

Center for Demography and Ecology

University of Wisconsin-Madison

The Use of Grandparents as Child Care Providers

Lina Guzman

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Lina Guzman
Department of Sociology
University of Wisconsin-Madison
1180 Observatory Drive
Madison, WI 53706
guzman@ssc.wisc.edu

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With an increase in the labor force participation rates of women with young children, researchers have begun to examine issues surrounding child care more closely. Among the many issues concerning researchers are the types of child care arrangements that women chose and the factors associated with their decision. Despite a growth in organized child care facilities (Goodman 1995), a significant proportion of children continued to be cared for by family relatives. Aside from the child's father, grandparents (in particular maternal grandmothers) are the family members who most commonly provide child care (Casper 1996; Casper, Hawkins & O'Connell 1994). According to CPS estimates, approximately 17% of working mothers with children under the age of five rely on grandparents for their primary child care needs (Casper 1996).

While it is clear that families with young children are continuing to rely on grandparents to provide some or all of their child care needs, it is less clear what factors are associated with parents' decision to use grandparents as child care providers. Past research has suggested that child care decisions are driven to some extent by both the availability of family relatives (Floge 1985) and need (Hofferth, Brayfield, Deich & Holcomb 1991; NICHD 1997; Eggebeen & Hogan 1990). Not surprisingly, several studies have found that having a relative nearby increases the likelihood that a parent will use relative child care (Kuhlthau & Mason 1991; Floge 1985; NICHD 1997).

The needs of parents and their children also play a role in child care decisions. Casper et al. (1994) find a higher proportion of single mothers relying on grandparents to fulfill their primary child care needs. In the absence of a partner, mothers of young children often turn to their parents and other family members to meet some of their child care needs (Hofferth et al. 1991). Children from poor families and families

receiving government assistance are also more likely to be cared for by grandparents (Casper 1996). For single mothers and financially strapped parents, grandparents clearly provide an affordable alternative to more costly child care arrangements.

Missing in the literature, however, is the extent to which inter-generational ties and, to a lesser extent, parental preferences concerning child care guide the decision to place children under the care of grandparents. Simply stated, the decision to have a grandparent provide child care may be driven by more than need or availability. The use of grandparents may also reflect the strength of inter-generational ties. A consistent finding of past research has been that single mothers are more likely to rely on grandparents for child care than married mothers (Hofferth et al. 1991; Casper 1996). While this pattern has most often been interpreted in terms of the economic burden that single mothers face, it also suggests a high degree of cohesiveness among families, especially in times of need.

The literature is full of examples that speak to the continuity of ties between parents and children across the lifecourse (Logan & Spitze 1996; Eggebeen & Hogan 1990; Aldous 1987). One of the many ways in which ties are maintained and strengthened throughout the life course is through the transmission of instrumental aid. Adult children and parents often come to each other's assistance by giving a hand with household tasks, providing financial assistance in the time of need, and by providing child care (Logan & Spitze 1996; Eggebeen & Hogan 1990). Eggebeen & Hogan (1990) find that parents of young children are the recipients of the largest amount of aid transmitted between parents and adult children, and that child care accounts for the sizable portion of these exchanges. Approximately 40% of parents of children under the age of five in their sample reported receiving childcare assistance from their parents.

While the transmission of instrumental aid appears to be largely dependent on need (see Aldous

1987), it may also be dependent on the quality of inter-generational ties (Bengston & Roberts 1991). Aldous (1987), for example, reports that parents initiate contact and provide support to adult children, not only as a function of existing need but also as a function of the closeness existing between the two generations. That is, parents and adult children who share close emotional bonds are more likely to be recipients and providers of aid. Her findings are not surprising given that much of the aid that is provided involves a great amount of time and effort, and in many instances an emotional and monetary commitment as well. The provision of child care is no exception. Caring for child is both labor intensive and time consuming and often quite challenging. Grandparents rarely receive monetary compensation for child care (Jendrek 1993), and when they do it is often well below market prices (Presser 1989). For many young grandparents who are still in the labor market providing child care means that they are faced with long taxing days. For those already outside of the labor market providing child care means that they have less time to pursue other activities. In a recent study, Jendrek (1993) found that 80% of grandparents who cared for their grandchildren, either by becoming custodial guardians or by providing 'day care', had to alter routines and plans in order to care for their grandchildren, and 50% had less time for themselves and friends. On the up side, 55% of grandparents also reported that caring for their grandchildren gave them more purpose for living. Clearly, providing child care is a mixed blessing for grandparents. On the one hand, they are able to help their adult children in a time of need and develop ties with their grandchildren. On the other hand, grandparents reencounter the hardships of parenting during a time when there is an expectation that life should be getting easier (Burton & Bengston 1985). Despite all this, a large proportion of grandparents continue to assist their children. Given the potential costs incurred by grandparents it is unlikely that grandparents will agree to provide child care if their relationship with their adult child is distant.

