Background

- Family members are an important source of caregiving over the life course. Parents raise children, and adult children support aging parents.
- Caregiving parents/grandparents are prescribed by different social norms and involve different responsibilities (Fuchs & Vener, 2005; Fugate et al., 2011).

Prior studies tend to focus on the amount of time spent on unpaid care work (Shaw, 1986; 1991; Shaw, 1991; Davey, 2008). How caregivers allocate their time to meet the demands of different caregiving responsibilities is unclear.

Present Study

- Our study provides a national portrait of three types of family caregivers in terms of their activities and patterns:
  - Caregivers of children
  - Caregivers of parents/grandparents
  - Caregivers of both children and parents/grandparents (sandwich caregivers)

Research Questions

- Who are caregivers of children, caregivers of parents/grandparents, and sandwich caregivers?
- How much time a day, on average, do caregivers provide care?
- How do caregivers allocate time to accommodate caregiving?
- Do the type of caregivers vary by caregivers’ sociodemographic characteristics?

Data

- Data come from the 2011 and 2012 American Time Use Survey (ATUS), N = 24,022.
- ATUS collects a time diary that begins at 4 a.m. the previous day and ends at 4 a.m. the following day.
- ATUS does not record the amount of time spent in various activities, including eating.
- New questions to measure time spent on eldercare were first introduced in 2011.
- The sample is weighted to represent the U.S. civilian noninstitutionalized population aged 15 or older.

Analytic Sample

- 2,366 caregivers of children
- 1,507 caregivers of parents/grandparents
- 391 caregivers of both children and parents/grandparents

Characteristics of Family Caregivers

- The relation in the time spent on care for children versus parent care was greater for caregivers who were younger and who had received less than a high school education.
- The relation in the time spent on care for child care versus parent care was greater for caregivers who were younger, who were White, and who were out of labor force.
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How Do Sandwich Caregivers “Squeeze” Time Compared to Caregivers of Parents?

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Limitations and Future Directions

- Although a large number of respondents reported that they had provided care to their parents or grandparents in the past 3 months, many did not provide care on the diary day, subsequently reducing the analytic sample size. Stacking more data from future waves would increase statistical power.
- Data provide no information about the needs of children and parents/grandparents. Thus, the time spent on caregiving is likely underestimated for caregivers of children or parents with greater needs for support.
- Family caregivers include kin other than parents and children (e.g., spouses, siblings, aunts/uncles, or nieces/nephews). Future research should consider the current study to examine whether the patterns of time use vary depending on kinship ties.

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