NEET or NEETH? How should we classify homemakers in the U.S.?

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Introduction
- Original UK definition of NEETs: Youth aged 15-24 not currently enrolled in school, not currently working, and not currently in a training program.
- In the U.S., NEETs are typically defined as youth aged 16-24 (for exception, see work by DeSliver at Pew) and are recognized in pejorative terms (e.g. "Disconnected Youth," "Disengaged Youth," "Idle Youth").
- I argue for a new definition: Youth aged 16-29 not in education, employment, training, OR homemaking; AKA NEETH.

Research Questions
1. How should we define NEETs in the U.S.?
   - What age range?
   - Should homemakers be coded as NEETs?
2. What is their prevalence?
3. What is the probability of being a NEET or a NEETH by gender controlling for covariates?

Data & Sample
- Data: IPUMS-CPS, October Education Supplement, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org.
- Due to sample sizes, we exclude those of Asian decent, and racial/ethnic "other"; those we were unable to ascertain metro status or nativity status.
- Control for gender, race/ethnicity, nativity, educational attainment, metro status, Census division, relationship status, presence of parent in household, and presence of an own child in household.
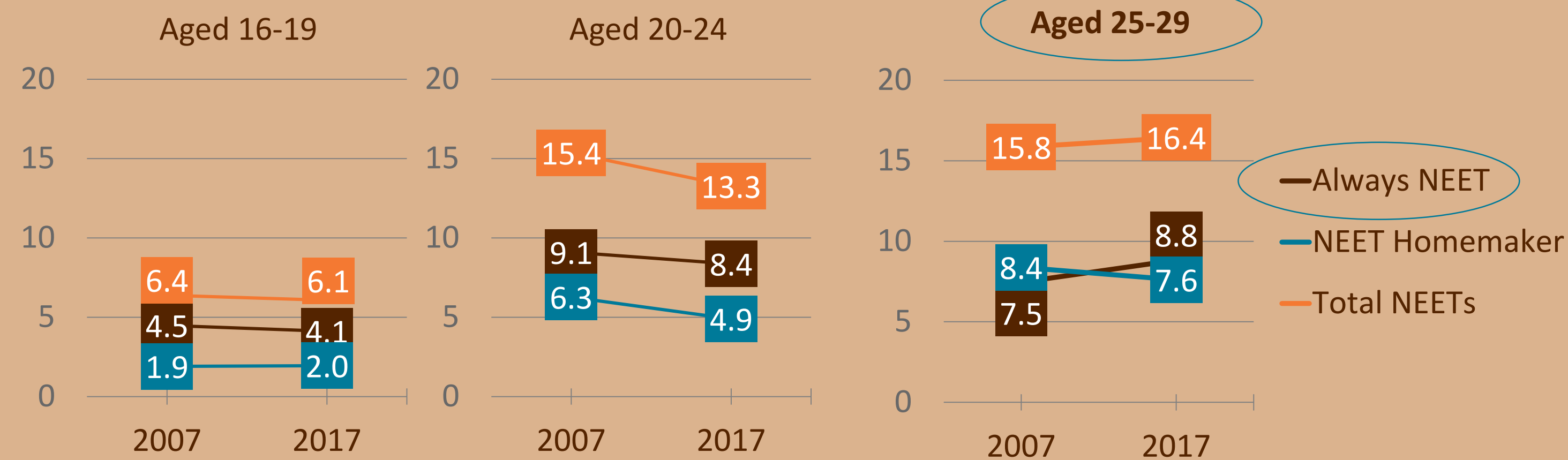
Analytic Strategy
- Descriptive statistics: Examine trends by age and NEET type.
- Multivariate: Predict NEET & NEETH and examine gender differences between the two models when controlling for covariates including relationship status, presence of a child, and homemaker status.