This may be especially true if one the ways in which to offset the psychological and emotional costs is through the reward of having a warm and close relationship with the child to whom they are providing aid.

Less clear, however, is the role that the quality of inter-generational ties plays in an adult child's willingness to call upon his or her parents to provide child care. Adult children who do not have a close relationship with their parent should be less likely to call on their parent for several reasons: 1) they may be less likely to expect to receive care; 2) to the extent that a poor adult child-parent relationship reflects the adult child's negative perception of the way he or she were reared, the adult child may be less willing to have his or her own child cared for by the grandparent; and, 3) adult children who have a poor relationship with their parents may want to avoid frequent contact--something that would be required if the parent provided child care. In contrast, adult children who enjoy a close relationship with their parents may be more likely to expect to receive child care assistance, especially if a pattern of reciprocity and assistance already exists. Adult children who enjoy close ties with their parents may also be eager to have their parents play a central role in the rearing of their young children. Not only does the provision of child care provide concerned parents the comfort and security of knowing that their child will be cared for by someone they trust and know, but it is also an opportunity for three generations to grow closer.

Child care decisions may also be based on parental notions of what is appropriate or ideal for their child. In today's economy few parents have the option of remaining out of the labor market. For mothers apprehensive about placing their young children in the hands of 'a stranger,' or for those who simply prefer that their child be cared for by a family relative, grandparents provide a welcomed alternative to non-relative care. Recent work has shown that timing and type of arrangement an infant is placed under is

strongly associated with mothers' commitment to work and her beliefs about the importance of maternal care (NICHD 1997; Kuhlthau & Mason 1991). Close to a third of parents of young children prefer relative care over other forms of childcare, when parental care is not possible (Hofferth et al. 1991). Among family relatives grandparents appear to be the most sought after (Kuhlthau & Mason 1991) and the most likely to provide care (Casper 1996). Further pointing to the notion that preferences can dictate child care decisions is Mason & Kuhlthau's (1992) finding that women who lack nearby relatives are more likely to report that the unavailability of child care has constrained their labor force participation. Together these findings provide evidence of the existence of a strong preference for relative care among mothers of young children.

Using data from the first and second waves of The National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH), I will attempt to bridge the gap in the literature by looking at the role that maternal preferences and inter-generational ties play in the decision to use grandparents for child care. The NSFH offers several advantages over other data sets, most notably its rich array of information on family structure and inter-generational contact over the life course. Data from the first and second waves of the NSFH will allow me to examine whether maternal preferences and inter-generational ties at time 1 affect the likelihood that grandparents provide child care at time 2. The only studies that I am aware of which examined the role of preferences and relationship quality measured them at the time that care was provided. A problem with these studies is that it is unclear whether relationship quality or preferences are a result of current child care arrangements or whether child care arrangements are influenced by relationship quality and preferences. Third, unlike previous studies, I will be looking specifically at the factors associated with the use of grandparent child care. Studies based on large national samples often note that a high proportion of

mothers use grandparents to meet some or all of their child care needs. However, they often lack the data needed to examine the links between inter-generational relationships and the use of grandparent child care. Smaller studies that have been able to look at these factors often combine all types of family relatives (including fathers, grandparents, aunts etc.) into one category and thus are only able to speak of relative care.

Methods

Sample: The present study is based on the first wave and second wave of the National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH)-a nationally representative panel study of U.S. adults (see Sweet, Bumpass & Call 1988). The NSFH was first conducted in 1987-88 with 13,018 adults, including an oversampling of cohabiting, recently married couples, and single parent families, as well as African American, Mexican American and Puerto Rican households. One adult per household was randomly selected to be personally interviewed (primary respondent). The second wave included personal interviews with the primary respondent and their current spouse or partner (secondary respondent).

During the main interview, all currently employed female primary respondents with children under the age of 5 were administered a series of items concerning current child care arrangements. Information on three key child care issues was collected: 1) child care provider(s); 2) number of hours child spends with each provider; and, 3) whether care is provided in the respondents' home or elsewhere.

Secondary respondents were also asked about child care arrangements. Unfortunately time 1 data was not available for the majority of these respondents.¹ The analysis was, therefore, limited to female

¹ At time 1, most secondary respondents were not yet married to the primary respondent and therefore were not interviewed.

primary respondents with children under the age of five who were currently employed. Of the 606 employed mothers of preschool aged children, 18 (3%) did not have either a living mother or mother-in-law and were, therefore, excluded from the sample.

