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Parents' Work Schedules and Time Spent with Children

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Abstract

This paper adds to the growing body of research on the overlap between work and family by investigating the relationship between attributes of work schedules for parents and the amount of time they spend with their children. Nationally representative time diary data from the ATUS is used to calculate the amount of time parents spend with children on a random day, and this data is merged with the CPS Work Schedules Supplement which provides information on the respondent's usual work schedule, such as having a flexible schedule, variable start and stop times, working from home or a day schedule. The results show that though some work schedule attributes have little influence on the amount of time parents spend with children, certain aspects of the timing of work are related to the total time parents spend with their children. The attributes of work schedules are also found to be associated with the amount of time spent in specific activities with children.

Keywords

children; time use; work-family balance; work schedules

Introduction

Time shared with children is important, and the amount and type of time parents spend with children is often studied. Research has shown that the type of time spent with children is positively related to children's educational and cognitive outcomes (Fiorini & Keane 2014; Hsin & Felfe 2014). Moreover, parents enjoy time spent in childcare, even more than other ways to use one's time (Connelly and Kimmel 2015; Musik et al. 2016). However, the competing time demands of parenthood and work make finding a balance between work and spending time with children difficult. Increases in time spent with children since 1960 are documented for parents across demographic and socioeconomic groups, even during this period of dramatic growth in women's labor force participation and dual earner couples (Bianchi 2000; Sayer et al. 2004; Bianchi 2009). The intensive parenting norms have also resulted in increases in child-focused time, especially for white, educated parents (Craig et al. 2014; Hays 1996; Ramey & Ramey 2010; Barnes 2015). In contrast, work is a "greedy" institution (Coser & Coser 1974), and some employees feel they need to always be on in

response to the 24/7 economy (Presser 2003; Barley, Meyerson, & Grodal, 2010; Perlow 2012). In light of these competing pressures, it is not surprising that many working parents feel the time squeeze (Milkie et al 2004; Hill et al 2013) and indicate that they want to spend more time with their children (Pew 2015). While dual earner couples and working mothers are found to protect time spent with children (Nock & Kingston 1988; Bianchi 2009; Hsin & Felfe 2014), working parents also feel they do not have adequate time for their children regardless of the time they spend with them, especially fathers (Milkie et al. 2004; Milkie et al. 2009).

While employment and work hours influence the amount of time available for children (Kimmel and Connelly 2007; Fox et al. 2013), work schedules may also impact time spent with children, but less research has considered this relationship. Work schedules are an important factor influencing work and family balance (Hayman 2008; Duncan & Pettigrew 2012) and family well-being (Davis et al. 2008). Many individuals want jobs with flexible work hours and schedule control in order to balance work and family, and scholars have called for temporally flexible workplaces to reduce gender wage and employment gaps (Goldin 2014) and improve work-family balance and health for employees (Gerson and Jacobs 2001; King et al. 2012; Perlow and Kelly 2014). In response, some work places have instituted flexible scheduling and encouraged working from home in order to promote productivity, employee commitment, and well-being. Studies within workplaces support this trend by showing that employees report reduced work-family conflict and are more productive when a company encourages flexible work arrangements, schedule control, and working from home (Kelly and Moen 2007, Kelly et al. 2011; Bloom et al 2012). However, previous research also shows that not all types of schedule flexibility have family benefits (Kossek et al 2006) and some may actually have negative consequences in regard to work and family balance (Jacobs & Padavic 2014; Noonan & Glass 2012). A possible mechanism leading to the work-family benefits associated with some work schedule characteristics may be that some work schedules allow parents to spend more time in different types of activities with their children or at different times of the day. However, it is not clear what types of work schedules are actually associated with time shared with children for working mothers and fathers.

Little previous research looks directly at the relationship between work schedules and the amount and type of time spent with children. Differences in time spent with children between standard and non-standard work schedules are found in both directions (Connelly and Kimmel 2011; Craig and Powell 2011; Wright et al 2008) and workplace specific studies have shown some differences in parents' time with children and schedule related policies (Hill et al. 2013; Davis et al. 2015). This paper builds upon this previous research by investigating the relationship between attributes of parents' work schedules and the amount of time they spend with their children for a large group of employees working across occupations and industries. Using nationally representative datasets, we answer the following four research questions:

1. Are attributes of work schedules related to the amount of time parents spend with children?
2. Do various attributes of work schedules impact time with children differently?

3. Do the relationships between types of work schedules and time spent with children vary by gender?

4. Are work schedules related to the type of activities done with children?

Unlike analyses using parents' recall of the time they spend with children, this paper analyzes the actual time spent with children, and the results are based on a broad collection of workers across industries and occupations. Data on parent's work schedules from the Current Population Survey (CPS) are merged with time-diary data from the American Time Use Survey (ATUS) to create a dataset that has both information on usual work schedules and time spent with children from a daily diary. The results suggest that some flexible work schedule attributes have little influence on the amount of time parents spend with their children. However, women who work from home spend more time with children on workdays, while men who have a variable schedule spend less. This research provides evidence that workplace and institutional policies promoting certain work schedule attributes could increase the time parents are able to spend with children, and thus improve work and family balance.

