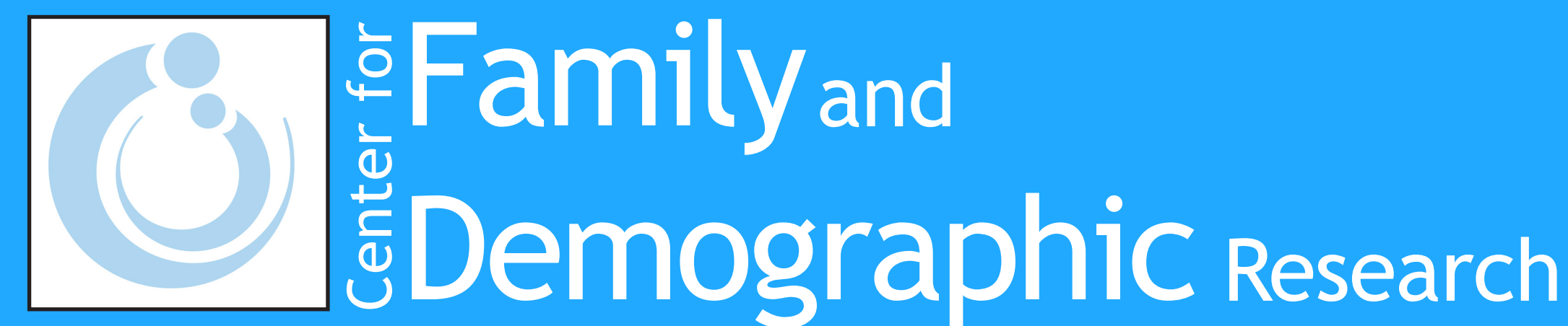


A National Portrait of Time Use Patterns among Family Caregivers

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Background

- Family members are an important source of caregiving over the life course. Parents raise children, and adult children support aging parents or grandparents (Bianchi, Hotz, McGarry, & Seltzer, 2008; Rossi & Rossi, 1990; Szinovacz & Davey, 2008).
- Caring for children and caring for parents or grandparents are prescribed by different social norms and involve different responsibilities (Finch & Mason, 1993; Fingerman et al., 2011).
- Prior studies tend to focus on the amount of time spent on unpaid care work (Bianchi, Folbre, & Wolf, 2012; Wolf, 2004). 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 time use 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 time use patterns vary by caregivers' sociodemographic characteristics?

Data

- Data come from 2011 and 2012 American Time Use Survey (ATUS), N = 24,922.
- ATUS collects a time diary that began at 4 a.m. the previous day and ended at 4 a.m. on the day of the interview.
- ATUS asks respondents the amount of time spent in various activities, including childcare.
- New questions to measure time spent on eldercare were first introduced in 2011.
- The samples are weighted to represent the U.S. civilian noninstitutional population aged 15 or older.