Main Findings
- Specifying homemakers as NEETs and limiting the age range to 24 masks the group struggling ten years post-recession.
- Specifying homemakers as non-NEETs changes the relationship of gender to the risk of being a NEET.
  - If homemakers are coded as NEET, women are significantly more likely to be a NEET.
  - If homemakers are NOT coded as NEET, women are significantly less likely to be a NEET.
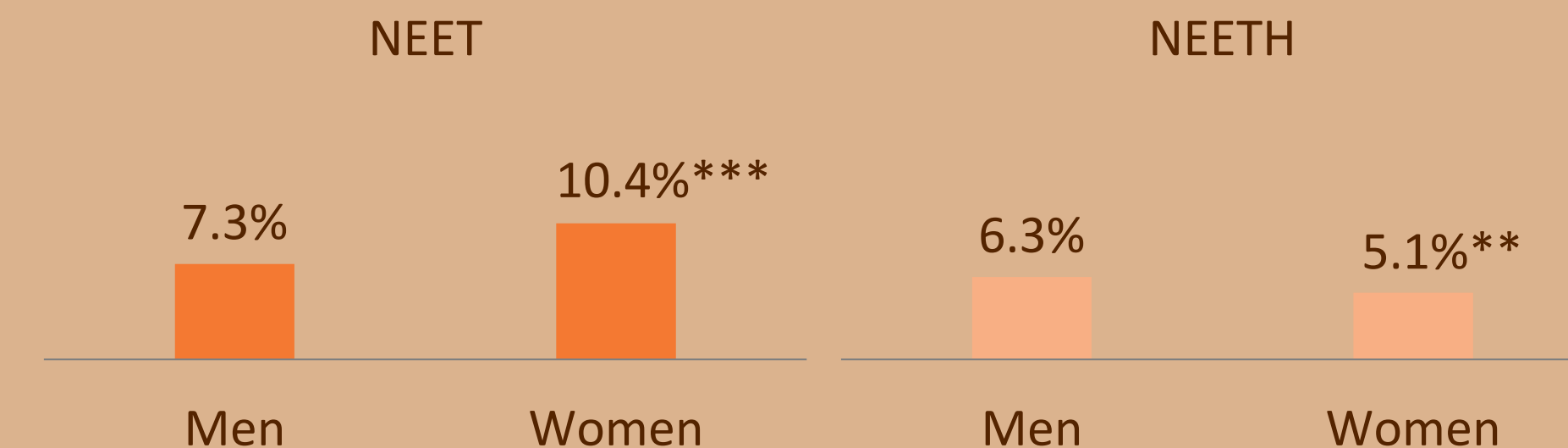

Specifying homemakers as NEET and capping age at 24 masks the group struggling post-recession.

Figure 1. Percentage by NEET Type in the U.S. by Age Group, 2007 & 2017

Specifying homemakers as non-NEET changes the relationship between gender and the risk of being a NEET.

Figure 2. Probabilities of Being a NEET or NEETH w/ Controls Among Those Aged 16-29 in the U.S. by Gender, 2017
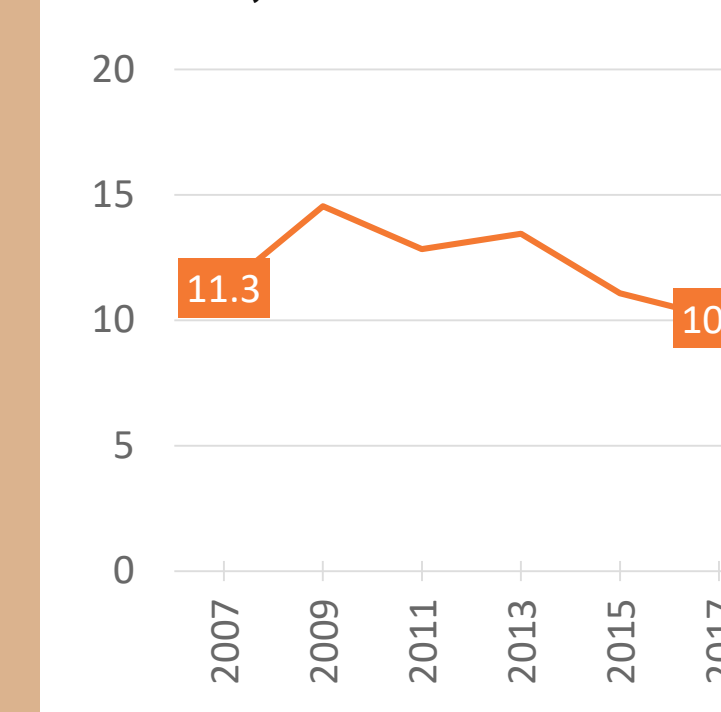