Previous research

Previous research indicates mothers' and fathers' time spent in childcare increased in previous decades (Bianchi et al. 2006; Sayer et al. 2004; Ramey and Ramey, 2010). The increases in time spent with children over the past fifty years are surprising as women's labor force participation increased dramatically in the United States since the 1950's (Presser, 1989) and the continued expectation that fathers should be the primary financial contributor to the household (Townsend 2002). Research shows that though working parents spend less time in primary care of children than non-working parents (Howie et al. 2006; Milkie et al. 2004), employed mothers and fathers spend more time now with children than they did a few decades ago (Bianchi et al. 2006; Bianchi 2000; Fox et al 2013).

Despite the ability of working parents to spend increasing amounts of time with their children, employment and work hours impact time available for children, particularly as work hours relates to work schedules. Though recent research from the US shows that parents working non-standard hours spend similar amounts of time in childcare as parents that work day time schedules (Wright et al, 2008; Connelly and Kimmel 2011), parents' availability during specific periods of time during the day may be important for time spent with children. Rappoport and Bourdais (2008) used data from Canadian couples to show that the timing of work, especially working between 6:00pm - 10:00pm, has a significant and large negative impact on the total time parents spend with children. Similarly, parents in Australia were found to spend less time in childcare when working non-standard schedules (Craig and Powell 2011).

Paid day care and school hours also influence time with children and work schedules especially because outsourced day care often aligns with the classic workday schedule between 6am and 6pm. The cost of childcare decreases the employment of mothers (Belau and Robins 1988; Connelly 1992; Kimmel 1998) and Jenkins and Osberg (2005) found couples with children desynchronize their work schedules to reduce the costs of childcare, thus increasing the time parents spend with their children. Nock and Kingston (1988)

actually highlighted the key childcare time of 3:00pm-6:00pm, the after school hours, when outsourced childcare may be more difficult to find and more costly than school or daytime outsourced care. Parents not working during that time spent significantly more time with their children then those who were working (Nock and Kingston, 1988).

It is commonly thought that employees with temporally flexible work schedules may be able to align work with family demands and, therefore, reduce work-family conflict and increase time available for other activities including for parents to spend time with children. However, "workplace flexibility" can take many forms. Some employees may have control over their schedule (Kelly et al. 2011) and other people, whose schedules are also considered "flexible," may be flexible for the benefit of the employer. In these instances employees are required to work variable hours, have unpredictable schedules, or feel like they need to always be working (Kalleberg 2011; Perlow 2012). This type of flexibility may increase work and family stress, and increase work spillover into family life (Blair-Loy 2009; Chesley 2005); in fact, Noonan and Glass (2012) show that telecommuting or working from home just increases total work hours. Previous research has shown that stable or predictable schedules may be more beneficial than flexible schedules for parents' work-family conflict, especially for low-wage workers (Henly et al. 2006; Henley and Lamber 2014; Jacobs & Padavic 2014).

In contrast, research has shown that certain flexible work arrangements, such as those that increase employees' schedule control, can improve work and family balance or time adequacy (Hayman 2009; Hill et al 2008; Hill et al 2013; Kelly et al. 2014). However, there is very little research looking directly at work schedules and the actual time spent with children. Roeters et al. (2010) showed that long work hours and more restrictive schedules reduced time with children for Dutch parents. While there is some evidence that changes in workplace policies may not impact time spent with children potentially because parents already prioritize time spent with their children (Hill et al. 2013), recent research from one company in the US showed that a workplace intervention increasing schedule control and manager support increased the amount of daily time parents spent with their children by almost 40 minutes per day (Davis et al 2015).

In light of these previous studies that find that parental work schedules impact work-family conflict and time spent with children, we hypothesize the following:

H1: Attributes of parents' work schedules will be related to time spent with children.

Similarly, because previous research has found that work and work schedule attributes like schedule control, work hours, and nonstandard work hours are related to time spent with children in different ways we expect the following:

H2: Parents' time spent with children will be differentially impacted by our measured attributes of parents' work schedules including day schedule, flexible schedule, variable schedule, working after 6pm, and working from home.

