

# Long-Term Care and Family Caregiving

Binderiya Byambasuren\*

July 3, 2023

[Click here for the latest version](#)

## Abstract

Adult children make up half of the family caregivers of elderly individuals in the United States. Due to prolonged long-term care needs, family care can significantly impact adult children's labor supply and earnings trajectory. This paper provides empirical evidence that daughters bear the brunt of family care compared to sons due to lower opportunity costs and the role of gender norms. Motivated by this empirical evidence, I structurally estimate a model of strategic interaction between a daughter and a son who differ in wages and preferences for family care. I find that heterogeneity in preferences, reflecting the importance attached to family care responsibilities, explains most of the gender gap in family care. I estimate that daughters face a 4.6% drop in lifetime earnings due to family care compared to a 1.5% drop for sons.

---

\*Department of Economics, American University. [bb3174@american.edu](mailto:bb3174@american.edu). I am grateful to my advisors, Ignacio Gonzalez, Amos Golan, and Maria Floro, for their guidance and support. I also thank the participants at the 2022 Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management, the 2022 International Association for Feminist Economics, and the Program on Gender Analysis in Economics summer workshops at American University for their helpful comments and feedback. I am grateful for the support from the Barbara Bergmann Fund at American University and the Center for Financial Security at University of Wisconsin-Madison.

# 1 Introduction

A rapidly aging population and higher life expectancy put many elderly individuals in need of long-term care (LTC) assistance in the United States<sup>1</sup>. A large share of LTC is provided by the families of elderly individuals, particularly adult children. Due to high time intensity and persistence in duration, caring for an elderly parent can have long-run effects on the employment and earnings of adult children. Empirical evidence shows that daughters provide the bulk of family care to elderly individuals, implying that the rising demand for LTC also has significant consequences for gender gap in employment and earnings. Despite its importance, the long-run effects of family care on gender gap in employment and earnings have received little attention. My paper fills this gap by examining the interaction between family care decisions and the labor market outcomes of daughters and sons in response to parent's LTC needs over the life cycle.

My paper has three main parts. First, I use the pooled 1998-2014 Health and Retirement Study (HRS) to provide the following empirical patterns. Focusing on single elderly individuals with multiple adult children, I document that caring for an elderly parent is a family decision involving sibling interactions<sup>2</sup>. Among adult children, daughters who work less and earn less provide most family care to elderly parents. Furthermore, I employ an event study methodology to estimate the dynamic effects of parent's LTC needs on the family care propensity and family care hours of daughters and sons. After controlling for individual and time fixed effects, I find that sons are significantly less likely to provide family care when they have a sister while having a brother does not change daughters' family care outcomes. The findings suggest evidence regarding the role of gender norms in shaping the family care decisions of daughters and sons. My results are consistent with the growing literature on the role of gender norms in explaining the observed gender gap in time spent on care work and household production<sup>3</sup>.

Second, motivated by these empirical patterns, I build a Cournot-Nash equilibrium model capturing strategic interactions between a daughter and a son in making family care decisions. When a parent needs LTC, adult children enter a Cournot-Nash game of deciding how many family care hours to provide for parental well-being, which represents a family public good. In addition to providing family care, adult children simultaneously choose how much to work

---

<sup>1</sup>LTC is defined as assistance in performing basic everyday activities such as eating, bathing, walking, etc.

<sup>2</sup>I focus on single elderly individuals since adult children are their primary caregivers (Barczyk and Kredler 2019).

<sup>3</sup>The seminal work of Akerlof and Kranton (2000) propose a theoretical framework on how one's identity and views on appropriate behavior based on social and cultural norms shape economic outcomes. Cortés and Pan (2020) review empirical evidence on the role of gender norms in the household division of care work and home production.

and consume. Two main channels shape how daughters and sons decide their family care contribution. First, they face different opportunity costs in terms of wages to provide family care. Second, they are heterogeneous in preferences for family care, which are considered endogenous to social and gender norms. The presence of parental well-being as a public good creates an interdependency between adult children. They decide their consumption, employment, and family care not only based on their own wages and preferences but also on those of their siblings. The structural model allows me to disentangle and quantify the differential effects of these two channels on family care and labor market outcomes of daughters and sons.

I estimate the model using the pooled 1998-2014 Health and Retirement Study (HRS). I employ simulated method of moments to estimate the model in two stages. In the first stage, I focus on the sample period when parents are healthy and adult children do not have to provide care. This allows me to pin down the structural parameters that capture the differences in the labor market behavior of daughters and sons before parent's LTC needs. In the second stage, I focus on the sample period when elderly parents need LTC due to health decline. Conditional on the first-stage parameters, I estimate the second set of structural parameters capturing the family care decisions of daughters and sons. The model replicates important features of labor supply and the distribution of family care hours between daughters and sons.

Third, I quantify the employment and earnings trajectories of daughters and sons using a life cycle simulation of parent's LTC needs and adult children's wage processes. I use a first-order Markov model to estimate the transition probabilities of parent's LTC needs and a random walk process to approximate the wage profiles of daughters and sons. I focus on a 20-year period when the elderly parent is aged between 65 and 85, which roughly corresponds to the age range of adult children from 40s to mid-60s. This covers adult children's high-earning years leading up to retirement, making it ideal for examining the effects of parent's LTC needs on the earnings trajectory of adult children. Using the structural estimates, I quantify the life cycle profiles of family care, employment and earnings of daughters and sons according to the simulated LTC needs and wage processes. The model fits the main features of the life cycle trajectories of family care, employment and earnings of daughters and sons.

I find that wage differences explain a significantly smaller part of the gender gap in family care than differences in preferences for family care between daughters and sons. When daughters and sons are heterogeneous in only wages, only 8% of the gender gap in family care hours is explained by the model compared to the 98% explained by the model when heterogeneity in both preferences and wages are considered. By running a counterfactual scenario of lifetime earnings in the absence of parent's LTC needs, I find earnings drop by

4.6% on average for daughters compared to 1.5% for sons over the life cycle. If daughters and sons are homogeneous in preferences for the public good but still face different wages, the foregone earnings would lower to 1.3% for daughters and 0.8% for sons.

My paper contributes to three main strands of literature. First, I contribute to a growing literature examining the role of adult children in long-term care decisions for the elderly. Several studies have focused on the strategic interaction between an elderly parent and an adult child to capture the role of family care in meeting the LTC needs of the elderly parent (Barczyk and Kredler 2018; Ko 2021; Mommaerts 2021; Skira 2015; Fahle 2020). However, focusing on family care from one adult child does not capture the strategic interactions among multiple children regarding who gets to be their aging parent’s caregiver. Engers and Stern (2002), Byrne et al. (2009) and M. Brown (2006) consider the role of multiple adult children in providing care to an elderly parent using a non-cooperative Cournot-Nash model. Engers and Stern (2002) allows for financial transfers between adult children so that they can elicit each other to become the primary caregiver to their parents instead of providing care themselves. Byrne et al. (2009) incorporates formal home care and the simultaneous decision to provide care and work. M. Brown (2006) examines the bequest motive of adult children in providing family care to their aging parents. My paper contributes to their theoretical framework by focusing on the effects of heterogeneity in wages and preferences for family care between daughters and sons.

Second, my paper also contributes to the extensive literature on family caregiving and labor market outcomes. At the extensive margin, most studies find a negative relationship between labor force participation and family care (Bolin, Lindgren, and Lundborg 2008; Crespo 2008; Heitmueller 2007; Lilly, Laporte, and Coyte 2007). Based on cross-sectional evidence in the United States, family care has a negligible effect on labor supply at the intensive margin (Bolin, Lindgren, and Lundborg 2008; Lilly, Laporte, and Coyte 2007). However, using the panel HRS data, Van Houtven, Coe, and Skira (2013) finds modest decreases in market hours for female caregivers but little effect for male caregivers. Based on the counterfactual scenario without parent’s LTC needs, I find a modest drop in employment rate and market hours of adult children. The reduction in market hours at the intensive margin is stronger for daughters than sons, which is consistent with the findings of Van Houtven, Coe, and Skira (2013). For female caregivers in the United States, Van Houtven, Coe, and Skira (2013) finds a 3% decrease in current wages but a negligible effect for male caregivers. Using a dynamic, structural model between a parent and a daughter, Skira (2015) finds a median value of \$51,780 in lifetime foregone earnings. Using the structural estimates and life cycle simulation, I find comparable results to Van Houtven, Coe, and Skira (2013) and Skira (2015) in terms of current and lifetime foregone earnings due to family care.

Lastly, I contribute to the literature investigating the role of gender norms in explaining the gender gap in care activities and household production. With the exceptions of Grigoryeva (2017) and Barigozzi, Cremer, and Roeder (2017), the literature extensively focuses on the interaction between married spouses in deciding the division of childcare and household production (e.g., Cortés and Pan 2020; Ichino et al. 2019; Lundberg and Pollak 2008). Using cross-sectional evidence, Grigoryeva (2017) finds that the gender composition of siblings has differential effects on the family care behaviors of daughters and sons. Based on longitudinal data and event-study estimation, my findings support the results of Grigoryeva (2017): having a sister lowers care propensity and care hours of sons, while having a brother does not have a significant effect on a daughter’s family caregiving. Barigozzi, Cremer, and Roeder (2017) incorporates the role of gender identity norms in an intergenerational bargaining model between a parent and multiple adult children. In their model, daughters and sons provide family care to their aging parents out of ‘guilt’, which is reflected in different disutility costs for daughters and sons if they do not provide care. Rather than a disutility, I consider parental well-being as a family public good to which adult children have altruistic motives to contribute. Moreover, by using a non-cooperative framework, I relax the assumption of income pooling between adult children under cooperative models.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 provides empirical evidence on the multiple children interactions in family care decision-making and the role of gender identity norms in explaining the gender gap in family care. Section 3 describes the model. The model estimation strategy is discussed in Section 4, and results and model fit are presented in Section 5. Section 6 presents results from counterfactuals. Section 7 concludes.

## 2 Empirical Evidence

This section provides three main empirical facts regarding family caregiving of adult children. First, providing care to an elderly parent requires a family decision-making process involving sibling interactions. Second, daughters who work less and earn less provide most family care hours to elderly parents. Third, the role of gender norms may explain the persistent gender gap in family care among daughters and sons.

### 2.1 Data

I use the pooled Health and Retirement Study (HRS) between 1998 and 2014. The HRS follows nationally representative individuals over 50 years old since 1992. The survey provides a rich set of information about elderly individuals regarding their health, income, asset, formal

care use and family care receipt. In addition, the HRS collects information on adult children of elderly individuals regarding demographic characteristics, employment, and income, as well as whether and how much a child provides family care to their elderly parent.

Within the context of the paper and the HRS data, the following definitions regarding LTC needs and family care are used. First, LTC needs are defined as assistance performing Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) or Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs). In the HRS, the set of ADLs includes six activities: bathing, dressing, eating, getting out of bed, walking across the room, and using the toilet. The set of IADLs consists of five activities: grocery shopping, making meals, managing money, using a phone, and taking medication. This paper defines family care as unpaid LTC assistance provided by adult children of elderly individuals.

The sample construction is as follows. First, I restrict the sample to 65+ single elderly individuals who were consecutively interviewed between 1998 and their death or the last interview wave in 2014. Since I focus on adult children interactions, I restrict the sample to individuals with at least two children aged 21 and above. Lastly, I focus on elderly parents who experience LTC needs and receive family care from at least one adult child between 1998 and 2014<sup>4</sup>. I focus on single elderly individuals and their adult children for two main reasons. First, single elderly individuals rely mainly on adult children for family care compared to married elderly individuals who rely more on spousal caregiving (Barczyk and Kredler 2019). Second, adult children are often still in the labor force when their parents experience LTC needs. Thus, focusing on adult children is ideal for studying the interaction between family care decisions and employment.

Table 1 disaggregates the HRS sample by the number of adult children and what percentage relied on family care from an adult child during 1998-2014. Overall, 83% of the sample has two or more children, and above 81% relied on family care from at least one adult child.

Table 1: Number of Adult Children and Family Care

	Number of children					Total
	1	2	3	4	5+	
% of sample	17.1	26.8	19.9	13.6	22.6	100
% of sample receive family care	70.1	79.6	79.3	89.4	86.5	81.0

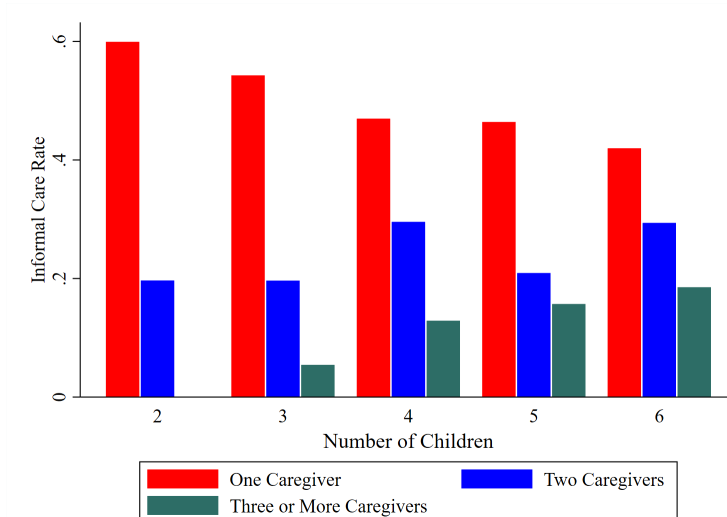
*Notes:* The sample includes 65+ single who experienced at least one limitation with ADL or IADL at some point in the pooled 1998-2014 Health and Retirement Study. The first row reports the share of individuals by the number of adult children. The second row shows the percentage that received family care from at least one adult child over the sample period, split by the number of children.

<sup>4</sup>See Appendix A for the sample details.

## 2.2 Family Care and Adult Children

Figure 1 presents the share of elderly individuals in terms of how many caregiver children they had during the 1998-2014 sample period. Getting help from only one child is the most common arrangement for families. However, the share of elderly parents with multiple caregivers becomes more common for those with more children. Receiving family care from two or more children roughly makes up 50% of families with six or more children. The patterns of multiple caregiving arrangements suggest that caring for an elderly parent is a family decision involving sibling interactions<sup>5</sup>.