Grandparent Child Care: As noted above, respondents were asked to report the types of child care providers they used. One of the categories on the list provided to them was grandparents. However, respondents were not asked to specify which grandparent provided child care. As a result information is only available on whether or not grandparent child care was used.

For the first set of analyses, I constructed a dichotomous variable of whether or not grandparent child care was used. To address the issue of whether the factors associated with the provision of care differ by the amount of child care that is provided, the second set of analyses was based on a measure which captured the proportion of mother's child care needs that a grandparent provides (measured by dividing the number of hours grandparent provides childcare to the number of hours that the mother is employed).

Child Care Needs: To measure the child care needs of mothers, four sets of variables were included. The first set captured characteristics of the mothers' work schedule, including hours worked per week. In addition, information was collected on respondents' work schedule, including whether the times and days varied, and whether work occurred during nights (between 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.)

The second set of variables measured characteristics of the children, such as age of youngest child and the presence of more than 1 child under the age of 5 in the household. A third categorical variable measured family structure (mother in a union with children from current union, mother in a union with children not from current union, and mother single--not cohabiting). Lastly, two measures of income were included: a) mother's hourly wages; and, b) AFDC receipt.

Availability of Grandparents: A major consideration in all child care decisions is convenience. All else being equal, the longer the amount of travel time to and from the grandparents' home the less likely that grandparents will be asked to provide care. Several studies have also included measures of household composition and have paid particular attention to the presence of female relatives. Floge (1985), for example, found that mothers living in households with other adult female relatives were more likely to receive child care assistance from relatives than women living alone with their children. To capture the availability of grandparents two dummy variables were included: 1) whether or not a maternal or paternal grandmother lived within 25 miles of the respondent; and 2) whether or not the respondent and a grandmother co-resided.

My decision to solely use the availability and characteristics of grandmothers was based on several reasons. First, inter-generational exchanges and contact--in particular child care--are often initiated and maintained by women (Roschelle 1997; Eggebeen & Hogan 1990; Hagestad & Neugarten 1985). As such women are often thought of as the family gate keepers. In contrast, men seldom engage in family activities independently from female family members (Johnson 1988). Secondly, child care when provided by a family member (excluding fathers) is most often provided by female kin (Roschelle 1997; Eggebeen & Hogan 1990). Lastly, if the grandparent's marriage is intact the issue of whose measure of availability to include is simplified because in most cases, if not all, the couple will be residing in the same location and thus, for the purposes of this analysis will have the same measure of availability. The issue of whose measure of availability to use is less straightforward in the cases where the grandparents are divorced. However, previous research has shown that parental divorce has negative consequences on relationships between parents and their children, and that this effect is most profound among children and divorced

fathers.

An issue that goes hand in hand with availability of grandmothers is their ability to provide care. The issue of ability is of special importance to this study because the potential providers of care are drawn from an older population of adults. For example, many of the grandparents who would be considered to be available using measures of geographic proximity and household structure may be too old or ill to do so. To address the issue of ability, measures of grandmothers' health and age were also included.

It is important to note that neither availability or ability address the willingness of grandparents to provide child care. Johnson (1988), for example, found that many grandparents preferred their role to be limited to social and recreational activities, and consciously rejected domestic and parental dimensions that form our traditional notions of grandparenthood (see also Cherlin & Furstenberg 1985). For these set of grandparents, their days of parenting were over; instead they looked forward toward an active, yet leisurely, retirement. For others, however, the idea of taking an active role in the rearing of their grandchildren was a welcomed experience, and provided a sense of importance. Clearly grandparenthood does not carry the same meaning for everyone. These findings suggest that some grandparents, despite their ability to provide child care will be unwilling to do so on a regular basis. Unfortunately, the data necessary to address this issue are not available.

Relationship Characteristics: In the first wave of the study, respondents were asked a series of questions about their relationship with their parents and, if married or cohabiting, their in-laws. The measures included a global indicator of the relationship quality: "On a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 is very poor and 7 is excellent, how would you describe your relationship with your mother (if married/cohabiting, mother-in-law)?" In addition, respondents were asked about the amount of contact that they had with their

mother (and mother-in-law): “During the past 12 months, about how often did you see your mother (mother-in-law)?”; “During the past 12 months, how often did you communicate with your mother (mother-in-law) by letter or phone?” For both items, the response options were scored as follows: 1 = not at all; 2 = about once a year; 3 = several times a year; 4 = 1-3 times a year; 5 = about once a week; and, 6 = several times a week. Respondents who resided with grandparents were assigned a value of 7 on both items. Cherlin and Furstenberg (1986) have reported that telephone calls and letters are a form of reinforcing already routine contacts, rather than a way to maintain long distant relationships. Therefore, I constructed a measure of contact by averaging the scores for phone and letter contact and visits.