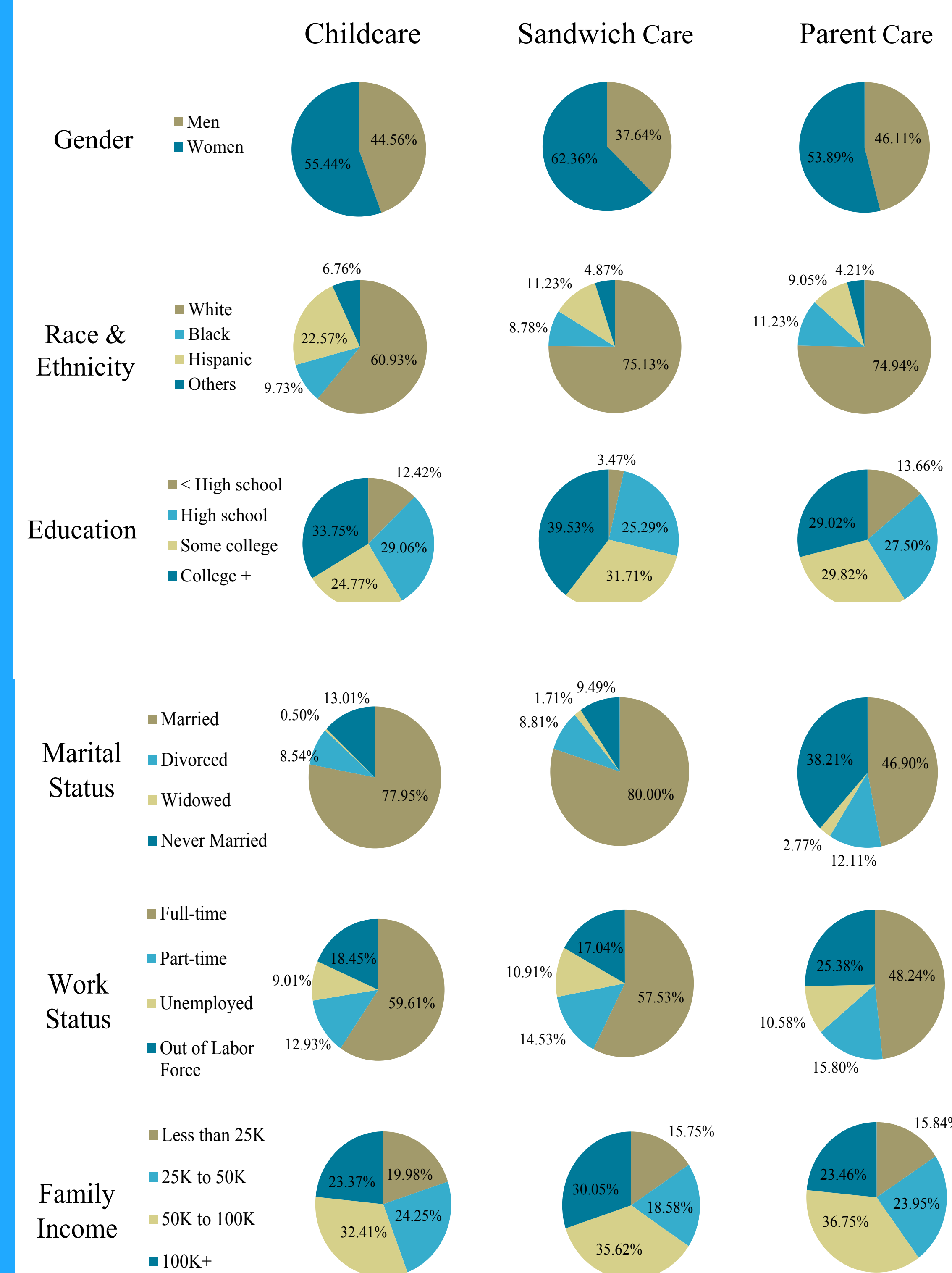
Analytic Sample

- 7,294 caregivers of children
- 1,567 caregivers of parents/grandparents
 - Of whom, 372 provided care to parents/grandparents on the diary day
- 976 sandwich caregivers
 - All provided care to children, but only 167 caregivers provided care to parents/grandparents on the diary day