Despite the changes in time spent with children for both mothers and fathers, a gendered difference still remains, regardless of employment status. Working mothers continue to

spend more time with children than fathers (Craig 2006, Raley, Bianchi, & Wang 2012). In addition, there is no difference in fathers' time with children by mothers' work hours (Yeung et al. 2001) though fathers do spend more solo time with children when their wife works more hours (Raley, Bianchi, & Wang 2012). Despite this, the gap between mothers and fathers is shrinking as fathers' time with children has shown a larger increase since the 1960's than mothers' time with children (Sayer et al. 2004). In addition, there is also some evidence of a gendered effect on the relationship between work schedules and time with children. Nock and Kingston (1988) found that the timing of work affects fathers' time with the children more than mothers' time. They showed that men do not adjust their work schedule for children, and, in general, fathers spend less time with their children than mothers, even when both are full-time employees. Finally, flexible work schedules have been shown to have a greater reduction to work-family conflict for mothers compared to fathers (Carlson et al. 2010) and mothers value flexibility more than fathers (Hill et al. 2008). With the documented variations by gender in time with children, work schedules and time with children, and benefits of flexible schedules by gender, we hypothesize:

H3: The relationships between attributes of work schedules and time spent with children will be greater for mothers than for fathers.

The composition of activities and time spent with children has also changed over time. Since the 1960s as parents' time spent with children has increased, parents have also adjusted the proportion of time spent in different activities. Research has shown that time spent teaching and reading increased more than time spent in daily care (Sayer, Bianchi and Robinson 2004). More specifically research has shown that more time spent at work for parents is related to spending less time in physical or recreational care for both mothers and fathers (Chesley and Flood 2016; Raley, Bianchi, & Wang 2012; Roeters, Van Der Lippe and Kluwer 2009) and lower odds of engaging in managerial care for fathers (Raley, Bianchi, & Wang 2012). Though there are few studies that investigate characteristics of work schedules for time spent in different types of activities with children, evening work hours are associated with less time in education related activities, helping with homework, and eating dinner (Wights, Raley and Bianchi 2008) as well as less time spent in routine and interactive care (Craig and Powell 2011) for both mothers and fathers. One study also found that mothers who work evening hours are less likely to read to children but more likely to eat breakfast with them (Wight, Raley and Bianchi 2008). Based on this previous research we hypothesize the following:

H4: Attributes of work schedules are differentially related to the type of activities done with children.

We extend the previous research on the relationship between work and time spent with children by drawing on a nationally representative survey of work schedules and time diary data. This analysis further considers how different work schedule characteristics may be related to time spent with children. Previous research has either focused on self-reported questions asking about the total time spent with children (Hill et al. 2013), has limited measures of work schedules (Wright et al, 2008; Connelly and Kimmel 2011), and/or draws on a survey of a single workplace (Hill et al. 2013; Davis et al. 2015). By using the CPS

Work Schedules (WS) supplement and the ATUS, we are better able to estimate total minutes spent with children as well as the different ways in which time spent with children is related to attributes of *usual* work schedules for employees across occupations and industries. It is not possible to see in the ATUS alone whether the start or stop time of the respondent is variable or flexible, but with the CPS-WS supplement questions we can know exactly that. While we do not know the exact context of each respondent's workplace, we use multiple measures of work schedules to identify those that are related to more time spent with children. By using this unique dataset, we are able to identify attributes of work schedules that promote or discourage time spent with young children, and this can inform institutional or workplace policies aimed at making the workplace more compatible with caring for children.

Data and Methods

Data—This paper uses data from the Current Population Survey (CPS) (Flood et al. 2015) and the American Time Use Survey (ATUS) (Hofferth et al. 2015), both conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The CPS is a nationally representative household survey designed to measure monthly unemployment where households are surveyed for four months in a row, and an additional four months following an eight month break. The ATUS is a nationally representative time diary survey in which the respondent is asked to report what primary activity they were doing, where they were doing the activity, and who they were with for a 24-hour period using a computer assisted telephone interview. Data are collected on all days of the week, and weekends are oversampled. Sample weights correct for the survey design such that aggregating across different days of the week results in a representative picture of average time use among the population. In addition to the time diary, respondents in the ATUS were given a survey with demographic questions and questions on others in the household. The ATUS respondents are over the age of 14 and selected at random from the CPS households two to five months following their exit from the CPS. Thus, some CPS respondents are also ATUS respondents, and we take advantage of this longitudinal structure to analyze the relationship between usual work schedules and time spent with children for parents.

The work schedules information for working parents is obtained from the CPS-Work Schedules (WS) Supplement, which was given in 2004 to CPS respondents in the month of May. Following the CPS basic monthly survey, respondents in the labor force were asked a set of questions about start and stop times for their usual work day. They were also asked specific questions regarding work schedules and work at home. We linked the respondents in the CPS-WS to the respondents in the ATUS data from 2004-2005 using the linking keys provided in the CPS and ATUS, and we retained links that matched on sex, race and age (same age or plus one year) in both surveys. Over 2,000 respondents were matched between the 2004 CPS-WS to the ATUS, and the sample was restricted to those with own children under the age of 13 in the home at the time of the ATUS and to those who worked on the ATUS diary day. We focus on children under the age of 13 because they require more supervision and care than teenagers. Also, the sample was limited to respondents that remained in the same occupation and industry between the surveys to ensure the responses on the work schedules are representative of the job the ATUS respondent currently holds.