Figure 1: Number of Adult Children Caregivers



*Notes:* The sample includes 65+ single individuals with two or more adult children who receive family care from at least one child in the pooled 1998-2014 Health and Retirement Study. The table records the share of individuals who receive care from one child (red bars), two children (blue bars), or three or more children (green bars) over the sample period, disaggregated by the number of children. The number of children equals six when an individual has six or more children.

Table 2 reports the family care patterns of adult children based on whether they provide care alone (“One Caregiver”) or together with their siblings (“Multiple Caregivers”) during the 1998-2014 sample period. Adult children who are the sole caregivers to their elderly parents provide an average of 24.2 weekly family care hours. For 29% of the time over the sample period, they give more than 20 weekly family care hours. Adult children who share caregiving responsibilities with their siblings provide an average of 18.2 weekly hours of family care with a median of 6 hours, which is notably lower than the care hours of those who provide care alone. Among adult children who share caregiving with their siblings, I define a primary caregiver as the child that provides the most total hours of family care to their

<sup>5</sup>See Appendix B for more descriptives on the types of care arrangements observed between adult children.

elderly parent over the sample period, compared to their other caregiver siblings. The mean family care hours of primary caregivers among the multiple caregivers is 26.1 weekly family care hours with a median of 7.75 hours. The family care patterns of the primary caregivers among multiple caregivers resemble those of caregivers who provide care alone. Even though multiple caregiver arrangements are typical for families, the bulk of family care is still done by one adult child, the primary caregiver. In fact, the primary caregivers provide 73% of the total family care hours in families with multiple caregivers<sup>6</sup>.

Table 2: Caregiving Patterns

	One caregiver	Multiple Caregivers
Family care hours (mean/median)	24.2/7.5	18.2/6
Family care hours   primary caregiver		26.1/7.75
Provides $\geq 20$ hrs/wk	0.29	0.23
Provides $\geq 20$ hrs/wk   primary caregiver		0.33
% of hours by primary caregiver	100.0	0.73

*Notes:* The sample includes all adult children of 65+ single individuals who have two or more adult children and receive family care from at least one child in the pooled 1998-2014 Health and Retirement Study. 'One Caregiver' refers to families with only one adult child providing family care, and 'Multiple Caregivers' refers to families with more than one adult child providing family care during the sample period. 'Primary caregiver' is a child that provides the most total hours of family care to their elderly parent, compared to their other caregiver siblings, if any, over the sample period.

This section provides empirical evidence that providing family care to elderly parents is a family decision involving sibling interactions. Multiple adult children step up to care for their aging parents with LTC needs. However, most family care is done by one adult child among multiple children.

## 2.3 Gender Gap in Family Caregiving

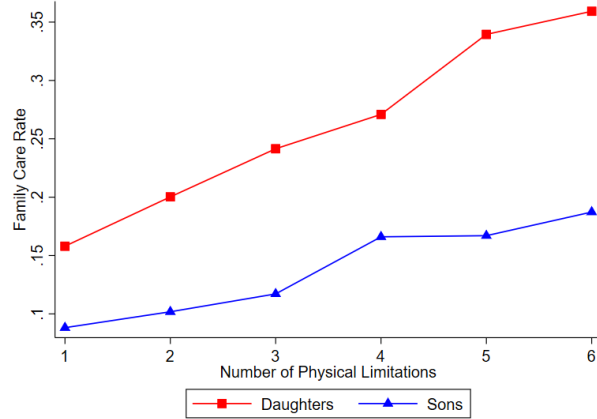
Figure 2 presents the shares of daughters and sons providing family care according to the number of ADLs the elderly parent needs assistance. The set of ADLs includes six activities: bathing, dressing, eating, getting out of bed, walking and toileting. When the parent needs help with more ADLs, the share of daughters providing care increases significantly compared to the share of sons. When a parent needs help with all six activities, roughly 35% of daughters care for their elderly parent, while 18% of sons provide care. At the intensive margin, the average weekly hours of family care for these daughters is 35 hours per week, whereas the average weekly hours for the sons are 15 hours<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>6</sup>This finding is consistent with the trend that 'lone' caregivers are the most common arrangement for family care (Wolff and Kasper 2006).

<sup>7</sup>Author's calculation using the HRS data.



Figure 2: Family Care Rate by Gender of Adult Children



*Notes:* The sample includes all adult children of 65+ single individuals in the pooled 1998-2014 Health and Retirement Study. The figure reports the share of daughters (red line) and sons (blue line) who provide family care to their elderly parent, disaggregated by the number of ADLs the elderly parent needs assistance. The set of ADLs: bathing, dressing, eating, getting out of bed, walking and toileting.

**Table 3** presents the characteristics of adult children based on whether and how many hours of family care they provide to their elderly parent. Daughters make up 70% of the children who provide more than 20 weekly family care hours. Most adult children who provide less than 20 weekly care hours are still daughters at 59%. Adult children, who provide less than 20 weekly family care hours, are similar in employment status and earnings to adult children who do not provide care. On the other hand, adult children who provide more than 20 weekly care hours are less likely to work and earn higher income compared to the other two groups of adult children. This shows that daughters increasingly take on the caregiving role as parent's LTC needs worsen. These daughters are less attached to the labor market and earn less than adult children who provide no or fewer family care hours<sup>8</sup>.

## 2.4 Heterogeneity in Preferences and the Role of Gender Identity Norms

This section documents the heterogeneity in preferences for family care among adult children, particularly daughters and sons. While different opportunity costs may explain the gap in family care between daughters and sons, they may only capture part of the story. Heterogeneity in preferences may influence how daughters and sons perceive family care responsibilities. Using point-blank survey questions, Cox and Soldo (2013) finds evidence that the caregiver's perception of feeling responsible for a family member or family norms of obligations and

<sup>8</sup>See Appendix C for an extended table.

Table 3: Labor Market Characteristics of Adult Children by Caregiving Patterns

	Provide Care		Not Provide Care
	$\geq 20$ hrs/wk	$< 20$ hrs/wk	
Age	53.5	53.5	53.6
Female	0.70	0.59	0.44
Full-time employment	0.48	0.63	0.62
Part-time employment	0.10	0.09	0.07
Non-employment	0.42	0.27	0.31
Earnings $\geq$ \$35,000	0.37	0.64	0.60
Earnings $\geq$ \$70,000	0.05	0.12	0.12
Family care (hrs/wk)	45/28	5/3	-
Observations	3,271	7,176	14,526

*Notes:* The sample includes all adult children of 65+ single individuals who have two or more adult children and receive family care from at least one child in the pooled 1998-2014 Health and Retirement Study. The table reports the characteristics of children based on whether and how many hours they provide care to their parents. 'Not-employment' includes adult children unemployed or out of the labor force. For family care hours, the mean/median hours are reported.

traditions play a role in their family care decisions for the elderly. I focus on one aspect of norms of obligations and traditions: the role of gender identity norms in shaping preferences for family care among daughters and sons<sup>9</sup>. Akerlof and Kranton (2000) define identity as one's sense of belonging to a social group (those of "man" vs. "woman") along with a view on how one should behave according to the norms and expectations of the social group. In the context of family care decisions, adult children may identify with the norm that taking care of an elderly parent is the daughter's responsibility rather than the son's. This notion of gender norm, such that daughters are responsible for caretaking or that daughters internalize the norm, is empirically supported. For example, Healy and Malhotra (2013) find that having sisters result in young men having more conservative attitudes regarding gender roles, whereas Brenøe (2022) suggests evidence that having a brother relative to a sister increases women's traditional gender role attitudes as measured through occupational and partner choices<sup>10</sup>.

To illustrate the potential role of gender norms in family care decisions, I examine how daughters and sons behave in sibling groups with different gender compositions. Specifically, I categorize sibling groups into three groups: 1) those consisting of at least one sister and at least one brother in mixed-gender sibling groups, and those consisting of 2) only sisters, and 3) only brothers in single-gender sibling groups. Examining the family care behaviors of

<sup>9</sup>I use gender norms and gender identity norms interchangeably throughout this paper.

<sup>10</sup>See Cortés and Pan (2020) for more evidence on what drives gender norms in the context of marriage, occupational choice, and the division of household labor.

daughters and sons across these sibling groups allows us to explore the role of gender identity norms. In the presence of gender norms, we expect to observe that sons provide less family care in the mixed-gender sibling groups than sons in the single-gender groups. On the other hand, having a brother should not significantly affect the daughter’s family caregiving.

## Event Study Methodology

This section estimates the effects of parent’s LTC needs on family care propensity and family care hours of daughters and sons separately. To explore the role of gender identity norms across mixed-gender and single-gender sibling groups, I also examine the marginal effects of having a sibling of the opposite gender on the family care outcomes of daughters and sons. I use a two-way fixed effects model with an event-study specification to estimate these effects. de Chaisemartin and D’Haultfœuille (2022) discusses the bias of two-way fixed effects estimation when treatment effects are heterogeneous over time. Since parent’s LTC needs are likely to worsen over time, I employ an event-study specification and estimate the time-varying effects of parent’s LTC needs on family care of adult children. Specifically, I estimate the following fixed effects event-study regression for sons and daughters:

$$Y_{ist} = \alpha_i + \beta D_{ist}^{Event} + \gamma Z_i \times D_{ist}^{Event} + \mu D_{ist}^{Age} + \theta X_{ist} + \lambda_t + \nu_{ist} \quad (1)$$

where  $Y_{ist}$  denotes the outcome variables of son or daughter  $i$  in year  $s$  and at event time  $t$  where the outcome variables are: 1) whether child  $i$  provides care to their parent and 2) how many weekly family care hours child  $i$  provides in year  $s$  and at event time  $t$ . An event time  $t$  is indexed to the year that an elderly parent experiences LTC needs, which are defined as needing assistance with ADL or IADL such as eating, dressing, or bathing<sup>11</sup>. Given the biannual nature of the HRS,  $t = \{-2, 0, 2, 4, 6\}$  where  $t = 0$  is the year the parent experiences LTC needs.  $D_{ist}^{Event}$  includes event time dummies with the base as two years before the event ( $t = -2$ ). In this way, the event time coefficients  $\beta$  capture the dynamic responses of care propensity and care hours to parent’s LTC needs over six years at  $t = \{0, 2, 4, 6\}$ , in relation to the year their parent was healthy at  $t = -2$ . Since I am interested in how sons and daughters behave in family care based on their sibling gender composition, I include an interaction term between the event time dummies  $D_{ist}^{Event}$  and a sibling group indicator  $Z_i$ , which equals 1 if the son or daughter  $i$  is in a mixed-gender sibling group. The interaction term coefficients  $\gamma$  capture the marginal effects of having a sibling of the opposite gender on outcome variables to those in a single-gender sibling group captured by  $\beta$ . Next, I include age dummies  $D_{ist}^{Age}$  to control for life cycle effects and time-fixed effects  $\lambda_t$  to account for business

---

<sup>11</sup>See Section 2.1 for a detailed description of activities under ADL and IADL.

cycles and other time trends in macroeconomic conditions. Conditional on age and year, this identifies variation in event time driven by variation in age at which the adult child faces LTC assistance from their elderly parent<sup>12</sup>. I also control for child and parent characteristics  $X_{ist}$  such as child’s marital status, number of own children, home ownership and parent’s region, total income, non-housing wealth, and subjective health status. I include individual fixed effects to control for time-invariant unobserved heterogeneity in family care decisions.

## Results

Before presenting the estimation results, I report the differences in earnings and labor market outcomes of daughters and sons before the parent experiences LTC needs. Since high wages and stronger labor market attachment can play a role in the family care decisions of adult children, it is important that these channels do not drive the differences in family care of daughters and sons across sibling groups. Table 4 presents the baseline differences in labor market outcomes for daughters and sons based on the sibling gender composition. As shown in Panel (a), there are no statistically significant baseline differences in employment status and earnings for sons in mixed-gender versus single-gender sibling groups. Daughters in mixed-gender sibling groups are more likely to be employed and employed full-time than single-gender sibling groups.

Regarding earnings, there are no statistically significant differences between the daughters across the two sibling groups. Low labor market attachment before parent’s LTC needs is expected to affect family caregiving in the future negatively. For example, Truskinovsky (2021) empirically shows that children experiencing unemployment spells before their parent experiences LTC needs are more likely to provide care when the parent experiences LTC needs. Since daughters in mixed-gender sibling groups are more attached to the labor market, they should have a lower incentive to provide care than their counterparts in single-gender sibling groups do.

I report the fixed effect estimates of family care propensity of daughters and sons in response to parent’s LTC needs in Table 5. Column (1) refers to the sample of daughters, and Column (2) refers to the sample of sons. The upper panel of Table 5 refers to the event-time coefficients describing how daughters and sons in single-gender sibling groups respond to parent’s LTC needs over time. In the year parent experiences LTC needs, daughters and sons in single-gender sibling groups are 26% and 31% more likely to provide family care to their parents. The effects persist for at least six years, suggesting that the parent’s health declines after the first year of experiencing LTC needs as they rely on their adult children for family

---

<sup>12</sup>See Kleven, Landais, and Sogaard (2019) and Kleven, Landais, and Sogaard (2020) for a similar identification using the arrival of the first child in the context of labor supply decisions of married couples.

Table 4: Earnings and Employment

	(1) Mixed-gender	(2) Single-gender	(3) Diff
<i>Panel A. Sons</i>			
Non-employment	.19	.20	-0.01
Part-time employment	.06	.05	.009
Full-time employment	.75	.75	.00
Earnings $\geq$ \$35,000	.56	.58	-.02
Earnings $\geq$ \$70,00	.11	.10	.01
<i>Panel A. Daughters</i>			
Non-employment	.26	.29	-.03**
Part-time employment	.11	.10	.01
Full-time employment	.64	.61	.03*
Earnings $\geq$ \$35,000	.54	.56	-.02
Earnings $\geq$ \$70,00	.08	.07	.01

*Notes:* The table reports the employment and earnings of adult sons and daughters before the parent needs LTC assistance. Column (1) refers to adult children with sibling(s) of the opposite gender in mixed-gender sibling groups. Column (2) refers to adult children without sibling(s) of the opposite gender in single-gender sibling groups. Finally, Column (3) reports the differences in employment and earnings between daughters and sons across two sibling groups. 'Non-employment' refers to adult children that are unemployed or out of the labor force. \*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$

care. Sons in single-gender sibling groups are more or equally likely to provide family care than daughters in single-gender groups across all periods.