Characteristics of Family Caregivers

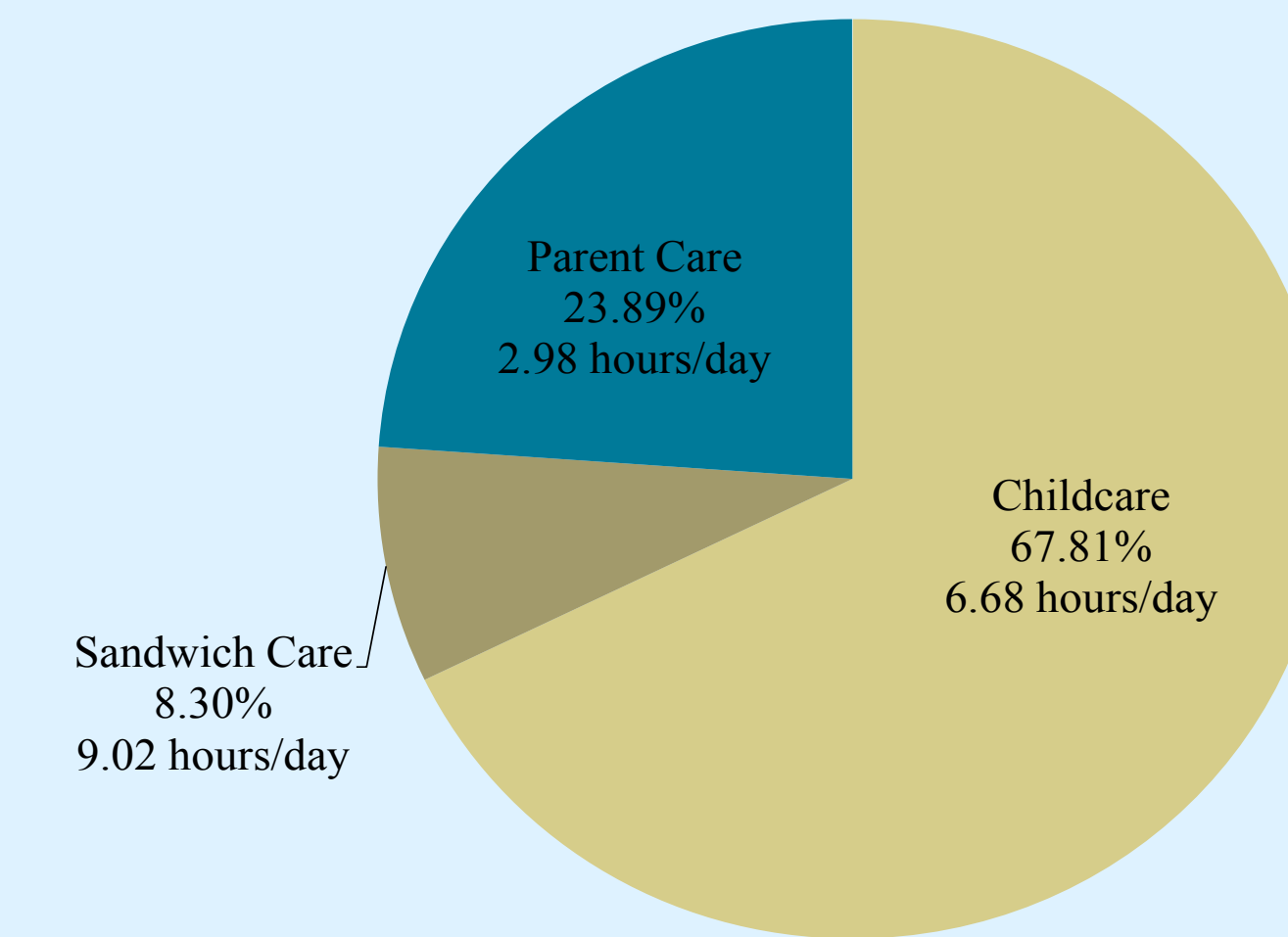
- Consistent with life cycles, caregivers of children were the youngest (38) and caregivers of parents/grandparents were the oldest (44). Sandwich caregivers were in the middle (41).
- Women were more likely than men to be caregivers, particularly among sandwich caregivers.
- Caregivers of children were more likely to be Hispanic, working full-time, and poorer, compared with caregivers of parents/grandparents and sandwich caregivers.
- On average, caregivers of parents/grandparents spent 2.98 hours a day on caregiving. The numbers for caregivers of children and sandwich caregivers were 6.68 hours and 9.02 hours, respectively.