Finally, only respondents with answers to the WS supplement questions related to work schedules were included in the sample (.5% of eligible respondents). The final sample includes 237 women and 294 men.

Measures

Our primary independent variable is time spent with children, and we create this measure from the 'with whom' records in the ATUS time diaries. For each activity throughout the day, excluding work, sleep, or personal care, the parent respondent was asked "Who was with you?/Who accompanied you?". We calculated the total daily *time spent with children under age of 13* by summing the minutes during the diary day that the respondent parent reported at least one own child under the age 0-12 was in the home. Likewise, *time spent with children under age 6* is the total amount of time spent on the diary day in non-work, non-sleep, and non-personal care activities when at least one own child between the ages of 0-5 lives in the home. We created this subgroup and stratify our analyses by the age of child because of the children age 0-5 require more attention and care on average than older children.

In addition to creating variables for total time with children, we use the information on the activity being done when the child or children are present to look at what parents do with their children. We organize all activities into seven broad categories of time including leisure, television, meals, primary care, housework, travel, and other. *Leisure* includes playing sports/exercising, socializing with others, reading, playing games, and attending events such as sports, movies, and parties; *television* includes time watching television; *meals* include all time spent eating as the primary activity; *primary care* involves physical care for children, reading to children, playing with children, talking to children, and other child-focused activities; *housework* includes activities such as meal preparation, cooking, cleaning, laundry as well as home repairs, and purchasing goods and services; t*ravel* includes all activity related travel on the diary day; and *other* is a combination of all other possible shared activities on the day.

We also use the survey data from the ATUS to create respondent-level, household-level, and diary day-level control variables that are related to time with children.[1] *Minutes spent working* is the number of minutes the respondent spent in work and work-related activities on the diary day. The amount of time worked in a day is a major factor in the time available to share with others (Flood and Genadek 2016). Time spent working is also an important element of work schedule, and we want to estimate the association of work schedule attributes outside of work time. *Race* is variable indicating if the respondent is white non-Hispanic, black non-Hispanic, other race non-Hispanic, or Hispanic and is included because previous research has shown variation in race of parents and time spent with children (Hofferth 2003; Kalil et al. 2013). *Age* categories for the parent are also included for this reason (Sayer et al. 2004). The *education* variable includes four codes, less than high school degree, high school degree, some college, and college degree(s). Education is included in the models because more educated parents have been found to spend more time with children

[1] We do not include the coefficients for these control variables in our tables, as they have been studied in previous research. However, they are available upon request from the authors

(Ramey and Ramey, 2010; Kalil et al. 2012) and it also captures socioeconomic status. In addition to education, marital status (Kendig and Bianchi 2008) and employment of parents (Nock and Kingston 1988; Sandberg and Hofferth 2001; Fox et al. 2013) impact time spent with children. Thus, we combine employment status of partner and union status to create indicators for being partnered but a single earner, partnered in a dual earner couple, and single parent. There is also a continuous variable for the *number of children* and in the models for time spent with children under age 13 we include an indicator for having children under age 5, as the number of children directly impact the time shared with them (Price 2008) and children under age five require more direct supervision than older children. The *region* variable includes the four major regions of the country and the *season* variable controls for the four seasons of the year. Finally, we include indicators for whether the diary day was on a *weekend* day rather than a weekday.

Our focal independent variables are five usual work schedule characteristic measures created using information from the CPS-WS supplement. *Flexible schedule* indicates that the respondent answered yes to the question, “Do you have flexible work hours that allow you to vary or make changes in the time you begin and end work?” Respondents who answered no are in the comparison group. The second work schedule measure is *work from home*, which indicates if the respondent works from home as a part of their job, and respondents who do not do any work from home make up the comparison group. The third measure is *day schedule*, which is an indicator for the respondent saying they usually work “a regular daytime schedule (Anytime between 6am and 6pm)”. All respondents selecting “some other schedule”, which include evening, night, rotating or split shift, or other, are coded as zero for this measure. The fourth work schedule characteristic is *variable schedule* where the respondent indicated that they did not have usual start or stop times to their work day, rather it was a variable start or variable stop time. Those reporting a usual start and usual stop time are in the comparison group. Finally, we use the question on usual stop time to create an indicator for respondents that finish work after 6:00pm and before midnight, *work after 6pm*. Those with variable stop times and usual stop time prior to 6:00pm are in the comparison group. These measures do not encapsulate all of the possible variations of individuals’ work schedules, but they do represent multiple aspects of a person’s workday and capture various types of workplace flexibility.