Child Care Attitudes: During the first wave of the study, respondents were asked three questions about their views on mothers with preschool aged children who work and day care arrangements of young children. “On a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 is strongly approve and 7 is strongly disapprove, please rate how much you approve or disapprove of the behaviors described: a) Mothers who work full-time when their youngest child is under age 5?; b) Children under 3 years old being cared for all day in a day care center?; c) Mothers who work part-time when their youngest child is under age 5?. A scale based on these three items was constructed by taking the mean score (Cronbach alpha = .77). A high score on this scale (i.e., disapproval) was expected to be associated with the use of grandparent child care.

Analyses and Results

As shown in table 1, over half of the women in the sample have a mother who lives within 25 miles, and slightly more than half of married women have a mother-in-law who lives within 25 miles. Grandparents who live nearby are relatively young and in good health. Both maternal and paternal

grandmothers enjoy relatively close relationships with their daughters and daughter-in-laws. However, adult children and mothers maintain more frequent contact with each other than daughter-in-laws and mother-in-laws.

(Table 1 about here.)

Single women whose mothers live nearby use grandparent child care at a higher rate than married women (see table 2). Among married women, the proportion who use grandparent child care is highest among those who have both grandmothers living nearby. Surprisingly, the proportion who report using grandparent child care is similar for women who only have a maternal grandmother (i.e., respondent's mother) living nearby and those who only have a paternal grandmother living nearby. Given that mother-child relationships are generally closer than relationships with in-laws, we would expect mothers to call upon maternal grandmothers at a higher frequency. This finding, however, suggests that women do not have a strong preference over which grandmother--maternal or paternal--will provide child care.

(Table 2 about here.)

Table 3 presents the bivariate relationship between grandparent and relationship characteristics, and the use of grandparent child care. Women who report using grandparent child care have slightly younger mothers and in-laws than women who do not use grandparent child care.² As expected, mothers who use grandparent child care enjoy a higher relationship quality and have more frequent contact with their

² The reader is reminded that because of the way in which the data were collected we are not able to determine which grandmother provided child care. The characteristics described are those of maternal and paternal grandmothers among mothers who report using grandparent child care and those who do not report using grandparent child care. As a result of the data limitations it is not possible to determine which set of characteristics (i.e., maternal or paternal) should be attributed to the child care provider.

mothers and in-laws than mothers who do not use grandparent child care. Surprisingly, the health of grandmothers among women who report using grandparent child care is somewhat poorer than among those who do not use grandparent child care. One possible explanation is that grandparents who are healthy are more likely to be in the labor force, and therefore less available to provide child care. However, if participation in labor force is limiting the use of grandparent child care, one would expect that grandparents who provide child care to be older than those who do not. This, however, is not the case. While the reasons for this relationship are unclear, it is troubling, nonetheless, that a large proportion of grandparents who provide child care appear to be in poor health.

(Table 3 about here.)

Table 4 provides an overall picture of the child care arrangements used by mothers in this sample. Over a quarter of the women in the sample rely on their parents or in-laws to meet some or all of their child care needs. Tables 5 through 7 present the bivariate relationship between types of child care arrangements used and various indicators of child care needs (i.e., hours worked, age of child, and marital status.) Contrary to our expectation, there is little variation in child care arrangements by mothers' employment status. There are, however, two notable exceptions: 1) a higher proportion of mothers who work part-time rely on their spouse or partner for some or all of their child care needs; and, 2) full-time employed mothers are more likely to use organized child care facilities.

Contrary to past findings (Floge 1985; Kuhlthau & Mason 1991), the use of grandparent child care is more common among mothers with older children. This is partly due to a high proportion of mothers with children under the age of 2 using spouses and non-relatives for child care. More surprising, however, is the finding that only a slightly higher proportion of single mothers report using grandparent child care than

married women. However, while the proportion using grandparent child care is not much higher among single women, the proportion who report that other family members (not including grandparents or child's father) provide child care is nearly twice as high among single mothers than among married women. That is, while single mothers are no more likely to call on grandparents to provide child care they are more likely to call on other family members, such as sisters or aunts.

(Tables 4 through 7 about here.)

To assess the importance of the four sets of factors associated with child care decisions, we now turn to the logistic regression results presented in tables 8 and 9. The regression was first estimated for the entire sample (which includes single women, women already married at time 1, and newly married women) and then separately for women who were already married at time 1 (i.e., time 1 data on mother-in-laws was available). In the first model, estimated for the entire sample, only characteristics of maternal grandmothers are included since time 1 data on paternal grandmothers is missing for a large number of the women (i.e., respondent was not married at time 1). In the second model, estimated for women already married at time 1, characteristics of paternal grandmothers are included.