Figure 1. Characteristics of Family Caregivers



Time Spent on Caregiving

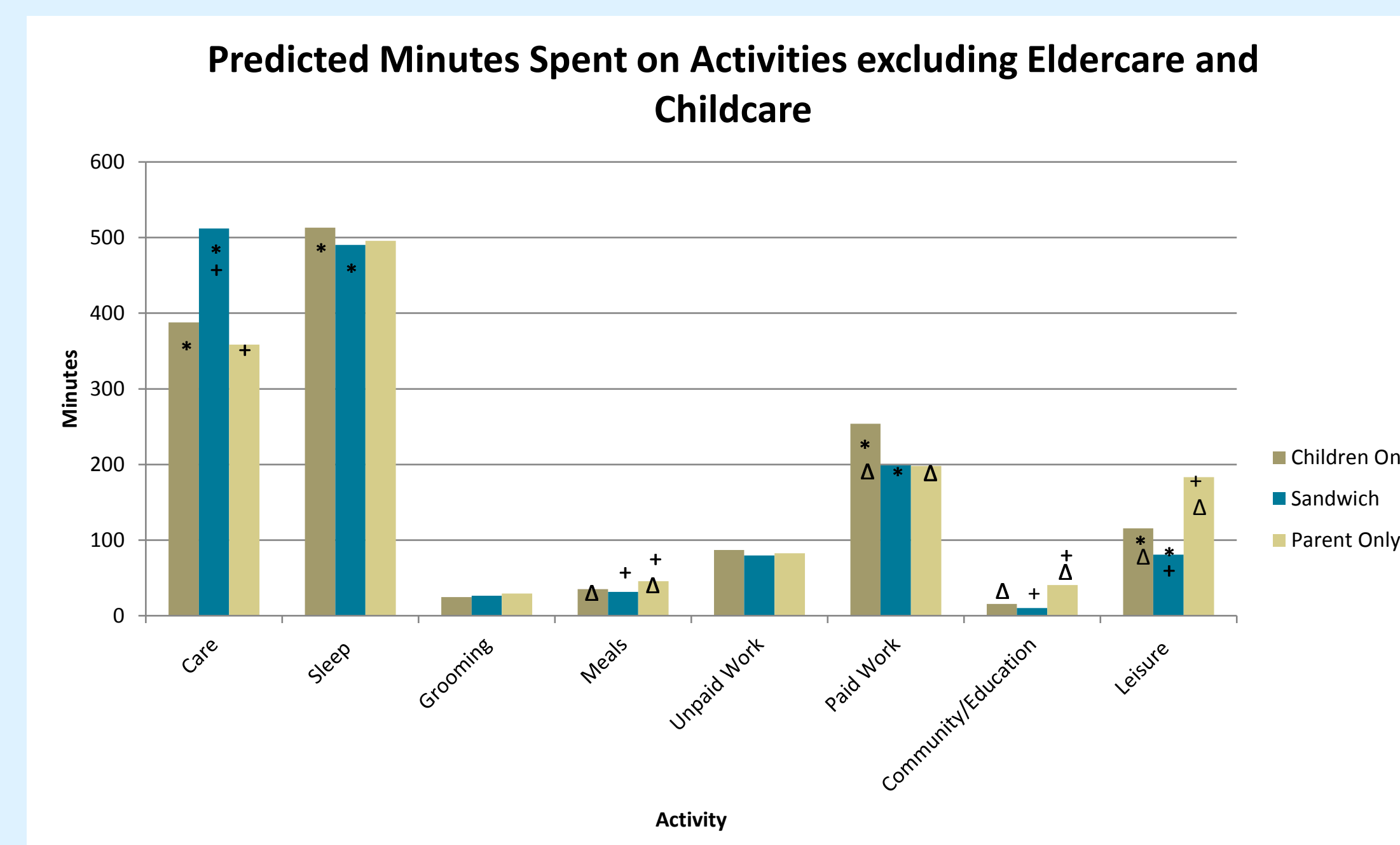
Figure 2. Distribution of Family Caregivers and Average Time Spent on Caregiving



Definition of Activities

- Childcare: Active and secondary
- Parent care: Active and secondary
- Sleep
- Grooming
 - Washing, dressing, personal care
- Meals
 - Eating, drinking
- Unpaid work
 - Chores, running errands, household activities, phone calls to people other than friends and family
- Paid work
 - Full- or part-time work and any other income generating activities
- Community and education
 - Religious activities, volunteer work, civic or government duties
- Leisure
 - Socializing, hobbies, using media such as television or the internet, playing sports or exercising