Sample characteristics

Table 1 shows the demographic and household characteristics of the sample from the ATUS separately for the mothers and fathers. The number of mothers in the sample is smaller than fathers because women with children are more likely to be out if the labor force than men. Likewise, fathers in this sample of working parents are more likely to have children under the age of 6 than mothers. The race/ethnicity, age, and education composition are similar across gender; however, 70% of mothers and 95% of fathers are married in the sample. This difference is likely a product of the sample section where respondents must be working on the diary day *and* parents who live with their children. The fathers in the sample also spend more time working on the diary day than mothers, on average.

Table 1 also shows the proportion of the sample that has each of the key independent variables created from the CPS-WS data. Around 40% of both working mothers and fathers indicated that they had a flexible schedule, while 23% of women and 27% of men indicate that they work from home. The majority of the sample works a day schedule, and only 14% of women and 20% of men indicate having a variable schedule. Finally, most respondents stop work before 6pm, 15% of women work after 6pm in the evening and 23% of fathers work into the evening.

Analytic Strategy

We first estimate the total time shared with children by work schedule characteristics and in specific activities. Following hypothesis 3, we allow for different relationships between work schedules and time spent with children by gender. Thus, all analyses are stratified by gender. Descriptive analyses are followed by ordinary least squares (OLS) regression estimates of the relationship the work schedule variables and the daily time individuals spend with their children while controlling for individual-level, household-level, and diary day characteristics described in the measures section.[2] Two sets of regressions are run for each independent variable; one for all parents with children under the age of 13 and the second is for the subset of parents with a child under the age of 6. We also use OLS to investigate how the work schedule measures are related to parents' allocation of time with children in the various broad activities. The model used for the activity-level analyses is the same as that used for the total time analyses, and we estimate the amount of time spent with children under age 13 for fathers and mothers in the six primary activities, excluding estimating the time spent in the small *other* category.

Results

Descriptive Results

Table 2 shows the average total time per day, in minutes, women and men spend with their own children by the work schedule indicators. The total minutes spent with children is at the bottom of the table; working women spend more time with their children on workdays than working fathers, 50-60 minutes on average depending on the age of children in the household. Statistically significant differences in time spent with children by the work schedule measures for mothers and fathers are shown by the "*" for a p-value of less than .05 and "+" for a p-value between .05 and .10. Mothers with children under the age of 13 spend more time with their children if they have a flexible schedule ($p<.10$) and if they work from home ($p<.05$). While there are other small differences in average time spent with children by the work schedule measures, having a day schedule, non-variable schedule and stopping work before 6pm are all associated with about 15 more minutes with children, but these differences are not statistically significant. Fathers with variable work start and stop times are found to spend 40 minutes less time per day with their children under 13 than fathers without variable schedules ($p<.10$). No other differences are found by work schedules for men statistically, and even the magnitude of differences are strikingly small.

[2] OLS is employed for these analyses rather than Tobit models because very few respondents report spending zero minutes with their children, and OLS models produce less biased estimates than Tobit models in time use analyses (Stewart 2013).

The results for the subsample of parents with children under age 6 are similar, even though parents spend more time in the presence of very young children on average. For this group, differences for mothers with flexible schedules are not found, but those who work from home spend 40 minutes more with their young children than those who do no work from home ($p<.05$). Mothers who have a day schedule spent about 40 more minutes with children under 6 than mothers who have a non day schedule ($p<.10$) and fathers with a variable schedule spend just under 60 minutes less time with children under 6 compared to fathers that do not work a variable schedule ($p<.10$).

The descriptive results suggest subtle differences in the time spent with children for working parents across some facets of work schedules. Mothers indicating their work schedule is a flexible schedule or has any work from home, the two measures most capturing flexibility, do spend more time with their children. However, the mean differences also show surprising continuity in the amount of time working parents spend with their children across the other work schedules in some instances, especially for men.

OLS Results

To test the hypotheses put forward earlier, and investigate the differences in time spent with children by work schedule characteristics, we estimate the total time spent with children for mothers and fathers using the OLS models described above. The coefficients from the five work schedule variables of interest are shown in Table 3 for mothers and fathers by age of youngest child in the home.[3] The only work schedule measure found to impact mothers' time spent with children is working from home ($p<.05$). Mothers with children under the age of 13 who work from home spend almost 50 minutes more on the diary-day with their children than mothers who do not work from home, controlling for the other work schedule characteristics and the demographic and household characteristics. The difference is larger for women with children under the age of six, where working from home is associated with more than an hour additional time spent with children. Having a flexible schedule is not associated with more time spent with children, nor do we find associations with usually having variable schedules, day schedules, or evening work with total time spent with children on the diary day.

For fathers, few of the work schedule measures impact the time spent with children. Flexible schedules, working from home, having a day schedule, and working after 6pm are not associated with differences in time spent with children while controlling for the individual and household characteristics. However, having a variable schedule is associated with significantly less time with children for men with a child under age 13 and under age 6 ($p<.05$). The differences are about 40 minutes per day for both groups of fathers. This result suggests that having start and stop times of work days that are inconsistent is not helpful for caregiving, and may make spending time with children more difficult when compared to a consistent schedule.