The lower panel of [Table 5](#) reports the marginal effects of having a sibling of the opposite gender on the care propensity of daughters and sons. For daughters, having a brother does not significantly change their care propensity in response to parent's LTC needs. On the other hand, having a sister lowers the care propensity of sons. In the year that parent experiences LTC needs, sons with a sister(s) are 19% less likely to provide family care to their parent in need of LTC than sons without a sister. These effects persist for at least six years after the parent experiences LTC needs.

[Table 6](#) reports the fixed effect estimates of weekly family care hours in response to parent's LTC needs. Again, we see similar patterns between daughters and sons across sibling groups. Having a sibling of the opposite gender does not significantly affect the daughter's family care hours. However, sons significantly lower their family care hours when they have a sister(s). [Figure 3](#) compares the marginal effects of having a sibling of the opposite gender on family care of daughters and sons, along with their 95% confidence intervals. After controlling for individual and time-fixed effects along with family and individual characteristics, the marginal effects of having a sibling of the opposite gender on family care propensity are

Table 5: Fixed Effect Estimates of Care Propensity by Sibling Gender Composition

	Daughters (1)	Sons (2)
Single-Gender ×		
At event	0.26*** (0.026)	0.31*** (0.033)
Two years after	0.19*** (0.028)	0.24*** (0.034)
Four years after	0.24*** (0.017)	0.23*** (0.038)
Six years after	0.18*** (0.036)	0.22*** (0.039)
Mixed-Gender ×		
At event	-0.019 (0.028)	-0.19*** (0.034)
Two years after	-0.005 (0.029)	-0.16*** (0.035)
Four years after	-0.040 (0.032)	-0.17*** (0.037)
Six years after	0.022 (0.030)	-0.18*** (0.035)
Controls	yes	yes
Fixed effects	yes	yes
N	13,332	12,580

*Notes:* The table reports the two-way fixed effects estimates of the event-study specification in [Equation \(1\)](#). The dependent variable equals 1 if an adult child provides family care to their elderly parent. 'At event' refers to the year parent needs assistance with activities or instrumental activities of daily living. All estimates on the event dummies are in reference to two years before the event ( $t = -2$ ). Single-Gender refers to siblings that only consist of sisters or brothers. Mixed-Gender refers to siblings with at least one sister and one brother. Controls include the adult child's marital status, number of own children, home ownership and parent's region, total income, non-housing wealth, and subjective health status. Robust standard errors are clustered at the family level and are in parentheses. \*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$

statistically significantly different between daughters and sons, as shown in Panel (a). The exception is the event-time coefficient four years after parent's LTC needs. However, the marginal effects are still statistically significant when averaged over the post-event periods. On the other hand, Panel (b) shows that the marginal effects of having a sibling of the opposite gender on family care hours are not statistically different between daughters and sons. Among daughters and sons who provide family care, sons provide less care to their parents when they have a sister. Still, this effect is not drastically different from the effects of having a brother on the care hours of daughters. Thus, having a sibling of the opposite gender appears to explain the family care responses of daughters and sons at the extensive margin (care propensity) rather than at the intensive margin (weekly family care hours).

To sum up, daughters and sons in single-gender sibling groups are equally likely to provide family care to their parents with LTC needs. But interestingly, sons in single-gender sibling groups have higher care propensity and provide more family care hours than daughters in single-gender sibling groups after accounting for observed and unobserved heterogeneity. Furthermore, the stark differences in family care propensity for sons in single-gender versus mixed-gender sibling groups suggest the potential role of gender norms present in mixed-gender sibling groups. This is especially important given that daughters and sons in mixed-gender groups do not have strong differences in opportunity costs or labor market attachment from their counterparts in single-gender sibling groups.

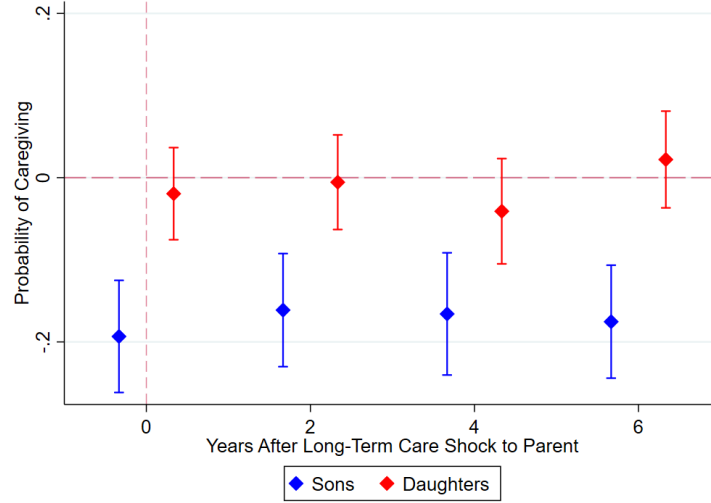
Table 6: Fixed Effect Estimates of Weekly Care Hours by Gender Composition of Siblings

	Daughters (1)	Sons (2)
Single-Gender ×		
At event	3.17** (1.51)	4.41*** (1.29)
Two years after	4.73*** (1.62)	4.95*** (1.52)
Four years after	3.65** (1.58)	3.82*** (1.38)
Six years after	2.32 (1.79)	5.06*** (1.57)
Mixed-Gender ×		
At event	1.08 (1.59)	-2.83** (1.32)
Two years after	-0.69 (1.72)	-3.87** (1.52)
Four years after	0.49 (1.59)	-2.97** (1.37)
Six years after	2.37 (1.56)	-4.56*** (1.52)
Controls	yes	yes
Fixed effects	yes	yes
N	13,332	12,580

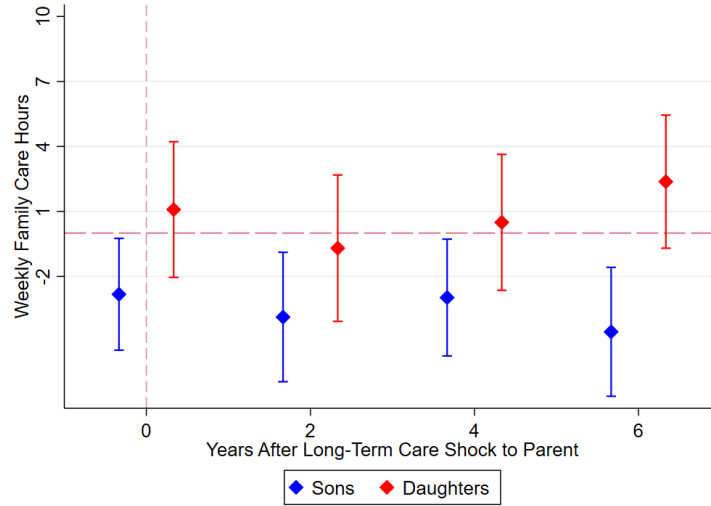
*Notes:* The table reports the two-way fixed effects estimates of the event-study specification in [Equation \(1\)](#). The dependent variable is the weekly family hours an adult child provides to their elderly parent. 'At event' refers to the year parent needs assistance with activities or instrumental activities of daily living. All estimates on the event dummies are in reference to two years before the event ( $t = -2$ ). Single-Gender refers to siblings that only consist of sisters or brothers. Mixed-Gender refers to siblings with at least one sister and one brother. Controls include the adult child's marital status, number of own children, home ownership and parent's region, total income, non-housing wealth, and subjective health status. Robust standard errors are clustered at the family level and are in parentheses. \*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$



Figure 3: Fixed Effect Estimates of family care in Mixed-Gender Sibling Group



(a) Mixed-Gender



(b) Mixed-Gender

*Notes:* The figure reports the fixed effect estimates of event-study specification in Equation (1) with a 95% confidence interval. Figure (a)-(b) refer to the probability of caregiving, and Figure (c)-(d) refer to the weekly family care hours of daughters and sons. Single-Gender refers to siblings that only consist of sisters or brothers. Mixed-Gender refers to siblings with at least one sister and one brother. Controls include the adult child's marital status, number of own children, home ownership and parent's region, total income, non-housing wealth, and subjective health status. The red bars refer to daughters, and the blue bars refer to sons in each group. The red, vertical dashed line is the event that a parent needs assistance with activities of daily living or instrumental activities of daily living. All estimates are in reference to two years before the event ( $t = -2$ ). Robust standard errors are clustered at the family level.

### 3 Model

Motivated by the empirical evidence, I present a game-theoretic model of sibling interactions with three main features. First, I model family care decisions as a result of a non-cooperative Cournot-Nash game between two adult children, a daughter and a son. Second, adult children are heterogeneous in wages and preferences for family care. Based on their wages and preferences, adult children simultaneously decide how much to consume, work and provide family care hours. Third, I model parental well-being as a family public good, to which adult children voluntarily contribute with their family care hours based on altruistic motives. Several studies find evidence for the altruistic motives of adult children in family care provision to elderly parents (Pezzin and Schone 1999; Engers and Stern 2002; M. Brown 2003). Motivated by these studies, I depart from formulations that assume adult children provide family care out of ‘guilt’ (e.g., Becker 1993; Barigozzi, Cremer, and Roeder 2017; Mommaerts 2021)<sup>13</sup>.

I use a non-cooperative framework over cooperative bargaining models to model family care decisions of adult children for two main reasons. First, the non-cooperative approach allows for separate budget constraints for each adult child. On the other hand, the cooperative models assume income pooling between family members<sup>14</sup>. Since adult children mainly live in separate households, income pooling is a stringent assumption. Second, the cooperative framework assumes that adult children commit to binding agreements on how much family care to provide to ensure a Pareto-optimal outcome. For example, in the context of marriage, Lundberg and Pollak (1993) and Lundberg and Pollak (2008) argue that without outside mechanisms (e.g., a legal institution enforcing one to commit certain care hours to provide an optimal level of public good), a cooperative outcome may not hold. Similarly, adult children cannot fully enforce each other on how many family care hours to commit. As a result, the public good is under-provided in the non-cooperative framework since siblings cannot take advantage of resource pooling and rely on the voluntary contribution of family care hours rather than binding agreements.

---

<sup>13</sup>A limitation of focusing on the altruistic channel, however, ignores the dimension of bequest motives of care provision. For example, Groneck (2017) finds that caregiver children are significantly more likely to receive a bequest. I implicitly assume that daughters and sons are not inherently different in their bequest motives. See M. Brown (2006) for a formulation of altruistically motivated adult children who provide care based on an expected bequest.

<sup>14</sup>See Barigozzi, Cremer, and Roeder (2017) in the case of a parent and two adult children, and Mommaerts (2021) in the case of an elderly parent and an adult child.

### 3.1 The Family Problem

This section introduces a simple model of family care decisions between a daughter and a son. Given child-specific wage  $w_i$  and parent's LTC needs  $e$ , child  $i$  decides how much to consume, work and provide family care hours. The parental well-being is represented as a family public good  $Q$  and child  $i$  voluntarily provides family care hours  $q_i$  to the public good, taking the other child's family care hours  $q_{-i}$  as given. Formally, child  $i$  solves the following problem<sup>15</sup>:

$$U(w_i, e) = \max_{c_i, l_i, q_i} u(c_i, l_i) + \theta_i \cdot u(Q) \quad (2)$$

subject to the following constraints:

$$Q = f(q_i, q_{-i}) \quad (3)$$

$$c_i = \max\{\bar{c}_i, w_i \cdot h_i\} \quad (4)$$

$$\bar{L} = l_i + h_i + q_i \quad (5)$$

$$h_i, q_i \geq 0 \quad (6)$$

where the utility of child  $i$  consists of consumption  $c_i$ , leisure  $l_i$  and parental well-being  $Q$ . The weight on parental well-being  $\theta_i$  captures how much child  $i$  weighs family public good over their consumption and leisure. Public good  $Q$  is a product of their family care hours of  $q_i$  and their sibling's family care hours  $q_{-i}$ <sup>16</sup>. Child  $i$  works  $h_i$  hours at the wage rate  $w_i$  and spends it on consumption  $c_i$  as long as their earnings are not below a consumption floor  $\bar{c}_i$ <sup>17</sup>. In addition, child  $i$  allocates their total available time  $\bar{L}$  between family care  $q_i$ , market work  $h_i$ , and leisure  $l_i$ . I assume non-negativity constraints on  $h_i$  and  $q_i$ . Public good  $Q$  is assumed to have diminishing marginal returns to its inputs such that  $f'(q_{i,-i}) > 0$  and  $f''(q_{i,-i}) < 0$ .

For tractability, I assume additively separable functional forms for the utility function. I also assume constant relative risk aversion (CRRA) specification for consumption, leisure, and family public good<sup>18</sup>:

---

<sup>15</sup>Based on the private contribution models of Bergstrom, Blume, and Varian (1986), M. Brown (2006) proposes a similar formulation with multiple adult children contributing to a family public good. However, M. Brown (2006) does not consider leisure in the utility functions of adult children and incorporates non-labor income instead of consumption floor. The author also focuses on the bequest motives of adult children rather than heterogeneity in preferences for the family public good.

<sup>16</sup>In the HRS data, the incidences of an adult child helping financially with parent's LTC needs is only 1.4% during the sample period 1998-2014. Thus, I do not consider adult children contributing with monetary transfers in the model.

<sup>17</sup>Below  $\bar{c}_i$ , an adult child decides to drop out of the labor force.  $\bar{c}_i$  can be interpreted as reservation wages in standard labor supply models. For the rest of the paper, I use the term 'reservation wages' to describe the earnings threshold below which an adult child would drop out of the labor force.