Not in Education Employment or Training or HOMEMAKING

Table 1. NEET Type, Weighted Percentages, 2017

	Always A NEET (n=1,361)	Homemaker NEET (n=972)	Never a NEET (n=17,265)
Total	7.4%	5.1%	87.6%
Gender			
Men	8.6%	1.4%	90.0%
Women	6.1%	8.9%	85.1%
Age			
16-19	4.1%	2.0%	93.9%
20-24	8.4%	4.9%	86.8%
25-29	8.8%	7.6%	83.6%
Race/Ethnicity			
Whites	5.9%	4.1%	89.9%
Blacks	12.1%	5.0%	82.9%
Hispanics	7.8%	7.6%	84.6%
Nativity			
Native born	7.4%	4.5%	88.2%
1-Gen native born	6.9%	4.6%	88.5%
Foreign born	8.1%	10.1%	81.8%
Educational Attainment			
<H.S.	6.1%	4.6%	89.3%
H.S./GED	13.8%	8.9%	77.3%
Some college	4.8%	4.1%	91.2%
Bachelor's+	4.5%	2.3%	93.1%
Metro Status			
Metro	7.2%	4.9%	87.9%
Non-metro	8.6%	6.3%	85.0%
Census Division			
New England	6.5%	3.8%	89.8%
Middle Atlantic	8.5%	4.7%	77.3%
East North Central	7.6%	4.3%	88.1%
West North Central	4.3%	3.8%	92.0%
South Atlantic	7.3%	5.2%	87.5%
East South Central	8.4%	5.9%	85.8%
West South Central	7.4%	7.0%	85.5%
Mountain	6.6%	5.0%	88.4%
Pacific	8.0%	5.2%	86.9%
Relationship Status			
Currently married	5.4%	15.1%	79.5%
Currently cohabiting	5.9%	6.4%	87.7%
Previously married	17.3%	5.2%	77.5%
Never married	7.8%	2.6%	89.7%
Presence of Parent			
Parent not present	6.7%	7.9%	85.4%
Parent is present	7.9%	2.7%	89.4%
Presence of Child			
Biological child not present	7.4%	2.5%	90.2%
Biological child is present	7.3%	18.9%	73.8%

Source: IPUMS-CPS

Table 2. Predicting NEET & NEETH, Logistic Reg., 2017

Variables	NEET	NEETH
Gender (Women)		
Men	-1.837 ***	-0.315
Age (25-29)		
16-19	-1.423 ***	-1.595 ***
20-24	-0.219 ***	-0.338 ***
Race/Ethnicity (Whites)		
Blacks	0.545 ***	0.685 ***
Hispanics	0.313 ***	0.211
Nativity (Native born)		
1-Gen native born	-0.133	-0.152
Foreign born	0.059	-0.134
Educational Attainment (<H.S.)		
H.S./GED	0.191 *	0.284 *
Some college	-1.037 ***	-0.955 ***
Bachelor's+	-1.349 ***	-1.008 ***
Metro Status		
Metro	-0.300 ***	-0.318 ***
Census Division (West South Central)		
New England	-0.124	-0.007
Middle Atlantic	0.088	0.197
East North Central	-0.081	0.090
West North Central	-0.590 ***	-0.481 **
South Atlantic	-0.175	-0.069
East South Central	-0.080	0.054
Mountain	-0.169	-0.007
Pacific	0.005	0.154
Relationship Status (Married)		
Cohabiting	-0.764 ***	0.042
Previously married	-0.329	1.234 ***
Never married	-0.875 ***	0.227
Presence of Parent		
Parent is present	-0.018	0.111
Presence of Child		
Biological child is present	0.804 ***	-0.227
Men X Relationship Status		
Currently cohabiting	1.097 ***	0.028
Previously married	1.535 ***	-0.012
Never married	1.666 ***	0.458
Men X Presence of Parent	0.462 ***	0.370 *
Men X Presence of Child	-0.791 ***	0.087
Constant	-0.339 *	-2.027 ***

Weights were used. N=19,407. ***p<0.001, **p<0.01; *p<0.05
Reference categories are in parentheses.

Figure 3. NEETs Aged 16-24 in the U.S., 2007-2017

Source: IPUMS-CPS

Figure 4. NEET Type by Gender Among Those Aged 16-29 in the U.S., 2017