The results support hypothesis 1, in part and hypothesis 2. We expected that work schedules would influence the amount of time spent with children and that there would be variation by

[3] Coefficients from the additional control variables can be obtained from the authors

work schedule attribute. For both mothers and fathers, at least one work schedule characteristic (working from home and variable schedules, respectively) is associated with differences in time spent with children. However, the other schedule characteristics are not found to be associated with the time spent with children. As we hypothesized, the relationship between work schedules and time with children varies by gender. Our results do not suggest that mothers' work schedules have a stronger relationship with time spent with children than fathers', but the results do show that working from home - an attribute of a flexible schedule - for women is *positively* associated with the amount of time spent with children (as we would expect), while none of the work schedule attributes are associated with greater amounts of time with children for men.

The *work from home* measure indicates if the respondent works from home as a part of their job. There are additional questions in the CPS-WS about this work, and supplementary analysis looking at formal working from home compared to bringing work home at the end of the day, hours per week worked at home, and days per week worked exclusively at home did not impact the amount of time mothers spent with children (results available upon request). Additionally, we looked at working from home on the ATUS diary day, both on its own and in addition to usual *work from home* measure. Working from home is associated with 35 more minutes with children for mothers with children under 13 and this is significant at the 10% level. However, when the diary-day indicator is added to the original model, it is no longer statistically significant and the usual *work from home* measure is still found to be associated with 43 more minutes shared with children (results available upon request). Thus, the *work from home* measure is likely capturing a workplace policy and culture that improves aligning the workday or week with children's schedules.

Activity-level analyses

We estimated the relationship between work schedule characteristics and total time parents spent with their children present on the diary day and found few statistically significant differences. Yet, it is possible that these work schedule measures do not impact the total time spent interacting with children, but they impact the timing of the parent's day and the activities that the parent is able to do while with their children. Table 4 shows the mean amount of time parents spend with children in the broad activities including leisure, television, meals, primary care, housework, travel, and other activities. Mothers and fathers spend different amounts of time in activities with their children, on average, yet for both mothers and fathers, the activity with the most shared time is primary childcare, more than an hour for mothers and slightly less than an hour for fathers. Mothers spend 40 minutes in housework with children present while men spend nearly 40 minutes watching television with their children. These estimates provide context for interpreting the coefficients presented in Table 5, which includes the six sets of OLS estimates for mothers in the top panel and fathers in the bottom panel that estimate the relationship between work schedules and time shared with children in specific activities.

In Table 5 we see that, for mothers, a flexible schedule is associated with less time spent in housework with her children ($p<.05$) and more time spent in leisure activities ($p<.10$). Working from home is found to be related to slightly more shared time across all activities

when compared to women that do not work from home, with the most time being spent in leisure ($p<.10$). Working a day schedule is positively associated with travel time with a child ($p<.05$), as is working a job with a variable schedule ($p<.10$). Finally, working after 6pm is associated with less television and almost 30 minutes more time on primary care time for mothers with children under age 13 ($p<.10$). The results from the 6 models show that work schedules are associated with variations in the types of activities performed while with children, after controlling for demographic and household characteristics. The schedule characteristics thought of as flexible (having a flexible schedule and working from home) are associated with more leisure with children, but not more primary care which is the category of activities most often found to be associated with positive outcomes for children (Fiorini & Keane 2014; Hsin & Felfe 2014). However, working after 6pm for women is actually associated with a large positive difference in primary care.

Fathers' work schedules are also found to be associated with variation in activities done with children. Unlike the findings for mothers, a day schedule is associated with less time spent in travel with children for men ($p<.05$). Fathers with a variable schedule spend at least 10 fewer minutes per day on housework with children and 15 minutes less leisure time with their children than those without variable work start or stop times ($p<.10$). Working a flexible schedule or after 6pm for fathers does not seem to influence the amount of time spent in the broad activity groups. Finally, working from home some is actually associated with less time in primary care for fathers, but more time sharing meals and traveling with children (all $p<.05$). While primary care is important for children, some research suggests sharing meals or having dinner together has positive outcomes for children (Meier & Musick 2014), so working from home may increase the availability of fathers to share meals with children.

These findings again support Hypothesis 3, as the relationship between work schedule characteristics and time with children varies for men and women, and Hypothesis 4, as we find that attributes of work schedules do impact the type of time parents spend with their children.