<sup>18</sup>The additive separability is commonly used in similar models that are structurally estimated (see Mommaerts (2021)).

$$U_i(c_i, l_i, q_i) = \frac{c_i^{1-\gamma_c}}{1-\gamma_c} + \alpha \frac{l_i^{1-\gamma_l}}{1-\gamma_l} + \theta_i \frac{(q_i + q_{-i})^{1-\gamma_q}}{1-\gamma_q} \quad (7)$$

where  $\gamma_c$ ,  $\gamma_l$ , and  $\gamma_q$  are curvatures on consumption, leisure, and family public good, respectively.  $\alpha$  refers to an adult child's weight on leisure relative to consumption and family public good. I assume that  $q_i$  and  $q_{-i}$  are perfect substitutes. This is motivated by the fact that Checkovich and Stern (2002) finds the care provided by one child reduces the other child's time in providing care to their parent. The perfect substitution also allows me to demonstrate the decrease in one adult child's family care hours in response to an increase in their sibling's family care hours under the Cournot-Nash model. I assume adult children differ in their preferences  $\theta_i$  for family public good  $Q$ .

Parent's LTC needs  $e$  take on three states: parent is healthy ( $e = 0$ ), the parent needs LTC ( $e = 1$ ), and the parent is dead ( $e = 2$ ). Note that public good  $Q$  only enters the utility function if the parent needs LTC at  $e = 1$ . Otherwise, each child's behavior is a simple consumption-labor-supply problem with wage heterogeneity.

### 3.2 Marginal Rates of Substitution

Given the family problem in Equations 2 – 6 and the functional form in Equation 7, I solve for the following first-order conditions of child  $i$  for  $i = 1, 2$ .

The first-order conditions for Child 1 are as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial U_1}{\partial c_1} : c_1^{-\gamma_c} &= \lambda_1 \\ \frac{\partial U_1}{\partial l_1} : \alpha l_1^{-\gamma_l} &= \lambda_1 w_1 \\ \frac{\partial U_1}{\partial q_1} : \theta_1 (q_1 + q_2)^{-\gamma_q} &= \lambda_1 w_1 \end{aligned}$$

Similarly, the first-order conditions for Child 2 are as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial U_2}{\partial c_2} : c_2^{-\gamma_c} &= \lambda_2 \\ \frac{\partial U_2}{\partial l_2} : \alpha l_2^{-\gamma_l} &= \lambda_2 w_2 \\ \frac{\partial U_2}{\partial q_2} : \theta_2 (q_1 + q_2)^{-\gamma_q} &= \lambda_2 w_2 \end{aligned}$$

where  $\lambda_i$  for  $i = 1, 2$  refers to shadow prices of each child's respective budget constraint.

Equating the first-order conditions with regards to leisure and family care, we get the following marginal rates of substitutions between time spent on family care and time spent on leisure:

$$l_1^{\gamma_l} = \frac{\alpha}{\theta_1} (q_1 + q_2)^{\gamma_q} \quad (8)$$

$$l_2^{\gamma_l} = \frac{\alpha}{\theta_2} (q_1 + q_2)^{\gamma_q} \quad (9)$$

Next, equating the first-order conditions with regards to leisure and consumption, we get the following marginal rates of substitution between leisure and consumption:

$$c_1^{\gamma_c} = \frac{w_1}{\alpha} l_1^{\gamma_l} \quad (10)$$

$$c_2^{\gamma_c} = \frac{w_2}{\alpha} l_2^{\gamma_l} \quad (11)$$

From the marginal rates of substitution in Equations 8 and 9, we can observe that the ratio between leisure  $l_i$  and family care  $q_i$  depends positively on  $\alpha$  and negatively on  $\theta_i$ . Since  $\alpha$  is assumed to be homogeneous across adult children, the child-specific weight on public good  $\theta_i$  plays a crucial role in how adult children allocate their time differently. As for the marginal rates of substitution in Equations 10 and 11, the ratio between consumption  $c_i$  and leisure  $l_i$  depends positively on wage  $w_i$  but negatively on  $\alpha$ . A higher wage reflects a higher opportunity cost to take time off to provide care (substitution effect) but it may also increase time for family care since high wages increase consumption (income effect).

### 3.3 Cournot-Nash Equilibrium

I define a strategy profile  $\delta = (q_1, q_2)$  where  $q_1$  and  $q_2$  are family care hours of each child in response to one another. A strategy profile  $\delta^* = (q_1^*, q_2^*)$  is the Cournot-Nash equilibrium if all of the following conditions are satisfied.

The optimality of Child 1's decision problem:

$$\delta_1^*(w_1) = \arg \max_{d_1^*} U_1(d_1^* | w_1, \delta^*) \quad \forall w_1 \quad (12)$$

The optimality of Child 2's decision problem:

$$\delta_2^*(w_2) = \arg \max_{d_2^*} U_2(d_2^* | w_2, \delta^*) \quad \forall w_2 \quad (13)$$

where decision variables  $d_i^* = \{c_i^*, l_i^*, q_i^*\}$  for  $i = 1, 2$ . Given wages  $w_1$  and  $w_2$ , adult children simultaneously choose optimal consumption  $c_1^*$  and  $c_2^*$ , optimal leisure  $l_1^*$  and  $l_2^*$ , and optimal family care hours  $q_1^*$  and  $q_2^*$ .

## 4 Estimation

This section details the steps to estimate the model presented in [Section 3](#). I first parameterize the wage distribution of daughters and sons. I then simulate the wage processes of adult children, and the parent's LTC needs over 20 years, using values taken from the literature or directly using the HRS data. Next, conditional on the parameterization, I estimate the remaining parameters in two stages using simulated method of moments<sup>19</sup>. Lastly, using the structural estimates and the life cycle simulation of wages and LTC needs, I quantify the trajectories of employment and earnings of adult children over 20 years.

### 4.1 Estimation sample

I use the pooled Health and Retirement Study (HRS) 1998-2014 to parameterize and internally estimate model parameters<sup>20</sup>. First, I use the HRS sample constructed in [Section 2.1](#) for parameterization of wage processes and parent's LTC needs. I then split the HRS sample into two sets of estimation samples for the moment matching. The estimation sample for the first-stage estimation includes the sample period of children when their elderly parents are healthy ("pre-LTC period"). The estimation sample for the second-stage estimation consists of the sample period of children whose elderly parents have at least one limitation with ADL or IADL ("post-LTC period"). [Figure 4](#) shows the age distribution of adult children in the full HRS sample.

[Table 7](#) shows the summary statistics of the pre-LTC estimation sample. Daughters and sons are similar in age and marital status. Daughters are more college educated and have higher home ownership compared to sons. As for labor market outcomes, sons are more likely to be employed and employed full-time compared to daughters. Sons also earn slightly higher. This indicates that daughters and sons already exhibit gender gap in labor market behavior and earnings before they face their trade-off between working and providing care to their frail parents.

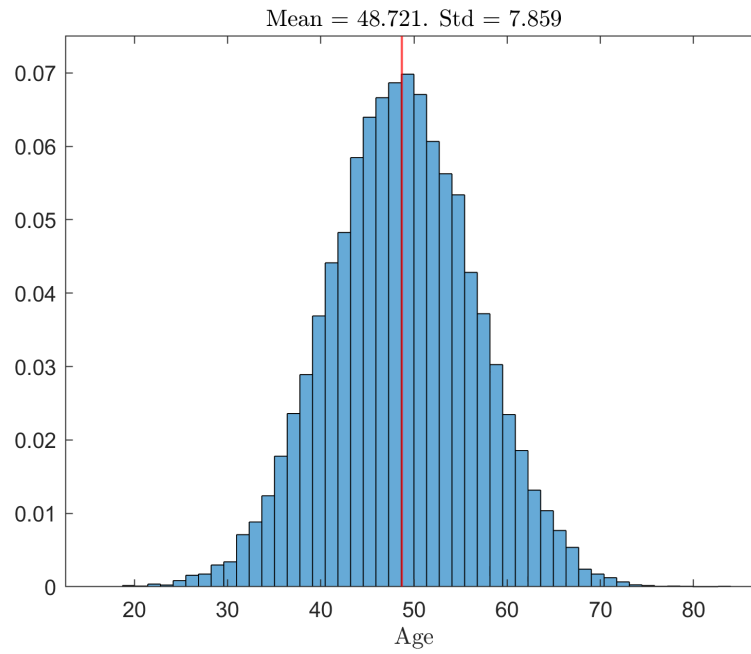
[Table 8](#) presents the summary statistics of the post-LTC estimation sample. Adult children are around age 52 when their parents experience LTC shock. Daughters are less likely to be married and more likely to live closer to their parents compared to sons. Adult children are less likely to work during post-LTC period. This can reflect the trade-off between family care and work but also early retirement and changes in employment over the life cycle. Among those working, sons earn more while daughters earn less, compared to their younger years in the pre-LTC period. Daughters provide more family care hours and at a higher rate than

---

<sup>19</sup>See McFadden (1989) and Pakes and Pollard (1989) for the theoretical background of the method.

<sup>20</sup>For details on HRS and sample restrictions, see [Section 2.1](#).

Figure 4: Age distribution of adult children in the HRS sample



*Notes:* The figure reports the age distribution of adult children aged 21 and over of 65+ single individuals with two or more adult children who receive family care from at least one child in the pooled 1998-2014 Health and Retirement Study.

sons do.

Table 7: Pre-LTC estimation sample

	Daughters	Sons
Age	48.17	48.17
Married	.63	.65
Lives within 10 miles to parent	.49	.46
Co-resides with parent	.11	.12
College	.50	.44
Home ownership	.64	.60
Not working	.26	.19
Working full-time	.63	.75
Working part-time	.11	.06
Earns $\geq$ \$35,000	.55	.57
Earns $\geq$ \$70,000	.09	.11
No. of observations	5,782	5,557
No. of individuals	3,175	2,968

*Notes:* The sample includes adult daughters and sons of 65+ single parents who have two or more children and receive family care from at least one child in the pooled 1998-2014 Health and Retirement Study. Pre-LTC period refers to the sample period of children when their elderly parents did not have any limitations with ADL or IADL and did not need long-term care (LTC) assistance. The table reports the mean summary statistics of the pre-LTC period.

Table 8: Post-LTC estimation sample

	Daughters	Sons
Age	51.69	52.14
Married	.61	.67
Lives within 10 miles to parent	.53	.45
Co-reside with parent	.13	.11
College	.50	.44
Home ownership	.61	.58
Not working	.37	.31
Working full-time	.53	.63
Working part-time	.10	.06
Earns $\geq$ \$35,000	.49	.54
Earns $\geq$ \$70,000	.10	.15
Provides family care	.28	.15
Weekly family care hours (mean/median)	22/7.5	14.5/4
No. of observations	10,592	9,932
No. of individuals	3,175	2,968

*Notes:* The sample includes adult daughters and sons of 65+ single parents who have two or more children and receive family care from at least one child in the pooled 1998-2014 Health and Retirement Study. Post-LTC period refers to the sample period of children when their elderly parents had at least one limitation with ADL or IADL and needed long-term care (LTC) assistance. The table reports the mean summary statistics of the post-LTC period.



## 4.2 Parameterization

**Total Hours Available.** I set 5,824 as the total annual hours available to each child, which they can allocate between market work and leisure in the absence of parent’s LTC needs, and between market work, leisure and family care in the presence of it. Total hours available in a year includes 16 hours per day, net of 8 hours of sleeping, multiplied by 7 days per week and 52 weeks per year. I include weekend days since family care often involves co-residency or the elderly parent’s intensive long-term care need requires 24/7 attention and care.

**Wages.** I parameterize the wage distribution for daughters and sons. [Table 9](#) lists the values taken from the literature or computed directly from the HRS data to parameterize the wage distribution. In the HRS data, the income variables are reported in brackets only. Thus, I fit the wage distribution based on the income brackets observed<sup>21</sup>. I set \$38,000 as the mean income for daughters and \$42,000 as the mean income for sons based on the HRS data. I take wage variances for daughters and sons from Blundell, Pistaferri, and Saporta-Eksten (2018), referred to as BPS (2018) in [Table 9](#). Using a sample of men and women in their prime working years, the authors compute the wage variances as .285 for women and .256 for men. See [Appendix E](#) for the simulated wage distribution and its fit against the data.

Table 9: Wage parameterization

Parameter	Description	Value	Source
<b>Wages</b>			
$w_1^0$	Mean wage for daughters	\$38,000	HRS
$w_2^0$	Mean wage for sons	\$42,000	HRS
$\sigma_{w_1^0}$	Wage variance for daughters	.285	Blundell, Pistaferri, and Saporta-Eksten (2018)
$\sigma_{w_2^0}$	Wage variance for sons	.256	Blundell, Pistaferri, and Saporta-Eksten (2018)

## 4.3 Long-Term Care Needs and Permanent Wage Shock

To quantify the employment and earnings trajectory of adult children, I simulate the life cycle profiles of LTC needs and wage processes of adult children.

**Long-Term Care Needs.** The parent’s long-term care needs  $e_t \in \{1, 2, 3\}$  is defined as: parent is healthy ( $e_t = 1$ ), parent needs LTC ( $e_t = 2$ ) and parent is dead ( $e_t = 3$ ). The first-order markov transition probabilities for parent’s long-term care needs depend on their long-term care needs in the previous period, parent’s permanent income ( $y_p$ ), gender ( $g$ ) and

<sup>21</sup>See [Section 2.1](#) for details on income variables in the HRS.

age:

$$e_{t+1} = e_{t+1}(e_t, y_p, g, t) \quad (14)$$

Using the HRS data, I run a multinomial logit model to estimate the transition probabilities of long-term care states, following Hurd, Michaud, and Rohwedder (2017). Specifically, I run a logit model from two non-absorbing states, healthy ( $e_t = 1$ ) and needs LTC ( $e_t = 2$ ), to one absorbing state where the parent is dead ( $e_t = 3$ ). Healthy state refers to periods when elderly parent does not have any limitations with ADL or IADL whereas LTC state refers to periods when elderly parent has at least one limitation with ADL or IADL. Table 10 reports the simulated transition probabilities of parent’s LTC needs.

Table 10: Simulated Probabilities Long-Term Care Needs

	Age 65	Age 75	Age 85	Age 95
Percent dead	0.0	.10	.33	.77
Percent healthy	.89	.81	.69	.56
Percent need care	.11	.19	.31	.44

*Notes:* The table reports simulated long-term care needs and mortality using the sample of 65+ single individuals with two or more adult children who receive family care from at least one child in the pooled 1998-2014 Health and Retirement Study. Long-term care needs are defined as having at least one limitation with ADLs or IADLs as defined in Section 2.1.