Child care needs of mothers do not appear to predict the use of grandparent child care. Of the four indicators of child care needs, only work-time is significantly associated with a decreased likelihood that grandparent child care is used. Instead, the availability of grandmothers is the factor that most drives the use of grandparent child care. Having a maternal grandmother living in the household or within 25 miles increases the likelihood that mothers of preschool aged children will use grandparent child care. While the effect of relationship quality and contact on the use of grandparent child care is in the expected direction, the effect is not significant.

(Table 8 about here.)

Table 9 presents the results of the model estimated for mothers who were married at time 1. For the most part, the results are similar to those seen in the previous model. Neither mothers' work, income or children's characteristics have a significant effect on the likelihood that grandparent child care is used. Mothers whose children are not from their current union are less likely to use grandparent child care, however the effect of family structure is not significant. As in the previous analysis, mothers who have a grandmother in the household or living nearby are significantly more likely to report using grandparent child care. While the quality of relationship with grandmothers at time 1 is not significantly associated with the likelihood that grandparent child care is used at time 2, the amount of contact at time 1 with maternal and paternal grandmothers is. Among those who were married at time 1, women who were in frequent contact with their mothers and mother-in-laws at time 1 were more likely to rely on grandparents to meet some or all of their child care needs at time 2. This suggests that those who maintain close contact with their mothers and in-laws may have established a pattern of exchange and visitations that facilitates the provision of child care when the need arises. This is consistent with the findings of Eggebeen & Hogan (1990) who report that patterns of assistance established throughout the life course are important determinants of current assistance. As in the previous model, child care preferences at time 1 are not significantly associated with the use of grandparent child care.

(Table 9 about here.)

Tables 10 and 11 present the results of ordinary least square regression estimating the proportion of mothers' child care needs that grandparents provide. Again the models are first estimated for the entire sample (including single mothers, women already married at time 1, and women who are newly married)

and then for women who were already married at time 1. As noted earlier, it was important to estimate the proportion of child care needs that grandparents provided in order to examine whether relationship characteristics and preferences affect not only the use of grandparent child care but the amount of child care that is provided.

(Table 10 and 11 about here.)

As in previous models, mothers' work characteristics and income are not significantly associated with the proportion of child care needs that grandparents provide. As indicated by the bivariate analysis, mothers with younger children have a significantly lower proportion of their child care needs provided by grandparents. In the reduced sample, however, the effect of age of child, while in the same direction, is no longer significant. In addition, mothers whose children are not from their current union receive a significantly smaller proportion of child care from grandparents than women whose children are from their current union. This is partly a result of their having one less grandmother (i.e., spouse mother) available to provide care. It also suggests that mother-in-laws are less likely to provide child care to their daughter-in-laws if the child in question is not their biological grandchild.

As in previous models the availability of maternal grandmothers is significantly associated with the proportion of child care needs provided by grandmothers. Not only are mothers with nearby kin relying on grandparents for child care, but they also more likely to have a larger proportion of their child care needs provided by a grandparent. That is, women whose mothers live nearby appear to be relying on grandparents for primary rather than auxiliary care. Consistent with the bivariate analysis, women whose mothers are in good health receive a significantly lower proportion of their child care from the grandparents than women whose mothers are in poor health. Again, it is important to interpret this finding with caution

since the data do not allow us to identify which grandmother (i.e., maternal or paternal) is providing care. Nonetheless, it is important to note that many of the grandparents who provide care do not appear to be in good health. This is especially troubling because health complications may increase the burden incurred by grandparents who provide child care. Caring for a young child is a challenging job for any healthy young adult. This challenge is further exacerbated by old age and poor health. In addition, the health of caregivers is likely to have an impact on the quality of care that children receive. Grandmothers who are in poor health are less likely to be active with their grandchildren. For example, they may be less likely to take them out for walks or to the parks, and may have difficulty 'keeping up' with their young and active grandchild.

In the full sample (married at time 1, newly married & single women), we find that those who report a close relationship with their mothers at time 1 are more likely to receive a higher proportion of their child care needs from grandparents at time 2, but the amount of contact with mothers at time 1, while in the expected direction, is not significantly associated with the proportion of child care needs provided by grandparents at time 2. In the reduced model (already married at time 1) the opposite is true. That is, those who are in frequent contact with the maternal grandmothers at time 1 receive a higher proportion of their child care needs from grandparents. As in the previous models child care preferences are not significantly associated with the proportion of child care needs that grandparents provide.