Allocation of Time on Various Activities

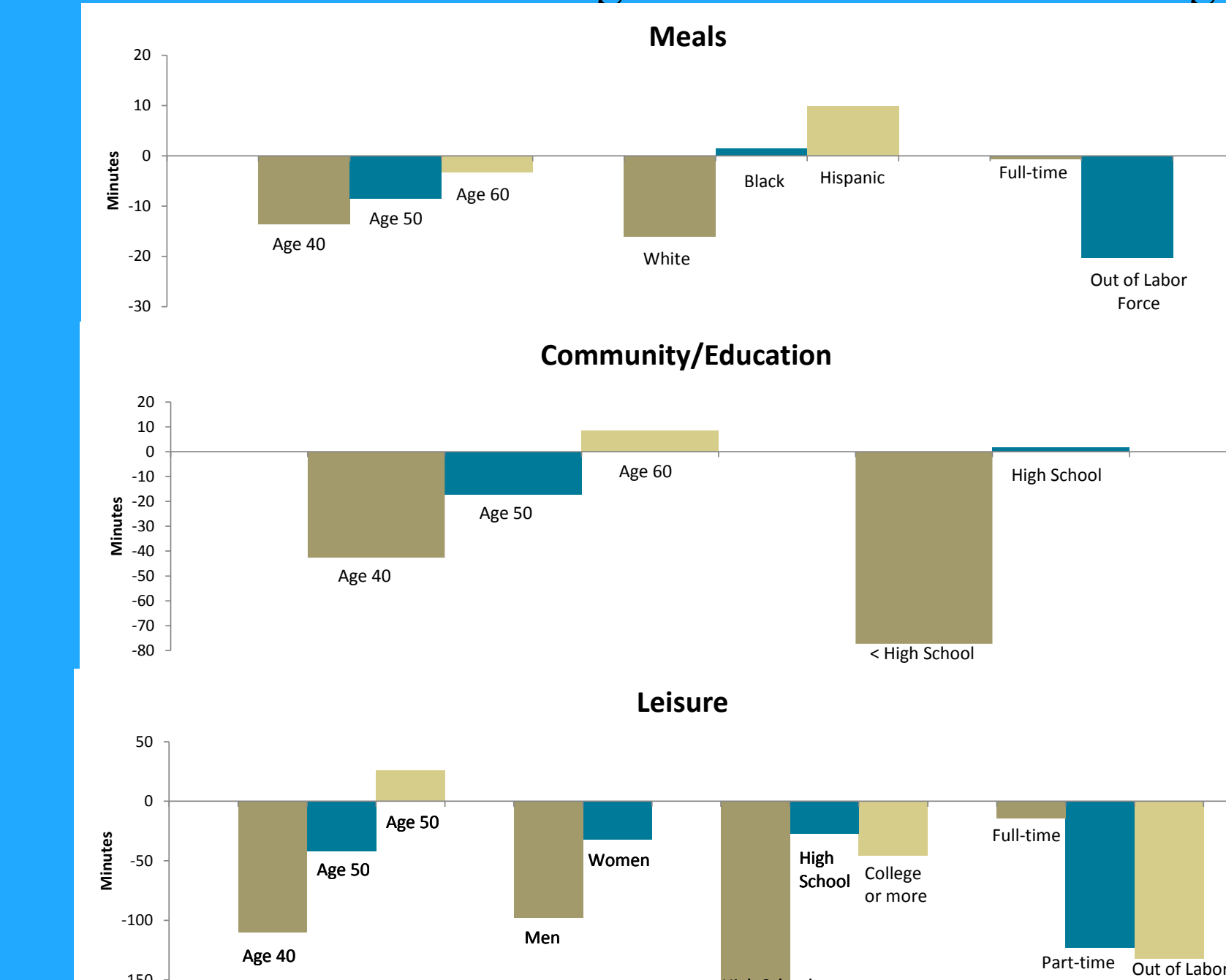


- Compared with caregivers of parents/grandparents, caregivers of children spent significantly less time on meals, community/education, and leisure.
- Compared with caregivers of children, sandwich caregivers spent significantly less time on sleep, paid work, and leisure.

How Do Sandwich Caregivers “Squeeze” Time Compared to Caregivers of Children?

- The reduction in time spent on meals for childcare versus parent care was greater for caregivers who were younger, who were White, and who were out of labor force.
- The reduction in time spent on community/education for child care versus parent care was greater for caregivers who were younger and who had received less than high-school education.
- The reduction in time spent on leisure for child care versus parent care was greater for caregivers who were younger, men caregivers, caregivers who had received less than high-school education, and caregivers who worked part-time or not in the labor force.