**Permanent Wage Shock.** I specify the life cycle profile of wages as a random walk process. Specifically, each child faces a permanent income shock such that:

$$\log w_{it} = \log w_{it-1} + \epsilon_{it} \quad (15)$$

where  $\epsilon_{it} \in \mathcal{N}(0, \sigma_\epsilon^2)$ . This is motivated by several studies that empirically show income shocks are well approximated as a random walk (Abowd and Card 1989; MaCurdy 1982; Meghir and Pistaferri 2004). I set the wage shock variance  $\sigma_\epsilon^2$  at 0.05 (Mommaerts 2021).

## 4.4 Moment Matching

This section documents the steps to internally estimate structural parameters using simulated method of moments. I focus on two different periods to estimate two sets of parameters. First, I use the pre-LTC estimation sample when parent is healthy and does not need long-term care assistance and estimate consumption curvature  $\gamma_c$ , leisure curvature  $\gamma_l$ , weight on leisure  $\alpha$  and reservation wages  $\bar{c}_1^{NL}$  and  $\bar{c}_2^{NL}$ . In this way, I estimate the earnings and labor supply behavior of daughters and sons before they face the trade-off between labor supply and family care. This is to account for the pre-LTC gender gap between daughters and sons in labor

market outcomes such as labor market participation, market hours and labor earnings.

Second, I use the post-LTC estimation sample when parent has long-term care needs and estimate public good curvature  $\gamma_q$ , weights on public good  $\theta_1$  and  $\theta_2$  and reservation wages  $\bar{c}_1^L$  and  $\bar{c}_2^L$ . During post-LTC sample period, adult children face not only trade-off between labor and leisure but also between labor and family care. Given the gender gap in family care, the estimation of these parameters reflect the differential changes in labor market participation and market hours due to family care for daughters and sons.

The estimation process goes as follows. I first solve the model numerically across wage distributions of each adult child and simulate the model with the objective to estimate the structural parameters that minimize the distance between data moments and model moments such that:

$$\hat{\lambda}_{1,2} = \arg \min_{\lambda_{1,2}} (\mathbf{X}_D - \mathbf{X}_M(\lambda_{1,2})) \Omega (\mathbf{X}_D - \mathbf{X}_M(\lambda_{1,2}))' \quad (16)$$

where the first-stage parameters  $\lambda_1 = \gamma_c, \gamma_l, \alpha, \bar{c}_1^{NL}, \bar{c}_2^{NL}$  and the second-stage parameters  $\lambda_2 = \gamma_q, \theta_1, \theta_2, \bar{c}_1^L, \bar{c}_2^L$ .  $\mathbf{X}_D$  is a vector of empirical moments from the data and  $\mathbf{X}_M(\lambda_{1,2})$  is a vector of moments simulated by the model at  $\lambda_{1,2}$ .  $\Omega$  is a weighting matrix computed as the inverse of the diagonal of the variance-covariance matrix of the data moments. To compute the simulated moments, I simulate 10,000 daughter-son pairs who face wage processes shown in [Section 4.2](#).

#### 4.4.1 First Stage Estimation

[Table 11](#) lists the first-stage parameters that are estimated internally using the pre-LTC estimation sample. The identification of these parameters are discussed in this subsection along with the empirical moments informative of these parameters. [Figure 5](#) shows the relationship between consumption curvature  $\gamma_c$  on the horizontal axis and labor supply on the vertical axis for two cases: a) when leisure curvature is low ( $\gamma_l < 1$ ) and b) when leisure curvature is high ( $\gamma_l > 1$ ). In addition, different wage rates are considered to illustrate how the curvature parameters govern the effects of wages on labor supply.

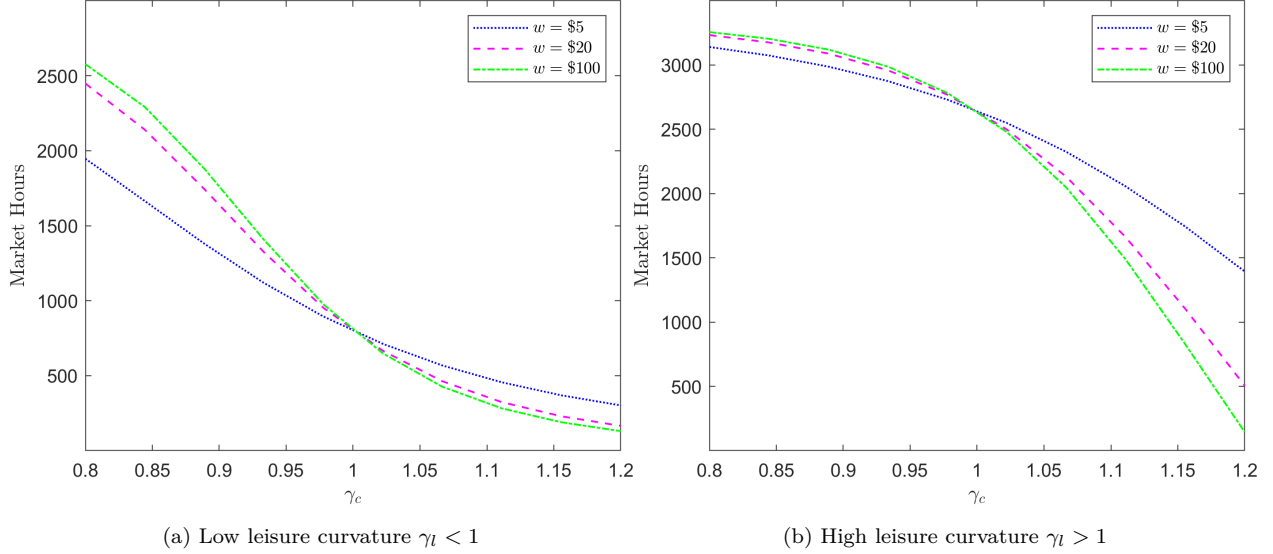
As reflected on the horizontal axis for both panels in [Figure 5](#), consumption curvature  $\gamma_c$  governs the income and substitution effects of wages on labor supply. When consumption curvature  $\gamma_c$  is less than 1, the substitution effect dominates: market hours increase as wage increases. On the other hand, when consumption curvature  $\gamma_c$  is more than 1, the income effect dominates: market hours lower as wage increases.

If consumption curvature  $\gamma_c$  governs whether labor supply increases or decreases to changes in wages, leisure curvature  $\gamma_l$  governs the magnitude of changes in labor supply to changes

Table 11: First-stage parameters: pre-LTC period

Parameter	Description
$\gamma_c$	Consumption curvature
$\gamma_l$	Leisure curvature
$\alpha$	Weight on leisure
$\bar{c}_1^{NL}$	Reservation wage for daughters
$\bar{c}_2^{NL}$	Reservation wage for sons

Figure 5: Income and Substitution Effects

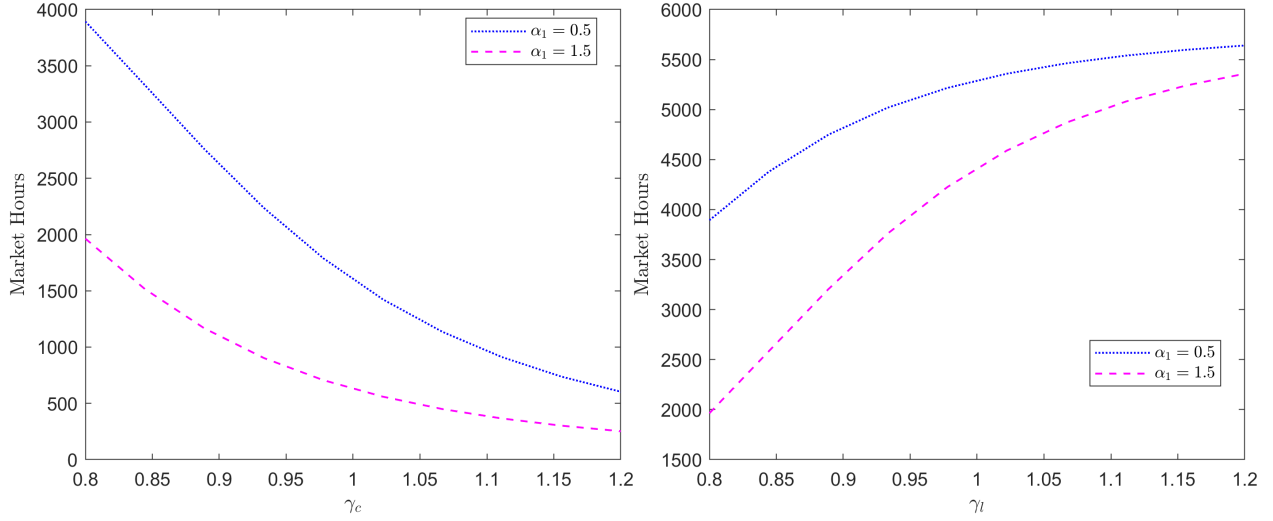


*Notes:* The figure shows the numeral solutions from the marginal rates of substitution between consumption and leisure outlined in Equation (10) and Equation (11). The market hours are shown on the vertical axis in relation to the consumption curvature  $\gamma_c$  on the horizontal axis. Panel (a) refers to the case when  $\gamma_l$  is lower than unity and Panel (b) refers to the case when  $\gamma_l$  is more than unity. The labor supply responses are shown across three different wage rates:  $w = \$5$  (blue dot),  $w = \$20$  (pink dash) and  $w = \$100$  (green dotted dash).

in wages. In other words, leisure curvature  $\gamma_l$  reflects the labor supply elasticity of wages. In the case  $\gamma_l$  is less than unity, labor supply is more elastic to changes in wages when the substitution effect dominates (Panel (a) of Figure 5). In the case  $\gamma_l$  is more than unity, labor supply is more elastic when the income effect dominates (Panel (b) of Figure 5). That is, as  $\gamma_c$  and  $\gamma_l$  are closer to zero, one will work more in response to wage increase (substitution effect) and the change in work hours is large. As  $\gamma_c$  and  $\gamma_l$  go farther from unity, one will work less in response to wages (income effect) and the change in work hours is also large. See Appendix F on the implications of  $\gamma_c$  and  $\gamma_l$  on consumption and leisure.

Figure 6 shows the effect of weight on leisure  $\alpha$  on market hours in relation to  $\gamma_c$  and  $\gamma_l$ , as shown in the left and the right panel, respectively. As expected, lower weight on leisure increases market hours by shifting the labor supply curve upwards. Note also that market

Figure 6: Labor supply in response to weight on leisure  $\alpha$



*Notes:* The figure shows the numeral solutions from the marginal rates of substitution between consumption and leisure outlined in Equation (10) and Equation (11). The market hours are shown on the vertical axis in relation to the consumption curvature  $\gamma_c$  shown in Panel (a), and leisure curvature  $\gamma_l$  in Panel (b). The two cases of weight on leisure  $\alpha$  are shown:  $\alpha = 0.5$  (blue dot) and  $\alpha = 1.5$  (pink dash).

hours are convex and decreasing in  $\gamma_c$  whereas market hours are concave and increasing in  $\gamma_l$ . Figure 5 and Figure 6 are informative of the moments that can identify  $\gamma_c$ ,  $\gamma_l$  and  $\alpha$ . While the direction of labor supply responses to wages are more informative about  $\gamma_c$ , the magnitude of labor supply responses to wages can be more informative about  $\gamma_l$ . On the other hand,  $\alpha$  can be explained by the level of market hours adult children supply.

I use the following four empirical moments to identify consumption curvature  $\gamma_c$ , leisure curvature  $\gamma_l$  and weight on leisure  $\alpha$ : percents of daughters working full-time and part-time; and the percents of sons working full-time and part-time. More specifically, a given wage rate and employment type inform  $\gamma_c$  and  $\gamma_l$ . The identification of reservation wages  $\bar{c}_1^{NL}$  and  $\bar{c}_2^{NL}$  and more straightforward as they are strictly identified by the employment rate of daughters and sons, respectively. Thus, I use two moments to identify the reservation wages: the employment rate of daughters and the labor participation rate of sons.

#### 4.4.2 Second Stage Estimation

Conditional on the first-stage estimation of  $\gamma_c$ ,  $\gamma_l$  and  $\alpha$ , I estimate the remaining parameters that are listed in Table 12 using the estimation sample when parent needs long-term care assistance (i.e., post-LTC period). The identification of these parameters are discussed in this subsection along with the empirical moments informative of these parameters.

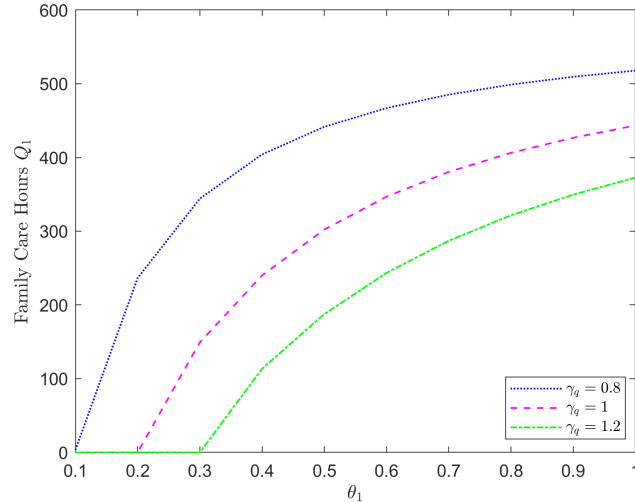
Figure 7 shows the responses of family care hours to changes in own weight on public good

Table 12: Second-Stage Parameters: Post-LTC Period

Parameter	Description
$\gamma_q$	Public good curvature
$\theta_1$	Daughter's weight on public good
$\theta_2$	Son's weight on public good
$\bar{c}_1^L$	Reservation wage for daughters
$\bar{c}_2^L$	Reservation wage for sons

and the public good curvature. As expected, higher weight on public good  $\theta_1$  increases one's family care hours  $q_1$ , holding their sibling's weight on public good  $\theta_2$  constant. An increase in public good curvature  $\gamma_q$  shifts the family care response curve downwards<sup>22</sup>. In addition, at low levels of own weight on public good  $\theta_1$ , family care hours are at corner solutions when public good curvature  $\gamma_q$  is high enough. This shows that public good curvature and weights on public good are shaped by not only hours of family care hours but also by the rate of family care of adult children.