Summary and Conclusion

This analysis has examined four factors associated with the use of grandparent child care. As in previous studies, this study examined how child care needs and the availability of relatives affect mothers' child care choices. Unlike previous studies that have looked at the use of relative child care, this study

included measures of inter-generational relationships and child care preferences among employed mothers prior to the receipt of aid. With the use of panel data I was able to measure the child care preferences of mothers, as well as the quality of relationship between adult children and their mothers and in-laws, prior to the adult children receiving child care. Previous studies that have included indicators of inter-generational relationship and child care preferences have measured them at the same time that care was being provided, thereby leaving unanswered the question of causality.

The analyses presented indicate that the decision to use grandparents for child care is largely driven by the availability of both maternal and paternal grandmothers. This finding is consistent with that of previous research which finds that women who have nearby kin are more likely to rely on relatives to provide their child care needs (Floge 1985; Kuhlthau & Mason 1991; NICHD 1997). In contrast to availability, mothers' child care needs do not appear to be related to the use of grandparent child care or the amount of child care needs provided by grandparents. This finding is contrary to our expectation that mothers with greater child care needs (e.g., single mothers, more than 1 child, full-time employed etc.) would be more likely to turn to their mothers or mother-in-laws for assistance.

The study also provides some support for the hypothesis that the provision of child care by grandparents is facilitated by close inter-generational relationships. Among women who were already married at time 1, the quality of their relationship with their mothers and mothers-in-law increased the likelihood that they would receive child care assistance from grandparents at time 2. In addition, women who enjoyed close relationships with their mothers and in-laws at time 1 received a larger proportion of their child care needs from grandparents. In other words, women with close ties to their mothers and mother-in-laws were more likely to call upon grandparents to be primary child care providers. Together

these findings suggest that close inter-generational relationships and established patterns of contact facilitate the provision and receipt of aid.

Kuhlthau & Mason (1991) have suggested that mothers often view grandparent child care as a close substitute for parental care. Mothers in their study with strong preferences for parental care were more likely to use relative child care. In contrast to their study, we find no evidence that child care preferences are associated with the use of grandparent child care. It may be that our measures of child care preferences did not adequately tap into the child care preferences or ideals of mothers.

A weakness of this study is that we were not able to identify which grandmother (maternal or paternal) provided care. This is especially important to this study because we are trying to assess the effect of inter-generational relationships on the provision of care. It is likely that were we able to identify which grandmother provided care the relationship between inter-generational ties and the provision of child care would be stronger than is seen here.

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Table 1: Availability and Characteristics of Grandparents Among Employed Mothers of Preschool Aged Children

Availability:	Maternal Grandmother		Paternal Grandmother	
	Proportion/Mean	Valid Cases	Proportion/Mean	Valid Cases
Alive at time 2	88.9	588	89.2	474 ^a
Lives within 25 miles at time 2	59.2	522	55.0	422
Characteristics among those living within 25 miles:				
Grandmother in good health at time 2	64.0	308	62.4	229
Grandmother's age at time 2	56.86	304	59.55	216
Amount of Contact at time 1	5.49	303	4.69	147 ^b
Quality of Relationship at time 1	5.89	304	5.38	172

1. Source: National Survey of Families and Households, Waves I and II.

2. Sample: Female Primary Respondents in the labor force with preschool aged children.

a. Reports on paternal grandmothers are only available for respondents who were married at time 2.

b. Reports on relationship quality and contact with paternal grandmothers are only available for respondents who were already married at time 1.

Table 2: Use of Grandparent Child Care Among Employed Mothers of Preschool Aged Children by Availability of Grandparents

Availability:	Single		Married/Cohabiting	
	Proportion	Valid Cases	Proportion	Valid Cases
Only maternal grandmother lives within 25 miles	47.7	65	34.8	89
Only paternal grandmother lives within 25 miles	N/A	N/A	30.5	82
Both grandmothers live within 25 miles	N/A	N/A	42.7	143
Either grandmother lives within 25 miles	N/A	N/A	32.7	171

1. Source: National Survey of Families and Households, Waves I and II.

2. Sample: Female Primary Respondents in the labor force with preschool aged children.

Table 3: Characteristics of Grandparents and Relationship with Adult Child by Whether Child Care is Provided

Grandparent's characteristics:	Uses Grandparent Child Care		Does Not Use Grandparent Child Care	
	Mean/Proportion	Valid Cases	Mean/Proportion	Valid Cases
Maternal grandmother's age	56.82	161	58.55	380
Paternal grandmother's age ^a	58.43	107	61.17	283
Maternal grandmother good health	60.3	156	64.6	356
Paternal grandmother good health	59.1	110	68.1	304
Quality of relationship at time 1^b:				
Relationship with maternal grandmother	6.06	161	5.79	380
Relationship with paternal grandmother	5.38	103	5.28	255
Amount of contact--maternal grandmother	5.34	161	4.76	380
Amount of contact--paternal grandmother	4.65	86	4.10	217

1. Source: National Survey of Families and Households, Waves I and II.

2. Sample: Female Primary Respondents in the labor force with preschool aged children.

^a Reports on paternal grandmothers are only available for respondents who were married at time 2.