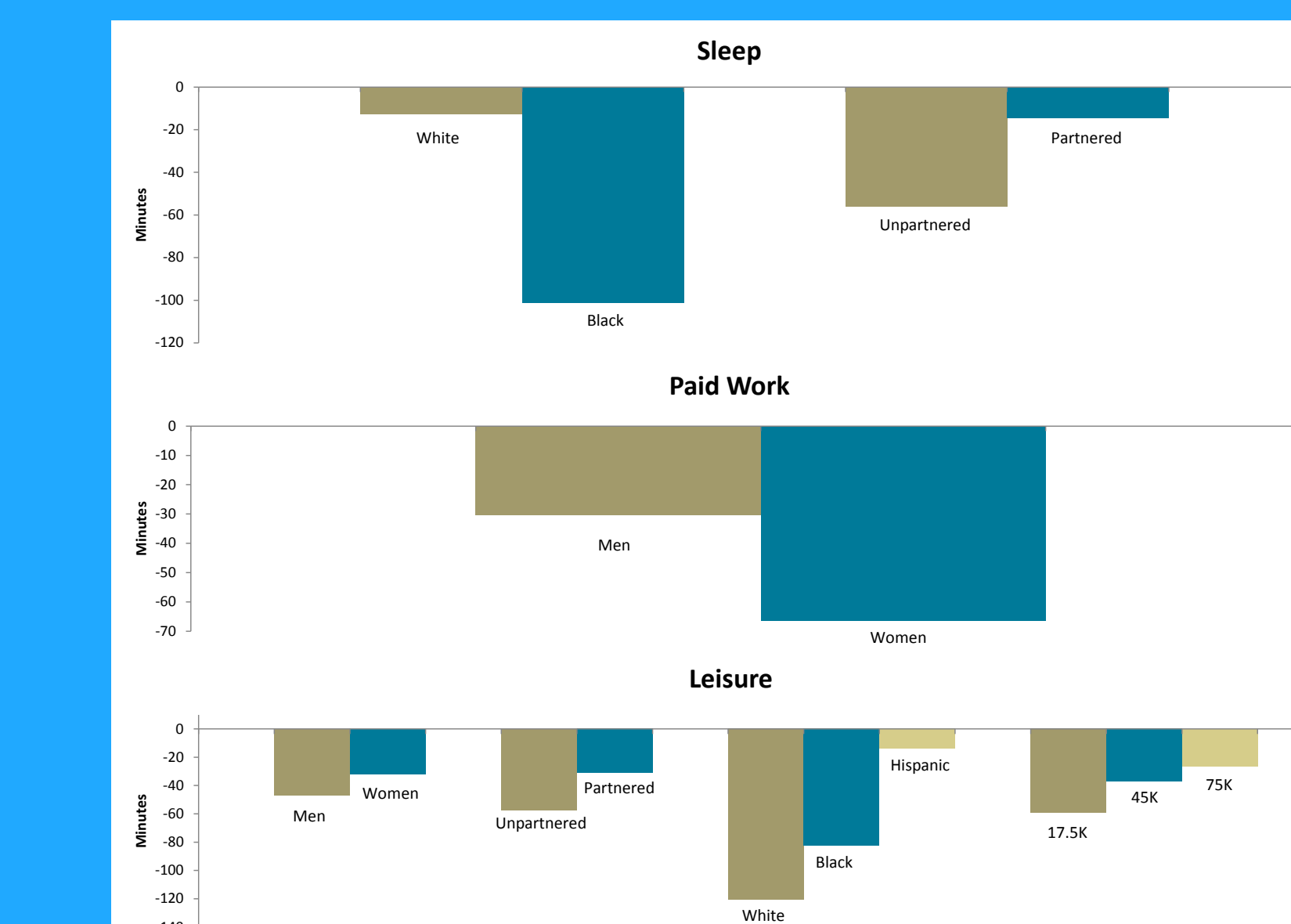
Figure 4. Difference between Caregivers of Children and Caregivers of Parents



How Do Sandwich Caregivers “Squeeze” Time Compared to Caregivers of Parents?

- The reduction in time spent on sleep for sandwich care versus child care was greater for caregivers who were Black and who were unpartnered.
- The reduction in time spent on paid work for sandwich care versus child care was greater for women caregivers.
- The reduction in time spent on leisure for sandwich care versus child care was greater for men caregivers, caregivers who were unpartnered, caregivers who were White, and caregivers who had lower family incomes.

Figure 5. Difference between Sandwich Caregivers and Caregivers of Children



Summary

- In response to the aging of Baby Boomers, many researchers and policymakers have turned their attention to the stress of caring for older adults. Yet, this study showed that caregivers of parents/grandparents spent the least time on caregiving among the three types of family caregivers.
- The finding that caregivers of children spent more time on caregiving than caregivers of parents/grandparents may reflect the fact that U.S. culture places a greater emphasis on obligations to children than to parents/grandparents.
- Sandwich caregivers were more likely than caregivers of children or parents/grandparents to have received more education and enjoy higher incomes, but in response to the demands of caring for both generations, they spent the least time on sleep and leisure, consequently putting their health at greatest risk.
- Caregivers who were already disadvantaged (e.g., younger, less-educated, unpartnered, out of labor force) tended to cut back time on meals, sleep, leisure, and community/education, further widening health disparities among caregivers.

Limitations and Future Directions

- Although a large number of respondents reported that they had provided care to 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., spouse, sibling, aunt/uncle, or niece/nephew). Future research should extend the current study to examine whether the patterns of time use vary depending on kinship ties.

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