints" when class status is aligned; when wealth accompanies higher educational attainment or when lower educational attainment is paired with debt, fathers spend more time taking care of their children. Perhaps fathers are not able to overcome the pressures and expectations embedded in hegemonic masculinity without these factors in congruence. Wealth does appear to allow men with higher educational attainment to counteract traditional gender norms around child caretaking, while wealth may intensify pressures for men with lower levels of educational attainment to conform to gendered parenting roles. The current legacy of the "new masculinity" for some fathers may only be increased feelings of conflict between their work and family lives, rather than translating into increased opportunities to update the expectations of masculinity.

However, perhaps men starting to experience the conflict that women have historically struggled with since entering the paid labor market will finally result in a change to the way we do business in America and how we prioritize family life. Perhaps this is a time of transition, and we will see more men making choices that give them the chance to revise the role of what it means to be a father, and to serve as equal co-parents with their partners.

Limitations:

This project considered the parental child caretaking division of labor between men and women; therefore, the sample was restricted to parenting couples in a heterosexual relationship. Future research should investigate how child caretaking responsibilities are divided between same-sex parenting partners.

Additionally, this project does not consider the source of household wealth. It is possible that the source of the wealth (inheritance from his parents, her parents, or jointly acquired wealth) might make a difference in the child caretaking division of labor. Due to data limitations, an examination of this factor was not possible for this project. Future research should consider the impact of the source of household wealth.

Conclusion:

Despite women's progress in the workplace, we have seen limited changes in the allocation of duties between men and women at home. Gendered expectations and masculinity ideals limit options and opportunities for fathers to be more involved in child caretaking, and particularly to make the decision to spend more time taking care of their children. Previous research has found that upper class men perform less child caretaking than working class men, unless they are not employed. This study finds that class status, in the form of educational attainment, interacts with wealth to influence father caretaking time. The fathers spending the most time taking care of their kids are those whose class status is aligned. Fathers with less education and debt and those with more education and wealth tend to invest more time in child caretaking. These findings may indicate that when class status is aligned, fathers are more able to act in ways that are contrary to gendered expectations and traditional masculinity norms.

Based on these findings, future research should consider if the source of a household's wealth makes a difference in the household's organization of child caretaking. Research has found that this makes a difference in other countries, particularly when women are in control of the wealth or when it is considered to be shared or equal; how does the source of wealth impact the child caretaking division of labor in the United States? Additionally, since we see that father's educational attainment appears to interact with wealth and influence child caretaking time, other studies should include mother's educational attainment in this equation as well. Parent's relative education is a significant factor in studies of SAHF families (Kramer and Kramer 2016; Kramer et al. 2015). Future research should consider how relative education interacts with wealth/debt to influence the child caretaking division of labor. When mothers have more education than fathers in household with wealth/debts, do father do more or less child caretaking?

This project attempts to add to our understanding of what factors help determine the child caretaking time of fathers by looking at how wealth and class resources effect family decision-making regarding the allocation of child caretaking duties. By understanding "if money matters" in family decisions regarding the division of child caretaking responsibilities, we can try to help all parents make conscious choices rather than simply follow social prescriptions.

Table 3. Means and Standard Deviations, Weighted

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Father Care Hours	2.8691	12.4828
Household Wealth (Age 30)	45,742.41	89,274.99
Mother Characteristics		
Age	28.9819	1.4587
Income ¹	10.0242	0.9610
Education - BA	0.2535	--
Race/Ethnicity		
White (Ref.)	--	--
Black	0.1805	--
Hispanic	0.2626	--
Other	0.0271	--
Work Status		
# Work Hours	24.4883	15.2049
Father Characteristics		
Age	31.8962	4.5829
Income ¹	10.4565	1.0657
Education - BA	0.2024	--
Race/Ethnicity		
White (Ref.)	--	--
Black	0.1836	--
Hispanic	0.2355	--
Other	0.0572	--
Work Status		
Full-time	0.8119	--
Part-time	0.0632	--
None (Ref.)	--	--
Children in Household		
Child(ren) under 6	0.8029	--