^b Reports on relationship quality and contact with paternal grandmothers are only available for respondents who were already married at time 1.

Table 4: Child Care Arrangements Reported by Employed Mothers of Preschool Aged Children

Child Care Arrangement	Proportion Using Arrangement
Grandparent	28.4
Husband/Partner	33.5
Other family member	16.9
Informal non-relative child care provider	33.7
Organized child care facility	34.1
Mother	6.8
N's	587
Number of child care arrangements	
One Child Care Arrangement	55.4
Two Child Care Arrangements	36.1
Three Child Care Arrangements	8.5
N's	587

1. Source: National Survey of Families and Households, Wave II.

2. Sample: Female Primary Respondents in the labor force with preschool aged children.

3. Note: Column will not total 100% because of multiple child care arrangements

Table 5: Child Care Providers Used by Employed Mothers of Preschool Aged Children by Work Hours

Child Care Arrangement	Number of hours worked	
	Part-time (34 hours or less)	Full-time (35 hours or more)
Grandparent	28.6	28.4
Husband/Partner	45.8	27.6
Other family relative	17.5	16.6
Informal non-relative child care provider	31.2	34.9
Organized child care facility	29.1	36.4
Mother	7.4	6.5
N's	189	398

1. Source: National Survey of Families and Households, Wave II.

2. Sample: Female Primary Respondents in the labor force with preschool aged children.

3. Note: Column will not total 100% because of multiple child care arrangements

Table 6: Child Care Arrangements Reported by Age of Youngest Child Among Employed Mothers of Preschool Aged Children

Child Care Arrangement	Age of Youngest Child					
	Less than 1 year old	1 year old	2 years old	3 years old	4 years old	5 years old
Grandparent	25.0	26.0	25.4	34.7	28.9	31.8
Husband/Partner	39.8	29.7	32.5	33.7	33.3	33.0
Other Family Relative	17.0	24.0	13.5	17.9	12.2	17.0
Informal non-relative child care provider	42.0	42.0	29.4	41.1	27.8	20.5
Organized child care facility	15.9	23.0	31.0	35.8	51.1	50.0
Mother	5.7	6.0	7.9	3.1	10.0	8.0
N's	88	100	126	95	90	88

1. Source: National Survey of Families and Households, Wave II.

2. Sample: Female Primary Respondents in the labor force with preschool aged children.

3. Note: Column will not total 100% because of multiple child care arrangements

Table 7: Child Care Arrangements Reported by Employed Mothers by Marital and Cohabitation Status

Child Care Arrangement	Mother's Marital and Cohabitation Status	
	Married or Living with Partner	Single-not cohabiting
Grandparent	27.6	31.9
Husband/Partner	40.5	5.2
Other Family Relative	14.2	27.6
Informal non-relative child care provider	35.0	28.4
Organized child care facility	31.4	44.8
Mother	7.0	6.0
N's	472	116

1. Source: National Survey of Families and Households, Wave II.
2. Sample: Female Primary Respondents in the labor force with preschool aged children.
3. Note: Column will not total 100% because of multiple child care arrangements

Table 8: Model Predicting Whether Grandparent Provides Child Care, Married and Single Women

Variable Names	b	s.e.
I. Child Care Needs:		
a. Mom's Work Characteristics		
Full-time (Part-time omitted)	-.09	.26
Work days vary	.35	.35
Times vary	-.84**	.40
Works during the night	.03	.26
b. Children's Characteristics		
Age of youngest child	.08	.08
More than 1 child under 5 present	-.13	.32
c. Family structure		
Live with husband or partner and kid(s) not from union	-.51	.33
Single--not cohabiting	-.16	.35
d. Household income		
Mother's hourly wages	.002	.01
Receive AFDC	.47	.59
II. Availability of Grandparents		
Maternal grandmother lives within 25 miles	.96***	.29
Maternal grandmother lives in HH	1.26**	.52
Maternal grandmother in good health	-.35	.25
Maternal grandmother under 54	-.08	.26
III. Relationship Characteristics		
Quality of Relationship with mom, time 1	.10	.09
Amount of contact with mom, time 1	.15	.11
Parents' marriage intact	.06	.25
IV. Child Care Preferences		
Constant	-3.004	.83
N's	497	
Log Likelihood	-245.54	