Figure 7: Family care hours  $q_1$  in response to  $\theta_1$  and  $\gamma_q$



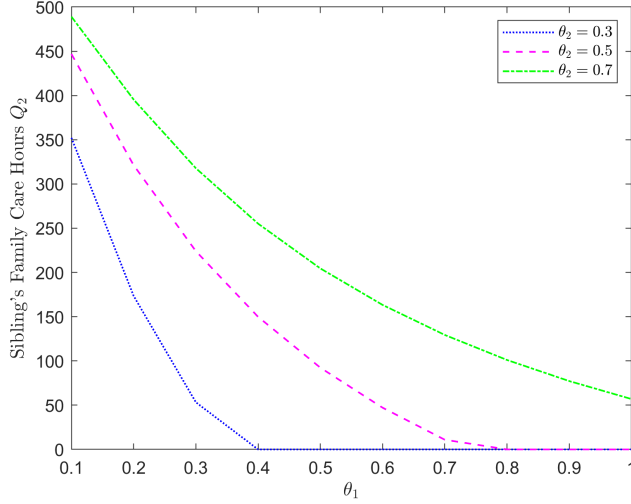
*Notes:* The figure shows the numeral solutions from the marginal rates of substitution between consumption and leisure outlined in Equation (8) and Equation (9). The family care hours  $q_1$  are shown on the vertical axis in relation to own weight on public good  $\theta_1$ . The three cases of public good curvature  $\gamma_q$  are shown:  $\gamma_q = 0.8$  (blue dot),  $\gamma_q = 1$  (pink dash), and  $\gamma_q = 1.2$  (green dotted dash). Note that the consumption curvature  $\gamma_c$  is set at less than unity for all scenarios.

Figure 8 illustrates family care hours in response to the interaction of both weights on public good. Due to the Cournot-Nash game, the family care response functions of each adult child are such that family care hours of one child lowers in response to higher family care

<sup>22</sup>Note that the consumption curvature is set at less than unity for all scenarios. This is to reflect the empirical findings for the substitution effect of wages for family caregivers.

hours of their sibling. As expected, when weight on public good of daughters  $\theta_1$  increases, the family care hours of sons decrease as demonstrated by the sons' downward sloping family care response function to their sister's weight on public good. However, the total change in family care hours of sons depend on the combination of own weight on public good  $\theta_2$  and their sister's weight on public good  $\theta_1$ .

Figure 8: Family care hours  $q_2$  in response to  $\theta_1$  and  $\theta_2$



*Notes:* The figure shows the numeral solutions from the marginal rates of substitution between consumption and leisure outlined in Equation (8) and Equation (9). The family care hours  $q_2$  are shown on the vertical axis in relation to their sibling's weight on public good  $\theta_1$ . The three cases of own weight on public good  $\theta_2$  are shown:  $\theta_2 = 0.3$  (blue dot),  $\theta_2 = 0.5$  (pink dash), and  $\theta_2 = 0.7$  (green dotted dash).

I use the following six moments to identify public good curvature  $\gamma_q$  and weights on public good  $\theta_1$  and  $\theta_2$ : average family care hours of daughters, percent of daughters working full-time, and percent of daughters working part-time; average family care hours of sons, percent of sons working full-time, and percent of sons working part-time<sup>23</sup>. In addition, I use two more moments to identify the reservation wages  $\bar{c}_1^L$  and  $\bar{c}_2^L$ : the employment rate of daughters and the employment rate of sons. Note that all empirical moments used for the second-stage estimation are from the post-LTC estimation sample, as described in Section 4.1.

## 5 Results and Model Fit

This section reports the results from the model estimation. The first stage and the second stage parameters along with their targeted moments are reported. The life cycle profiles of

<sup>23</sup>Since the model does not specifically incorporate extensive margin for family care, I put zeros for those who do not provide any positive care hours when computing the mean family care hours.

employment and earnings for daughters and sons are then simulated using the structural parameters from the two stages. Lastly, I analyze the model fit.

## 5.1 Consumption curvature, leisure curvature and weight on leisure

Table 13 presents the structural estimation of first-stage parameters. Consumption curvature  $\gamma_c$  is estimated at 0.948 and the leisure curvature  $\gamma_l$  at 0.776. As illustrated in Figure 5,  $\gamma_c$  captures the strength of income effect and a value lower than unity implies that substitution effect dominates. Given the empirical pattern that high wage children are more likely to work and work full time in the HRS data, the estimated value for  $\gamma_c$  accurately reflects the strength of the substitution effect<sup>24</sup>. In addition,  $\gamma_l$  shapes the elasticity of labor supply and the estimated value being lower than unity demonstrates higher elasticity when the substitution effect dominates<sup>25</sup>. How much adult child weighs leisure compared to consumption, reflected by  $\alpha$ , is estimated at 0.51 and is similar to the structural estimate found in Mommaerts (2021).

Table 13: First-stage estimation

Parameter	Estimates
$\gamma_c$	0.948
$\gamma_l$	0.776
$\alpha$	0.51
$\bar{c}_1^{NL}$	\$27,000
$\bar{c}_2^{NL}$	\$26,000

*Notes:* The table reports the model parameters estimated using simulated method of moments. The targeted moments and identification are discussed in Section 4.4. See parameter definitions in Section 3.

As for the reservation wages, the lowest wage at which an adult child would enter the labor market, are \$27,000 for daughters and \$26,000 for sons. Daughters having higher reservation wage than sons is somewhat inconsistent with the empirical literature that finds positive male-to-female reservation wage gap (e.g., S. Brown, Roberts, and Taylor (2011) and Caliendo, Lee, and Mahlstedt (2017)). There are two plausible reasons for this finding. First, note that adult children are relatively younger during the pre-LTC period and daughters may have slightly higher reservation wage compared to sons due to larger time spent on childcare and household throughout their later adulthood. In fact, the role of marriage and motherhood in increasing reservation wages for women is empirically supported (Parera-Nicolau and Mumford (2005), Youderian (2014) and Ma (2021)). Second, I assume daughters and sons

<sup>24</sup>Using a household model with two earners who have young children, Blundell, Pistaferri, and Saporta-Eksten (2018) finds a similar structural estimate for  $\gamma_c$  at 0.903.

<sup>25</sup>See Panel (a) of Figure 5 for the labor supply responses when both  $\gamma_c$  and  $\gamma_l$  are lower than unity.



have the same weight on leisure and thus any differential preferences for time spent at any activities other than market work is additionally being captured by the differences in  $\bar{c}_1^{NL}$  and  $\bar{c}_2^{NL}$ . Table 14 shows the targeted moments used in the estimation of first-stage parameters.

Table 14: Targeted moments used in first-stage estimation

Moments	Model	Data
Percent of daughters not working	.27	.26
Percent of daughters working full-time	.65	.63
Percent of daughters working part-time	.08	.11
Percent of sons not working	.18	.19
Percent of sons working full-time	.74	.75
Percent of sons working part-time	.08	.06

*Notes:* The table reports the simulated moments from the model and the empirical moments from the HRS data. The targeted moments and identification are discussed in Section 4.4 and estimation sample is described in Section 4.1. See model formulation in Section 3.

## 5.2 Public good curvature and weights on public good

Conditional on the first-stage parameters, I then use the post-LTC estimation sample where children now face family care responsibilities due to parent’s LTC needs. Table 15 reports the structural estimates governing the family care hours of daughters and sons. Public good curvature  $\gamma_q$  is identified by the level of family care hours, as shown in Figure 7, and is estimated at 0.923. The structural estimates of weights on public good  $\theta_1$  and  $\theta_2$  demonstrate heterogeneity in preferences for public good. That is, daughters weigh family public good at 0.2006 compared to 0.195 for sons. The difference may appear negligible in magnitude but I show the importance of this heterogeneity in preferences for public good between daughters and sons in Section 6.1 by running a counterfactual where daughters and sons differ in their wages but are homogeneous in their preferences for public good.

Table 15: Second-stage estimation

Parameter	Estimates
$\gamma_q$	0.923
$\theta_1$	0.2006
$\theta_2$	0.195
$\bar{c}_1^L$	\$23,000
$\bar{c}_2^L$	\$25,000

*Notes:* The table reports the model parameters estimated using simulated method of moments. The targeted moments and identification are discussed in Section 4.4. See parameter definitions in Section 3.

Interestingly, reservation wages  $\bar{c}_1^L$  and  $\bar{c}_2^L$  change moderately during post-LTC period due to higher non-employment rates of adult children. The reservation wage for daughters lower to \$23,000 and the reservation wage for sons to \$25,000<sup>26</sup>. Table 16 reports the targeted moments used in the estimation of the second-stage parameters.

Table 16: Targeted moments used in second-stage estimation

Moments	Model	Data
Mean family care hours of daughters	287	288
Percent of daughters not working	.38	.37
Percent of daughters working full-time	.55	.53
Percent of daughters working part-time	.07	.09
Mean family care hours of sons	99	96
Percent of sons not working	.30	.31
Percent of sons working full-time	.65	.62
Percent of sons working part-time	.05	.07

*Notes:* The table reports the simulated moments from the model and the empirical moments from the HRS data. The targeted moments and identification are discussed in Section 4.4 and estimation sample is described in Section 4.1. See model formulation in Section 3.

### 5.3 Life Cycle Profile and Model Fit

Using the wage process and LTC needs simulated over 20 year period in Section 4.3, I quantify the labor market behavior and family care hours of adult children over the life cycle of the parent aged between 65 and 85. Since the moments over the life cycle were not targeted for the model estimation, the life cycle behavior can give us how well the model fits.

Table 17 shows the employment of daughters and sons over the parent’s age quintiles. The model fits reasonably well, except the moderate underestimation of employment rate for sons. In the HRS data, the employment rate for daughter is 75% when their parent is aged between 65 and 70, which is roughly around 40s for the adult children. This share goes down to 67% after around 20 years. The model slightly overestimates the employment rate of daughters at the tails, during which the least number of elderly parents have LTC needs. Only 11% of elderly parents need assistance with LTC at age 65, and 33% of the elderly parents are deceased at around age 85 (see Table 10). Since the model does not account for channels other than family care that affect employment rates for adult children and the parental LTC needs are lower during this period, the overestimation observed for daughters is rather expected. On the other hand, the model underestimates the employment rate for

<sup>26</sup>This is consistent with the findings of Krueger and Mueller (2014), which empirically show that decrease in reservation wages are driven by older individuals.

sons consistently when parent is aged 70 and older. This reflects the fact that the model overestimates son's contribution in family care as the parental LTC needs arise.

Table 17: Employment rate by parent's age quintile

	Age 65-70	Age 71-75	Age 76-80	Age 81-85
<i>A. Daughters</i>				
Model	.78	.74	.72	.69
Data	.75	.74	.72	.67
<i>B. Sons</i>				
Model	.81	.77	.74	.72
Data	.81	.80	.79	.74

*Notes:* The table reports the simulated moments for employment rate from the model and the life cycle simulation of LTC needs and permanent wage shock. Age refers to the age of the elderly parents of adult children. The empirical moments are from the estimation sample described in [Section 4.1](#). See the estimation of LTC needs and permanent wage shock in [Section 4.3](#).

[Table 18](#) reports the family care hours of daughters and sons over the life cycle. Notably, family care hours are moderately underestimated for daughters over the period when parent is 70 and older, but overestimated for sons throughout the life cycle. This mirrors the underestimation of employment rate for sons as the model produces higher contribution in family care for sons.

Table 18: Family care hours by parent's age quintile

	Age 65-70	Age 71-75	Age 76-80	Age 81-85
<i>A. Daughters</i>				
Model	155	178	260	301
Data	132	192	288	336
<i>B. Sons</i>				
Model	63	80	93	105
Data	32	73	85	96

*Notes:* The table reports the simulated moments for family care hours from the model and the life cycle simulation of LTC needs and permanent wage shock. Age refers to the age of the elderly parents of adult children. The empirical moments are from the estimation sample described in [Section 4.1](#). See the estimation of LTC needs and permanent wage shock in [Section 4.3](#).

## 6 Counterfactuals

I run two counterfactual exercises using the stylized life cycle simulation of labor market and family care behavior of daughters and sons. First, I assume a scenario where daughters and

sons have same weights on family public good. The purpose of this exercise is to show how much of the gender gap in family care hours is driven by differences in opportunity costs of daughters and sons as opposed to heterogeneity in preferences for family public good. Second, I quantify the life cycle earnings trajectory of daughters and sons in the absence of parent's LTC needs and compare the results to the trajectory with parent's LTC needs. This allows me to show potential foregone earnings associated with family care and the differences in foregone earnings between daughters and sons.

## 6.1 Homogeneous Preferences for Public Good

In this exercise, I assume daughters and sons have the same weight on family public good at 0.2. **Figure 9** illustrates the differences in family care behavior of daughters and sons under two scenarios: homogeneous preferences ( $\theta_1 = \theta_2$ ) and heterogeneous preferences ( $\theta_1 > \theta_2$ ). Compared to the data, we can see that the model with homogeneous preferences significantly underestimates the gender gap in family care. However, we still observe a gap in family care hours between daughters and sons in this counterfactual scenario. This is entirely driven by differences in opportunity costs of daughters and sons in terms of wages. The results for the model with heterogeneous preferences for public good, on the other hand, show the gender gap in family care driven by differences in opportunity costs and in preferences for public good. Note that the estimated values are  $\theta_1 = 0.2006$  and  $\theta_2 = 0.195$ . This exercise illustrates the importance of accounting for heterogeneity in preferences in order to explain the gender gap in family care decisions. This channel of heterogeneity in preferences to explain the gender gap in unpaid care work and household production as a family public good has been largely ignored in family interactions other than married couples, and specifically in the context of long-term care<sup>27</sup>.