Conclusion

There is a limited literature on work practices and schedules for parents and how they influence the amount and type of time spent with children (Hill et al. 2013; Davis et al. 2015). Yet, this research is critical in our understanding of the costs and benefits associated with institutional and public policies related to work schedules as time with children has positive benefits for children's development (Fiorini & Keane 2014; Hsin & Felfe 2014). This study contributes to this literature by using a unique data set with attributes of working parents' usual work schedules merged with daily diary data, which provides information on the amount of time parents spend with children on a random workday. We find that mothers' and fathers' work schedules are related to total time spent with children in different ways; mothers who work from home some spend more time with their children than mothers that do not, and fathers with variable start and stop times spend less time with their children than those working consistent schedules. These relationships hold while controlling for individual and household-level characteristics, and additional work schedule attributes, which are not

found to have a direct associations with time spent with children. However, the combination of work schedule characteristics does seem to influence the amount of time spent in specific activities with children for parents.

Though these results are from cross sectional data and do not imply causality, together these results demonstrate the value of understanding the relationship between work schedules, and work policies more generally, for families with children. Unlike the indicator for flexible schedule, having variable start and stop times seems suggests a schedule determined by the employer rather than the employee. The working from home measure, and flexible schedule, is likely reflective a of a policy and occupation that allows the worker to control some of their work location and timing. Thus, the lack of schedule control for fathers is associated with less time with children, and more schedule control for mothers is conducive to spending time with children. These combined findings support the recent literature that schedule control improves work-family balance (Kelly and Moen 2007). The results for time spent in specific activities also lend support to this as well, where mothers use schedule control to spend more time with children likely in activities they enjoy more (Connelly and Kimmel 2015) and fathers can then align schedules to spend more time in meals with children.

Despite the unique opportunity to link characteristics of work schedules and time diary data in this analysis, this study has important limitations that should be considered. First, this study draws on older data. The CPS-WS supplement was fielded in 2004 before companies like Yahoo and Best Buy made waves with their announcements regarding flexible workplace policies (Lee 2013, Pepitone 2013) and the technical ability to work from home was still under significant development. However, in light of the continued interest in working from home and workplace flexibility (Counsel of Economic Advisors 2014), understanding the relationship between characteristics of workplace schedules continues to be relevant. Second, this analysis depends on a small sample of respondents that participated in both the CPS-WS supplement and the ATUS. Despite the small sample, we are able to find relationships between work schedules and time spent with children in this nationally representative sample. The ATUS also has only one respondent per household and the respondent must be age 14 or older. Thus, we only have one parent's report of time with children in two-parent families. It would be ideal to have a sample with all household members' time diaries so we could asses work schedules and time with children for both parents in two-parent families, and we could analyze children's time use.

Even with the data limitations, this paper makes a significant contribution to the literature on work schedules and time with children, and work and family more broadly by estimating the associations between work schedule characteristics and the amount of time parents spend with their children. Newly collected data on work schedules in combination with the ATUS data could open the possibilities for more analyses on the relationship between work schedules and caring for children, and we could then assess change over time. With more data, future research could build on these results by including spouses' work schedules for married respondents, by analyzing parents' usual work schedules and the time teenage ATUS respondents spent with their parents, and by differentiating by the sex of children. With a larger data set we could also explore differences by occupation in combination with

wages to understand the relationship between socioeconomic status, job type, work schedules, and time with children.

This study joins others in showing that some aspects of flexible scheduling and remote work can improve work-family balance for employees, specifically by increasing the actual time parents spend with children. Moreover, our study suggests that some aspects of schedules can be a detriment to time spent with children as well. These results can provide insight as companies and institutions create and promote policies related to work schedules designed to support parents, care giving, and work-family balance.

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Table 1.

Summary measures for working women and men with children under age 13

	Mothers	Fathers
Married or Partnered	0.717	0.949
Age	37.48	38.82
Race		
White	0.751	0.776
Black	0.076	0.054
Other	0.046	0.065
Hispanic	0.127	0.105
Education		
Less than high school	0.068	0.092
High school	0.215	0.262
Some college	0.333	0.293
College degree	0.384	0.354
Children		
Number of children	1.903	2.014
Children under age 6	0.684	0.327
Minutes spent working	513	582
Work Flexibility		
Flexible schedule	0.405	0.378
Work from home	0.228	0.265
Day schedule	0.882	0.833
Variable schedule	0.143	0.201
Work after 6pm	0.148	0.228
Observations	237	294

Notes: Authors' calculations from ATUS and CPS-WS surveys. Parents' characteristics are from the ATUS survey, and the work measures are obtained from the CPS-WS supplement.

Table 2.

Minutes spent with children by work schedules

	Children Under Age 13		Children Under Age 6	
	Mothers	**Fathers**	**Mothers**	**Fathers**
Flexible schedule	224.69 +	163.25	254.32	182.66
Nonflexible schedule	207.55	162.72	242.04	190.59
Work from home	256.91 *	161.35	309.39 *	171.65
No work from home	203.42	163.39	227.27	192.32
Day schedule	216.16	160.84	254.40 +	187.77
Nonday schedule	196.82	173.68	212.33	187.05
Variable schedule	201.95	130.67 +	181.73	141.54 +
No variable schedule	216.29	170.04	260.50	199.40
Stop work after 6pm	200.26	158.38	256.66	171.74
Stop work before 6pm	216.29	164.14	245.41	192.39
Average time spent with children	213.99	162.90	247.22	187.63
Observations	237	234	96	162

Note: Authors' calculations from ATUS and CPS-WS. Flexible schedule measures obtained from CPS-WS supplement, minutes spent with children calculated from ATUS. The

*indicates within gender difference by work schedule measure at p<.05,

+indicates within gender difference by work schedule measure at p<.10.