Table 9: Model Predicting Whether Grandparent Provides Child Care, Married Women

Variable Names	b	s.e.
I. Child Care Needs:		
A. Mom's Work Characteristics		
Full-time (Part-time omitted)	-.29	.44
Work days vary	.81	.59
Times vary	-.68	.64
Works during the night	-.39	.43
B. Children's Characteristics		
Age of youngest child	.09	.14
More than 1 child under 5 present	.41	.51
C. Family structure		
Live with husband or partner and kid(s) not from union	-.94	.60
D. Household income		
Mother's hourly wages	-.002	.01
Receive AFDC	-.01	1.44
II. Availability of Grandparents		
Only maternal grandmother lives within 25 miles	.91	.79
Only paternal grandmother lives within 25 miles	1.75**	.71
Both grandmothers live within 25 miles	1.16*	.68
A Grandmother lives in HH	3.16**	1.28
A grandmother in good health	-.50	.39
A grandmother under 54	.51	.51
III. Relationship Characteristics, time 1		
Quality of relationship--maternal grandmother	.17	.16
Quality of relationship--paternal grandmother	.10	.13
Amount of contact with maternal grandmother	.78**	.24
Amount of contact with paternal grandmother	.42**	.18
Parents' marriage intact	.15	.44
In-Laws' Marriage intact	.47	.46
IV. Child Care Preferences		
Constant	-6.03	1.76
N's	274	
Log Likelihood	-96.45	

Table 10: OLS Regression Model Estimating Proportion of Mother’s Child Care Needs Provided By Grandparents, Married and Single Women

Variable Names	b	s.e.
I. Child Care Needs:		
A. Mom’s Work Characteristics		
Full-time (Part-time omitted)	-.05	.04
Work days vary	.04	.05
Times vary	-.07	.05
Works during the night	-.04	.04
B. Children’s Characteristics		
Age of youngest child	-.02*	.01
More than 1 child under 5 present	-.07	.05
C. Family structure		
Live with husband or partner and kid(s) not from union	-.08*	.04
Single--not cohabiting	-.07	.05
D. Household income		
Mother’s hourly wages	.002	.001
Receive AFDC	.08	.09
II. Availability of Grandparents		
Maternal grandmother lives within 25 miles	.10**	.04
Maternal grandmother lives in HH	.35***	.08
Maternal grandmother in good health	-.08**	.03
Maternal grandmother under 54	-.02	.04
III. Relationship Characteristics		
Quality of Relationship with mom, time 1	.02*	.01
Amount of contact with mom, time 1	.02	.02
Parents’ marriage intact	-.01	.04
IV. Child Care Preferences		
Constant	.02	.11
N’s	497	
R2	.16	

Table 11: OLS Regression Model Estimating Proportion of Mother’s Child Care Needs Provided By Grandparents, Married Women

Variable Names	b	s.e.
I. Child Care Needs:		
A. Mom’s Work Characteristics		
Full-time (Part-time omitted)	-.02	.05
Work days vary	.09	.06
Times vary	-.09	.07
Works during the night	-.03	.05
B. Children’s Characteristics		
Age of youngest child	-.02	.02
More than 1 child under 5 present	-.03	.05
C. Family structure		
Live with husband or partner and kid(s) not from union	-.12*	.06
D. Household income		
Mother’s hourly wages	1.37 E-04	.001
Receive AFDC	-.10	.18
II. Availability of Grandparents		
Maternal grandmother lives within 25 miles	.02	.09
Paternal grandmother lives within 25 miles	.09	.07
Both grandmothers live within 25 miles	.02	.07
A Grandmother lives in HH	.60**	.12
Maternal grandmother in good health	-.13**	.04
A grandmother under 54	-.09	.06
III. Relationship Characteristics, time 1		
Quality of relationship--maternal grandmother	.007	.01
Quality of relationship--paternal grandmother	.01	.02
Amount of contact with maternal grandmother	.09**	.03
Amount of contact with paternal grandmother	.01	.02
Parents’ marriage intact	.02	.05
In-Laws’ Marriage intact	-.07	.05
IV. Child Care Preferences		
Constant	.33	.17
R2	.31	

Center for Demography and Ecology
University of Wisconsin
1180 Observatory Drive, Rm. 4412
Madison, WI 53706-1393
U.S.A.
608/262-2182
FAX 608/262-8400
comments to: guzman@ssc.wisc.edu
requests to: cdepubs@ssc.wisc.edu