¹ Income is logged

Table 4. Effect of Wealth and Class on Father Primary Child Caretaking Hours

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Household Wealth (Age 30)	-1.266e-06 (1.57e-06)	-1.787e-07 (1.78e-06)	-4.126e-06 (2.63e-06)
Mother Characteristics			
Age	-1.9109*** (0.3413)	-1.9077*** (0.3411)	-1.9024*** (0.3398)
Income ¹	-0.1333 (0.2969)	-0.1337 (0.2981)	-0.1192 (0.2983)
Education - BA	-1.0716** (0.4597)	-1.0761** (0.4744)	-1.0909** (0.4639)
Race/Ethnicity			
White (Ref.)	--	--	--
Black	0.3893 (3.1878)	0.3677 (3.1495)	0.3419 (3.1828)
Hispanic	1.0317 (0.9185)	1.0452 (0.9179)	1.0285 (0.9192)
Other	2.3055 (2.5840)	2.4034 (2.5969)	2.2694 (2.5755)
Work Status			
Hours/weekly	0.0109 (0.0067)	0.0115* (0.0067)	0.0126* (0.0068)
Father Characteristics			
Age	-0.1210* (0.0715)	-0.1195* (0.0713)	-0.1201* (0.0714)
Income ¹	0.1519 (0.1641)	0.1593 (0.1685)	0.1786 (0.1642)
Education - BA	-0.0480 (0.4242)	-0.0774 (0.4177)	-0.4908 (0.4843)
Race/Ethnicity			
White (Ref.)	--	--	--
Black	1.4610 (2.8878)	1.6192 (2.8416)	1.4884 (2.8894)
Hispanic	-0.7831 (0.8658)	-0.7833 (0.9703)	-0.7423 (0.8694)
Other	1.7601 (2.5050)	2.2574 (3.1098)	1.8230 (2.5159)
Work Status			
Full-Time	-1.9051 (1.4166)	-1.9090 (1.4175)	-1.8764 (1.4176)
Part-Time	-0.8294 (2.0083)	-0.8391 (2.0177)	-0.8174 (2.0101)
None	--	--	--
Children in Household			
Child(ren) under 6	1.5396*** (0.4647)	1.5408*** (0.4663)	1.5398*** (0.4653)
Interaction Terms			

Wealth*Black	--	-4.509e-06 (7.18e-06)	
Wealth*Hispanic	--	1.520e-07 (4.30e-06)	
Wealth*Other	--	-0.00001 (0.00001)	
Wealth*Father-BA	--	--	6.316e-06* (3.23e-06)
Constant	61.4993***	61.2171***	60.8301***
R ²	.0690	.0664	.0686
BIC	6871.2618	6891.1576	6877.3946
N	917	917	917

*Significant at * p<.1; ** p<.05; *** p<.01: (two-tailed)

¹ Income is in logged dollars

+Robust Standard Errors are in parentheses

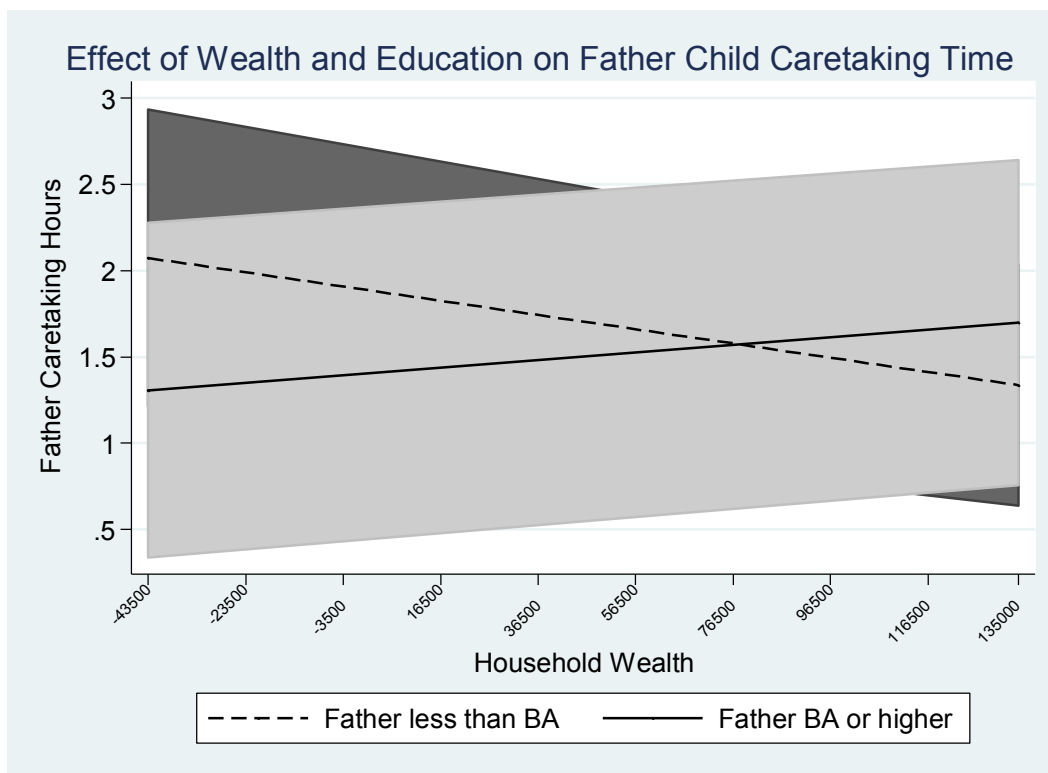


Figure 1. Effect of Wealth and Education on Primary Father Child Caretaking Time

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