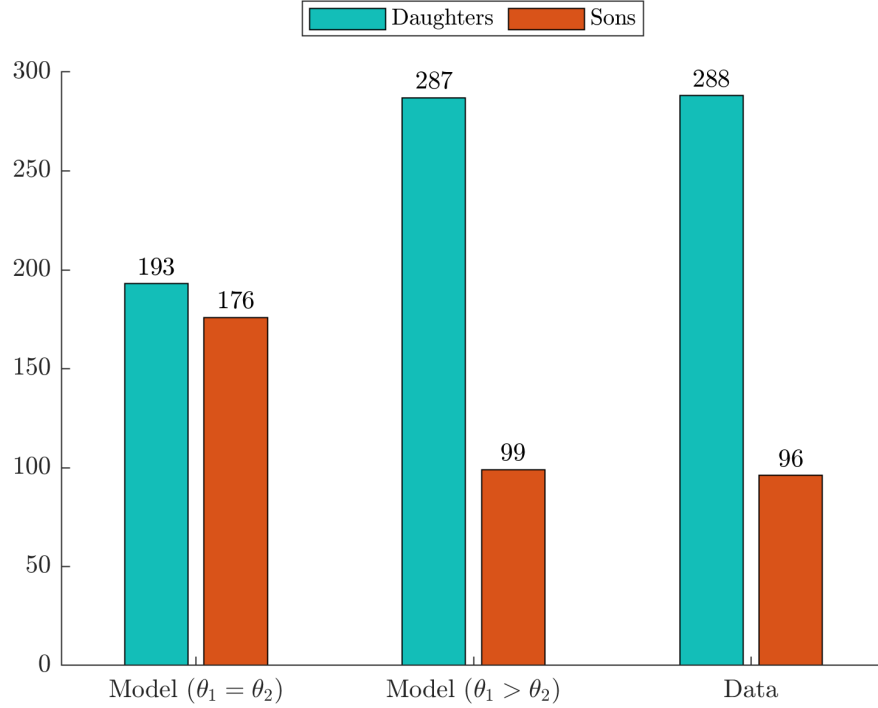
## 6.2 Foregone Earnings and Family Care

Using the simulated life cycle profile of children's wage processes, I run a counterfactual exercise where adult children face permanent wage shock but do not face LTC needs from their parents over the life cycle. This is to examine how adult children would have behaved in the labor market in the absence of their responsibility to take care of their elderly parent in a stylized life cycle framework. By comparing the earnings under the counterfactual simulation without parent's LTC needs to the earnings under the simulation with LTC needs, I quantify

---

<sup>27</sup>See Lundberg and Pollak (2008) and Cortés and Pan (2020) for the inclusion of heterogeneity in preferences, which is shaped by gender identity norms, for childcare and household production among married couples.

Figure 9: Family care hours with and without heterogeneous preferences



*Notes:* The figure reports the family care hours for daughters (teal) and sons (red) for three cases: 1) homogeneous weights on public good ( $\theta_1 = \theta_2$ ); 2) heterogeneous weights on public good as estimated by the model simulation in [Section 5.2](#) ( $\theta_1 > \theta_2$ ); and 3) the empirical moments from the HRS data. The family care hours are annual hours with zeros for cases when adult child do not provide care. For the counterfactual scenario with homogeneous preferences, I assume  $\theta_1 = \theta_2 = 0.2$ . See sample details in [Section 4.1](#).

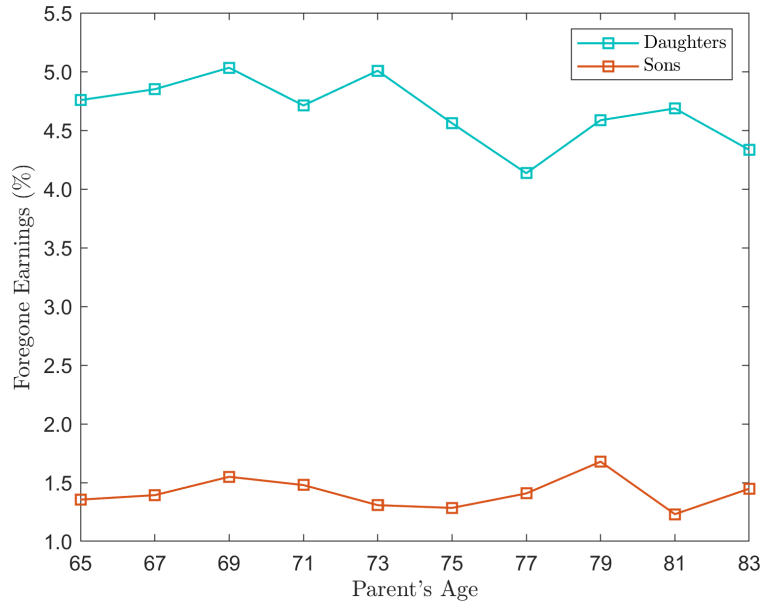
the foregone earnings associated with family care for daughters and sons. Specifically, I compute the foregone earnings as follows:

$$\Delta Y = \frac{Y^{LTC=1} - Y^{LTC=0}}{Y^{LTC=1}} \quad (17)$$

where  $Y^{LTC=1}$  refers to the earnings computed under the scenario where parents face LTC needs, and  $Y^{LTC=0}$  refers to the earnings under the counterfactual where parents do not face any LTC needs. When  $\Delta Y$  is negative, parental LTC needs results in foregone earnings for adult children.

Figure 10 presents the foregone earnings associated with family care in percentage of adult child's actual earnings. In other words, the foregone earnings represent the percentage drop in earnings associated with family care. I report the foregone earnings over 20 year period when parent is aged 65 and 85. This roughly reflects the working period of adult children from their 40s to mid 60s. Daughters face an average of 4.6% drop in earnings over this time period compared to sons who face an average of 1.3% drop in earnings. Note that the gender gap in foregone earnings are driven by both differences in opportunity costs and preferences for family public good.

Figure 10: Foregone earnings under heterogeneous preferences



*Notes:* The figure reports the foregone earnings associated with drop in labor supply due to family care, in percentage of adult children's actual earnings, for daughters (teal) and sons (red). The exact formula is described in Equation (17). The counterfactual exercise assumes heterogeneity in wages and preferences for family care between daughters and sons.

## 7 Conclusion

Family care in the face of prolonged and intensive LTC needs can affect caregivers to reduce their labor supply or exit the labor market, and thus affecting their earnings over time. One group particularly affected by the trade-off between working and family care is adult children of elderly individuals. This paper focuses on the family decision to provide care among adult daughters and sons and how those decisions affect their labor supply and earnings in their 40s to mid-60s.

To analyze what shapes adult children's decision to provide family care, I estimate a Cournot-Nash equilibrium model between daughters and sons who are heterogeneous in wages and preferences for family care for their parents. My main takeaways are threefold. First, I provide suggestive evidence that gender norms can help explain the observed gender gap in family care among adult children. Second, estimating a non-cooperative Cournot-Nash equilibrium model, I find that the heterogeneity in preferences is an important channel to explain the observed gender gap in family care in addition to wage differences between daughters and sons. Third, daughters face a 4.6% drop in earnings due to family care, whereas sons face a 1.3% drop in earnings over the life cycle.

## Appendix A Sample Details

The pooled 1998-2014 Health and Retirement Study is used to construct the data used in empirical evidence and model estimation. The sample restrictions and their corresponding number of observations are reported in [Table 19](#).

Table 19: Sample construction

	No. of parents	No. of children	No. of child-wave observations
65+ single elderly parents	3,740	9,508	85,572
Those with $\geq 2$ adult children	2,454	8,864	79,776
Those who experienced LTC needs	1,942	7,047	63,423
Those who received family care	1,317	4,966	44,694

Out of 3,740 65+ single elderly individuals who consecutively interviewed between 1998 and 2014, 2,454 have at least two adult children aged 21 and over. Out of those individuals with at two or more adult children, 1,942 experienced at least one limitation with ADL or IADL during 1998-2014. Further 1,317 individuals received family care from at least one child. The restriction gives us 4,966 adult children of elderly parents who rely on family care between 1998-2014. The final individual-wave observations of these adult children are 44,694 over the sample period.

## Appendix B More on Multiple Children Caregivers

Table 20: Caregiving Arrangement by Number of Caregivers

	Provide care	Caregiving Arrangement	
		Take turns	Simultaneous
One caregiver	82%	-	-
Multiple caregivers	88%	52%	48%

*Notes:* The sample includes 3,261 observations when a parent is sick, disaggregated by how many caregivers the parent has over the 1998-2014 sample period. The observations are from 1,340 parents aged 65 and over with multiple multiple children and at least one caregiver. Provide care refers to the periods when a caregiver child provides care to the sick parent. For multiple children caregivers, in each period they either take turns (i.e. one providing care in some periods and another providing care in other periods) or provide care simultaneously in the same period (over two years).



## Appendix C Descriptive statistics on Adult Children by Caregiving Intensity

Table 21: Characteristics of Adult Children by Caregiving Patterns

	Provide Care		Not Provide Care
	$\geq 20$ hrs/wk	$< 20$ hrs/wk	
Age	53.5	53.5	53.6
Female	0.70	0.59	0.44
Married	0.49	0.69	0.69
Home ownership	0.51	0.74	0.66
College	0.21	0.32	0.24
Working full-time	0.48	0.63	0.62
Working part-time	0.10	0.09	0.07
Not working	0.42	0.27	0.31
Earns $> \$35,000$	0.37	0.64	0.60
Earns $> \$70,000$	0.05	0.12	0.12
Lives within 10 miles	0.75	0.61	0.31
Family care (hrs/wk)	45/28	5/3	-
Observations	3,271	7,176	14,526

*Notes:* The sample includes 24,973 person-wave observations of 4,967 adult children of 65+ single individuals who has two or more children and receive family care from at least once child in the pooled 1998-2014 Health and Retirement Study. The table reports the characteristics of children based on whether they provide care to their parent during the sample period, and on whether they provide more than 20 hours of care during the sample period. For family care hours, the mean/median hours are reported.

## Appendix D Caregiving Arrangements by Sibling Groups

Table 22 presents the family care patterns across the three sibling groups. The percent of elderly parents who do not receive care from any adult child is highest among the group of only brothers at 27.7% compared to around 15% of the other two groups. One child providing all the family care is most prevalent in single-gender sibling groups ranging from 55.9% to 58.4%. In contrast, one child as the sole caregiver is less prevalent in the mixed-gender sibling group at 49.7%. As families with only sons and daughters have fewer children on average (see Figure 11), this pattern is consistent with the empirical evidence that the share of multiple caregivers for elderly parents increases as the number of adult children increases. Despite

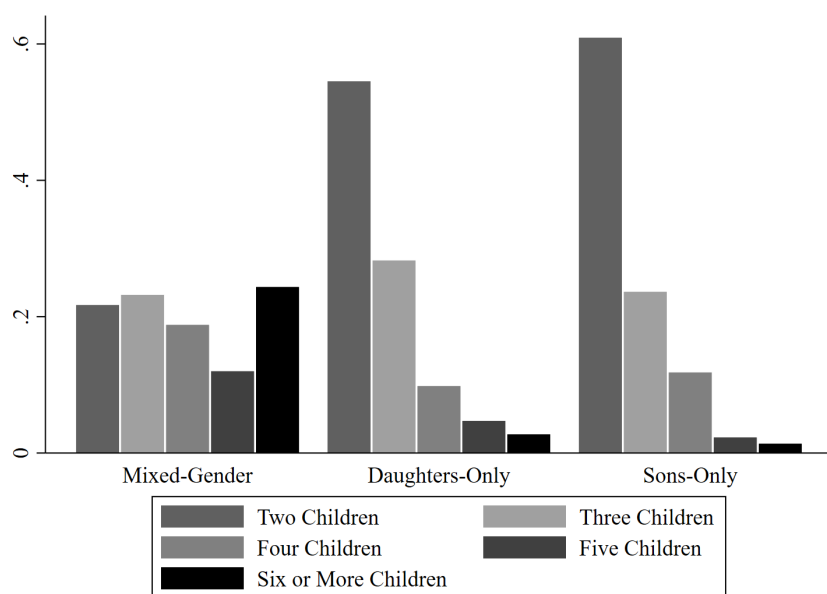
the lower number of siblings, however, we observe a higher rate of shared caregiving for sisters-only groups than brothers-only groups.

Table 22: Number of Children Caregivers by Sibling Groups

	Mixed-gender	Sisters-only	Brothers-only	Total
% with no caregiver	14.8	15.7	27.7	16.7
% with one caregiver	49.7	58.4	55.9	52.0
% with multiple caregivers	35.5	25.9	16.4	31.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Notes:* The sample includes 65+ single individuals with two or more children and experience needs with activities or instrumental activities of daily living during the pooled 1998-2014 Health and Retirement Study. The rows represent the percent of elderly parents in terms of how many adult children provided care during the sample period. Mixed-gender refers to sibling groups with at least one brother and one sister. Single-gender sibling groups are disaggregated by those with only sisters and only brothers.

Figure 11: Distribution of Number of Adult Children By Sibling Groups

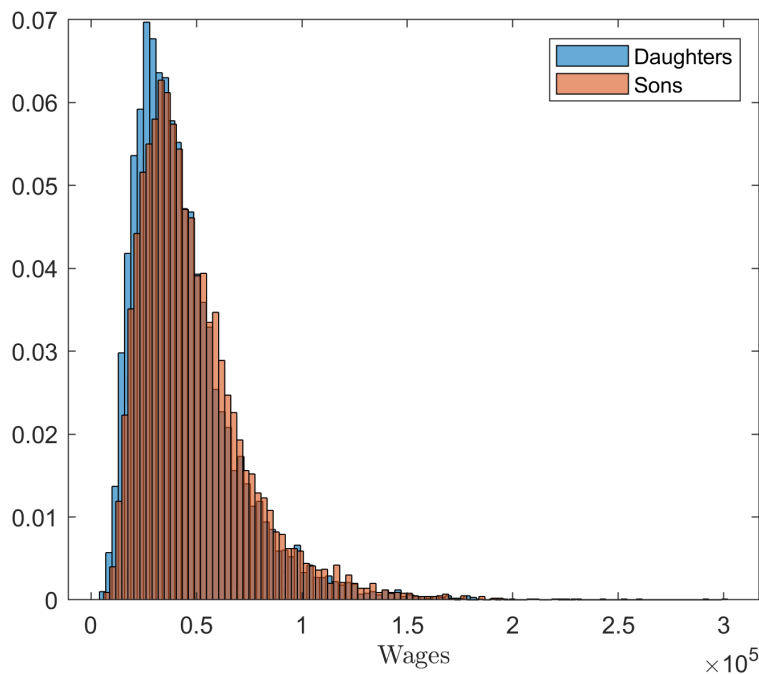


*Notes:* The sample includes single individuals aged 65 and over with at least one adult child in the pooled 1998-2014 Health and Retirement Study. "Mixed-Gender" refers to the set of families that have both sons and daughters, "Daughters-Only" refers to the set of families that only have daughters, and "Sons-Only" refers to the set of families that have only sons.

