

Caring for children and time -budget constraints: the role of women's professional activity

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Using the 1998 time use survey for France, my aim is to study the impact of women's professional commitment on the time devoted to child care. How do volume and structure of activities devoted entirely to children (care, reading, play, etc.) vary by their age, their sex, household composition, parents' socio-demographic characteristics and, in particular, parents' occupations? How are these tasks shared between the parents? And how does the parents' commitment to their children interact with their professional lives and their time budget constraints measured by the couple's personal time (physiological plus leisure)?

The first part of this paper describes behaviors. I then simultaneously model the time devoted by men and women to the different types of activity using two methodological advances. (1) For persons who report not doing a particular activity on the observation day, infrequency – i.e. the activity did not happen to occur that day – is distinguished from general non-engagement in this activity. (2) We simultaneously model women's labor force participation decisions and these activities.

We conclude with attempts to value this time (i) by opportunity cost (ii) by the price of these activities on the market of goods and services.