Table 3.

Mean minutes spent with children under age 13 in parent's major activities

	Mothers	Fathers
Leisure	26.81	16.86
Television	28.63	38.47
Meals	19.61	26.08
Primary Care	69.41	48.80
Housework	40.83	16.21
Travel	23.51	13.13
Other	5.20	3.35
Total	214.0	162.9

Note: Author's calculations from ATUS. Includes all ATUS respondent parents in the CPS-WS that work on the diary day.

Table 4.

OLS estimates of the relationship between work schedule characteristics and time spent with children

	Children Under Age 13		Children Under Age 6	
	Mothers	**Fathers**	**Mothers**	**Fathers**
Flexible schedule	−1.357	−4.133	−10.082	−.809
	(19.66)	(15.32)	(26.88)	(20.12)
Work from home	49.752 *	1.171	66.235 *	−2.922
	(21.28)	(15.43)	(28.89)	(23.62)
Variable schedule	17.462	−39.891 *	−38.352	−46.133 *
	(29.53)	(17.22)	(41.52)	(23.20)
Day schedule	37.697	−25.558	14.417	0.776
	(30.90)	(20.46)	(40.95)	(24.34)
Work after 6pm	−7.918	−12.910	−8.550	−19.709
	(21.41)	(14.10)	(36.85)	(18.32)
R-squared	0.2951	0.3456	0.5018	0.4496
Observations	237	294	96	162

Note: Regressions include the following additional variables: work time on diary day, single parent, partnered parent with one income, race and ethnicity, education, age, number of kids, child under age 5, weekend, region, and season. Robust standard errors are in the parenthesis.

+ p<.10;

* p<.05;

** p<.01;

*** p<.001

Table 5.

OLS estimates of the relationship between work schedule characteristics and time spent with children under age 13 by activity

	Mothers					
	Leisure	Television	Meals	Primary Care	Housework	Travel
Flexible schedule	16.454 +	−1.809	−0.217	1.550	−15.203 *	−1.754
	(9.69)	(8.60)	(3.28)	(10.16)	(7.71)	(5.16)
Work from home	16.151 +	8.423	5.586	13.681	1.690	3.118
	(9.46)	(10.68)	(4.32)	(13.93)	(10.48)	(6.52)
Day schedule	5.075	3.249	−3.581	−9.626	5.464	14.333 **
	(14.02)	(14.34)	(4.10)	(12.79)	(13.78)	(7.72)
Variable schedule	−2.226	0.177	−9.115	9.376	22.469 +	18.337 +
	(13.15)	(13.44)	(5.54)	(17.20)	(13.41)	(6.73)
Work after 6pm	−7.391	−16.345 +	−5.960	27.290 +	−11.494	1.900
	(9.43)	(9.47)	(4.17)	(14.55)	(8.20)	(5.33)
R-squared	0.1673	0.0917	0.2337	0.2490	0.2252	0.1879
Observations	237	237	237	237	237	237
	Fathers					
	Leisure	Television	Meals	Primary Care	Housework	Travel
Flexible schedule	1.609	−10.701	−1.990	14.102	−0.900	−5.560 +
	(5.56)	(10.49)	(3.60)	(10.60)	(4.95)	(3.27)
Work from home	2.897	−4.644	12.133 **	−22.963 *	4.981	8.490 *
	(6.15)	(8.31)	(4.45)	(10.38)	(6.46)	(4.24)
Day schedule	−11.733	−5.007	1.780	−4.892	−11.435	−7.095 *
	(6.25)	(10.43)	(4.57)	(11.46)	(5.21)	(3.68)
Variable schedule	−15.849 +	17.995	−0.781	−0.946	−12.146 *	−10.045
	(10.60)	(12.15)	(5.39)	(14.65)	(7.54)	(4.87)
Work after 6pm	−7.479	−3.409	4.196	−3.192	−3.354	−1.153
	(5.93)	(8.89)	(4.51)	(11.14)	(4.90)	(3.52)
R-squared	0.1532	0.1706	0.1416	0.2614	0.1243	0.2350
Observations	294	294	294	294	294	294

Note: Regressions include the following additional variables: work time on diary day, single parent, partnered parent with one income, race and ethnicity, education, age, number of kids, child under age 5, weekend, region, and season. Robust standard errors are in the parenthesis.

+ p<.10;

* p<.05;

** p<.01;

*** p<.001