## Appendix E Simulated wage distribution and fit

Figure 12 illustrates the parameterized wage distributions for daughters and sons. Table 23 shows the fit of the simulated wage distributions against the HRS data. For both daughters and sons, simulated income overestimates the upper income bracket but the lower and middle income brackets fit well against the data.

Figure 12: Simulated wage distribution



Notes: The figure shows the simulated wage distribution of adult children using the parameters in Table 9.

Table 23: Wage distribution fit

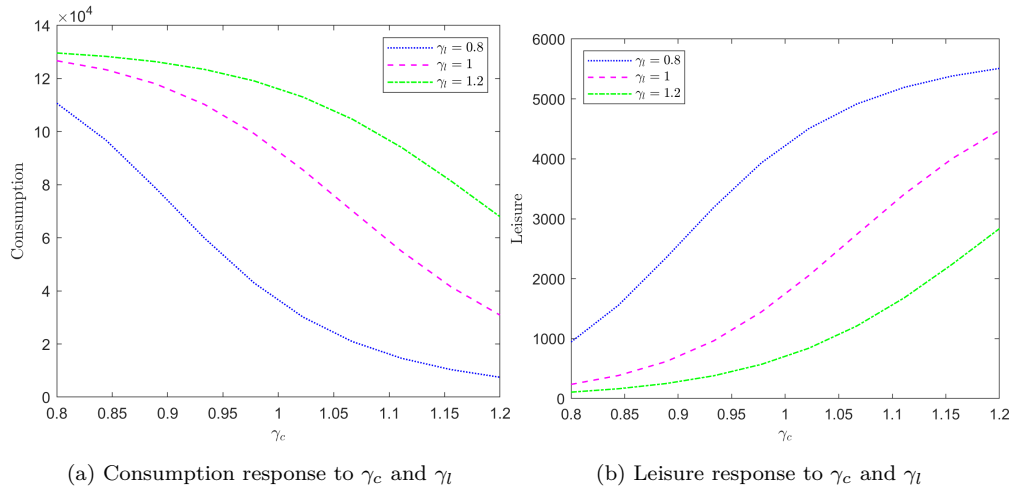
	Daughters		Sons	
	Simulated	Data	Simulated	Data
$\geq \$35,000$	.57	.59	.65	.65
$\geq \$70,000$	.13	.09	.16	.13

Notes: The table reports the fit of the simulated wage distribution of daughters and sons using the parameters listed in Table 9. The data moments are from the HRS.  $\geq \$35,000$  refers to earning more than \$35,000.

## Appendix F Implications of Structural Parameters on Consumption and Leisure

Figure 13 shows the responses of consumption and leisure to the interaction of  $\gamma_c$  and  $\gamma_l$ . As income effect gets stronger, represented by an increase in  $\gamma_c$  along the horizontal axis, consumption decreases as one reduces their labor supply and enjoys more leisure instead. On the other hand, the leisure curvature  $\gamma_l$  has the opposite effect. Higher  $\gamma_l$  increases consumption while lowering leisure as the response of market hours become more concave at any given  $\gamma_c$ , as illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 13: Leisure and Consumption in Response to  $\gamma_c$  and  $\gamma_l$



*Notes:* The figure shows the numeral solutions from the marginal rates of substitution between consumption and leisure outlined in Equation (10) and Equation (11). The consumption and leisure are shown in relation to consumption curvature  $\gamma_c$  in Panel (a) and Panel (b), respectively. The responses are shown across three different levels of leisure curvature  $\gamma_l$ :  $\gamma_l = 0.8$  (blue dot),  $\gamma_l = 1$  (pink dash) and  $\gamma_l = 1.2$  (green dotted dash).

## References

- Abowd, John M., and David Card. 1989. "On the Covariance Structure of Earnings and Hours Changes." *Econometrica* 57 (2): 411–45. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1912561>.
- Akerlof, George A., and Rachel E. Kranton. 2000. "Economics and Identity\*." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 115 (3): 715–53. <https://doi.org/10.1162/003355300554881>.
- Barczyk, Daniel, and Matthias Kredler. 2018. "Evaluating Long-Term-Care Policy Options, Taking the Family Seriously\*." *The Review of Economic Studies* 85 (2): 766–809. <https://doi.org/10.1093/restud/rdx036>.
- . 2019. "Long-Term Care Across Europe and the United States: The Role of Informal and Formal Care." *Fiscal Studies* 40 (3): 329–73. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-5890.12200>.
- Barigozzi, Francesca, Helmuth Cremer, and Kerstin Roeder. 2017. "Caregivers in the Family: Daughters, Sons and Social Norms." *European Economic Review* 130 (November): 103589. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eurocorev.2020.103589>.
- Becker, Gary S. 1993. "The Economic Way of Looking at Life." (Coase-Sandor Institute for Law & Economics).
- Bergstrom, Theodore, Lawrence Blume, and Hal Varian. 1986. "On the Private Provision of Public Goods." *Journal of Public Economics* 29 (1): 25–49. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0047-2727\(86\)90024-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/0047-2727(86)90024-1).
- Blundell, Richard, Luigi Pistaferri, and Itay Saporta-Eksten. 2018. "Children, Time Allocation, and Consumption Insurance." *Journal of Political Economy* 126 (S1): 43.
- Bolin, K., B. Lindgren, and P. Lundborg. 2008. "Your Next of Kin or Your Own Career?: Caring and Working Among the 50+ of Europe." *Journal of Health Economics* 27 (3): 718–38. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhealeco.2007.10.004>.
- Brenøe, Anne Ardila. 2022. "Brothers Increase Women's Gender Conformity." *Journal of Population Economics* 35 (4): 1859–96. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00148-021-00830-9>.
- Brown, Meta. 2003. "Social Security Reform and the Exchange of Bequests for Elder Care." *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1138023>.
- . 2006. "Informal Care and the Division of End-of-Life Transfers." *Journal of Human Resources* XLI (1): 191–219. <https://doi.org/10.3368/jhr.XLI.1.191>.
- Brown, Sarah, Jennifer Roberts, and Karl Taylor. 2011. "The Gender Reservation Wage Gap: Evidence from British Panel Data." *Economics Letters* 113 (1): 88–91. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econlet.2011.05.025>.
- Byrne, David, Michelle S. Goeree, Bridget Hiedemann, and Steven Stern. 2009. "Formal Home Health Care, Informal Care, and Family Decision Making." *International Economic Review* 50 (4): 1205–42. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25621507>.

- Caliendo, Marco, Wang-Sheng Lee, and Robert Mahlstedt. 2017. "The Gender Wage Gap and the Role of Reservation Wages: New Evidence for Unemployed Workers." *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 136 (April): 161–73. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2017.02.011>.
- Checkovich, Tennille J., and Steven Stern. 2002. "Shared Caregiving Responsibilities of Adult Siblings with Elderly Parents." *The Journal of Human Resources* 37 (3): 441. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3069678>.
- Cortés, Patricia, and Jessica Pan. 2020. "Children and the Remaining Gender Gaps in the Labor Market." w27980. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research. <https://doi.org/10.3386/w27980>.
- Cox, Donald, and Beth Soldo. 2013. "Motives for Care That Adult Children Provide to Parents: Evidence from "Point Blank" Survey Questions." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 44: 491–518. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23644635>.
- Crespo, Laura. 2008. "Caring for Parents and Employment Status of European Mid-Life Women." *CEFMI Working Paper*, 36.
- de Chaisemartin, Clément, and Xavier D'Haultfoeuille. 2022. "Two-Way Fixed Effects and Differences-in-Differences with Heterogeneous Treatment Effects: A Survey." *The Econometrics Journal*, June, utac017. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ectj/utac017>.
- Engers, Maxim, and Steven Stern. 2002. "Long-Term Care and Family Bargaining." *International Economic Review* 43 (1): 73–114. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2354.t01-1-00004>.
- Fahle, Sean. 2020. "Harnessing the Potential of Family Caregivers: A Solution to the U.S. Long-Term Care Crisis?" In. ASHECON. <https://ashecon.confex.com/ashecon/2020/meetingapp.cgi/Paper/9558>.
- Grigoryeva, Angelina. 2017. "Own Gender, Sibling's Gender, Parent's Gender: The Division of Elderly Parent Care Among Adult Children." *American Sociological Review* 82 (1): 116–46. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122416686521>.
- Groneck, Max. 2017. "Bequests and Informal Long-Term Care: Evidence from HRS Exit Interviews." *Journal of Human Resources* 52 (2): 531–72. <https://doi.org/10.3368/jhr.52.2.1214-6839R1>.
- Healy, Andrew, and Neil Malhotra. 2013. "Childhood Socialization and Political Attitudes: Evidence from a Natural Experiment." *The Journal of Politics* 75 (4): 1023–37. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022381613000996>.
- Heitmueller, Axel. 2007. "The Chicken or the Egg? Endogeneity in Labour Market Participation of Informal Carers in England." *Journal of Health Economics* 26 (3): 536–59. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhealeco.2006.10.005>.
- Hurd, Michael D., Pierre-Carl Michaud, and Susann Rohwedder. 2017. "Distribution

- of Lifetime Nursing Home Use and of Out-of-Pocket Spending.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 114 (37): 9838–42. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1700618114>.
- Ichino, Andrea, Martin Olsson, Barbara Petrongolo, and Peter Skogman Thoursie. 2019. “Economic Incentives, Home Production and Gender Identity Norms.” *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3399814>.
- Kleven, Henrik, Camille Landais, and Jakob Egholt Sogaard. 2019. “Children and Gender Inequality: Evidence from Denmark.” *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 11 (4): 181–209. <https://doi.org/10.1257/app.20180010>.
- . 2020. “Does Biology Drive Child Penalties? Evidence from Biological and Adoptive Families,” 28.
- Ko, Ami. 2021. “An Equilibrium Analysis of the Long-Term Care Insurance Market.” *Review of Economic Studies* forthcoming: 57.
- Krueger, Alan, and Andreas Mueller. 2014. “A Contribution to the Empirics of Reservation Wages.” *NBER Working Paper Series*, January.
- Lilly, Meredith B, Audrey Laporte, and Peter C Coyte. 2007. “Labor Market Work and Home Care’s Unpaid Caregivers: A Systematic Review of Labor Force Participation Rates, Predictors of Labor Market Withdrawal, and Hours of Work.” *The Milbank Quarterly* 85 (4): 641–90. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0009.2007.00504.x>.
- Lundberg, Shelly, and Robert A. Pollak. 1993. “Separate Spheres Bargaining and the Marriage Market.” *Journal of Political Economy* 101 (6): 988–1010. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2138569>.
- . 2008. “Family Decision Making.” In *The New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics*, edited by Palgrave Macmillan, 1–8. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK. [https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95121-5\\_2551-1](https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95121-5_2551-1).
- Ma, Xinxin. 2021. “Market Wage, Child Care and the Employment of Married Women.” In *Female Employment and Gender Gaps in China*, edited by Xinxin Ma, 13–39. Hitotsubashi University IER Economic Research Series. Singapore: Springer Nature. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-33-6904-7\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-33-6904-7_2).
- MaCurdy, Thomas E. 1982. “The Use of Time Series Processes to Model the Error Structure of Earnings in a Longitudinal Data Analysis.” *Journal of Econometrics* 18 (1): 83–114. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0304-4076\(82\)90096-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/0304-4076(82)90096-3).
- McFadden, Daniel. 1989. “A Method of Simulated Moments for Estimation of Discrete Response Models Without Numerical Integration.” *Econometrica* 57 (5): 995. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1913621>.
- Meghir, Costas, and Luigi Pistaferri. 2004. “Income Variance Dynamics and Heterogeneity.”

- Econometrica* 72 (1): 1–32. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0262.2004.00476.x>.
- Mommaerts, Corina. 2021. “Long-Term Care Insurance and the Family.” *Working Paper*, 62.
- Pakes, Ariel, and David Pollard. 1989. “Simulation and the Asymptotics of Optimization Estimators.” *Econometrica* 57 (5): 1027–57. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1913622>.
- Parera-Nicolau, Antonia, and Karen A. Mumford. 2005. “Labour Supply and Childcare for British Mothers in Two-Parent Families: A Structural Approach.” *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.876446>.
- Pezzin, Liliana E., and Barbara Steinberg Schone. 1999. “Intergenerational Household Formation, Female Labor Supply and Informal Caregiving: A Bargaining Approach.” *The Journal of Human Resources* 34 (3): 475. <https://doi.org/10.2307/146377>.
- Skira, Meghan M. 2015. “Dynamic Wage and Employment Effects of Elder Parent Care: Dynamic Effects of Caregiving.” *International Economic Review* 56 (1): 63–93. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jere.12095>.
- Truskinovsky, Yulya. 2021. “Employment Shocks, Unemployment Insurance, and Caregiving.” University of Wisconsin-Madison: Center for Financial Security.
- Van Houtven, Courtney Harold, Norma B. Coe, and Meghan M. Skira. 2013. “The Effect of Informal Care on Work and Wages.” *Journal of Health Economics* 32 (1): 240–52. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhealeco.2012.10.006>.
- Wolff, Jennifer L., and Judith D. Kasper. 2006. “Caregivers of Frail Elders: Updating a National Profile.” *The Gerontologist* 46 (3): 344–56. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/46.3.344>.
- Youdarian, Xiaoyan. 2014. “The Motherhood Wage Penalty and Non-Working Women” 34 (2): 10.