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The Changing Association between Marriage, Work, and Child Poverty in the U.S., 1974-2010

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ABSTRACT

Marriage and work have long been central to debates regarding poverty and the family. Although ample research demonstrate their negative association with child poverty, both marriage and work have undergone major transformations over recent decades. Consequently, it is plausible that their association with child poverty may have also changed. Using ten waves of U.S. Census Current Population Survey data from the Luxembourg Income Study, this study examined the relationships between marriage, work, and relative measures of child poverty from 1974-2010. Results indicated both marriage and work still decrease the odds of child poverty. However, time interactions showed marriage's negative association with child poverty has declined in magnitude, whereas work's negative association with child poverty has increased in magnitude. These findings underscore the historically-varying influence of demographic characteristics for poverty. They also suggest the limitations of overemphasizing marriage and the growing importance of work for reducing child poverty in America.

The U.S. stands out for its failure to significantly reduce child poverty over the past few decades, and its unusually high child poverty rates relative to other rich countries (Gornick & Jäntti, 2012; Rainwater & Smeeding, 2004). Accordingly, there has been vibrant scholarly literature concerning poverty among children and families (see Edin & Kissane, 2010; Lichter, 1997; Seccombe, 2000). Marriage and work have been central to this scholarship and related policy debates. The continued focus on marriage and work in alleviating child poverty is salient given the major transformations in these institutions. While a married couple with children was once the norm, non-marital births and single parent households have become commonplace. Moreover, divorce rates remain relatively high, cohabitation is increasing, Americans are choosing to marry later, if at all, and marriage has become a more selective institution (Cherlin, 2009; Raley, 2000). The attributes and patterns of work have also changed greatly. Median wages have stagnated, earnings inequality has worsened (Bluestone and Harrison, 2001; Mishel et al., 2012.), and female labor force participation has increased dramatically (Lichter & Crowley, 2004). There has also been a decline in well-paid blue-collar work, growth in part-time jobs, and greater job insecurity (Kalleberg, 2007; Mishel et al., 2012). While it is well documented that marriage and work decrease a child's odds of being poor, these changes raise the question of whether their associations with child poverty have also changed over time. This study addresses this query.

BACKGROUND

Theories Why Marriage and Work are Associated with Poverty

There are several causal explanations for why marriage affects child poverty. First, marriage increases the number of potential adult earners, and thus income, in the household. Relatedly, dual-earner households are more able to absorb the shock of income losses compared

to single-earner households. Second, marriage benefits families through economies of scale. By sharing expenses (e.g. rent and other household goods and services), married couples can save more, support a higher standard of living, and invest for the future (Amato & Maynard, 2007). Thus, from an "income-to-needs" perspective, married households fare better financially (Thomas & Sawhill, 2005). Third, according to Becker's theory of household specialization, married couples have greater flexibility in how they divide their time between home and market production, and thus can maximize household earnings (Amato & Maynard, 2007). However, marriage does not benefit all children equally, as White children typically experience greater economic benefits from marriage than Black and Hispanic children (Manning and Brown 2006).

While marriage may lead to greater levels of income, employment, and other available resources, selection into marriage also contributes to the relationship between family structure and child poverty. The adults most likely to form and maintain two-parent married households are more stable, well-adjusted, and resource rich (Brown, 2010). Further, unmarried, low-income parents are more likely to marry after experiencing increases in earnings (Gibson-Davis, 2009). Thus, failure to consider pre-existing differences that influence selection into marriage can lead to overstating the causal effects of family structure (McLanahan & Percheski, 2008).

Regarding how work affects child poverty, earnings are the dominant source of income for households, and income is the basis for defining poverty. Indeed, low employment and low wages translate into large differences in earnings capacities, which in turn increase the likelihood of poverty (Sigle-Rushton & McLanahan, 2002). Moreover, Rainwater and Smeeding (2004) concluded that ensuring at least one parent is employed is the most important step to avoiding child poverty and found having multiple earners in the household further lowers this risk.

Given the role of marriage and work for avoiding child poverty, ample research has

examined related trends. Several studies have found changes in family structure, namely the rise in non-marital births, largely explain increases in child poverty from 1970s to the mid-1990s (Christopher, 2005; Lichter & Crowley, 2004; Nichols, 2013). Accordingly, scholars have shown poverty rates would have declined greatly had single parents been married (& McLanahan, 2002; Thomas & Sawhill, 2002). Conversely, in more recent decades, it is changes in work, not family structure, that most explain child poverty trends (Chen & Corak, 2008; Lichter & Crowley, 2004; Nichols, 2013). For example, post-1996 welfare reform, greater maternal employment most accounted for child poverty in single parent families, especially among Blacks and Latinos (Lichter & Crowley, 2004). Similarly, Nichols (2013) found increased parental work effort mainly drove declines in child poverty from 1993-2011.

Indeed, these studies illustrate how compositional changes in family structure and parental work help explain fluctuations in child poverty. However, one nuanced, but key, gap in the literature regarding marriage and work is precisely how the magnitude of their association with child poverty has changed. There are plausible reasons to expect these associations could have gotten either weaker or stronger from the 1990s to the present.

The Case for Changes in the Association between Marriage and Child Poverty

Women's marriage and fertility trends provide reason why marriage may have a stronger negative association with child poverty. As a whole, women are delaying marriage more, but while delayed childbearing has increased among highly educated women, less educated women still tend to have children earlier (Wilde, Batchelder, & Ellwood, 2010). Delayed childbearing leads to substantial increases in the earnings and work hours of both mothers and fathers (Miller, 2010; Wilde et al., 2010). Moreover, children born to low-skill women tend to come early, when the mother often has few earnings and is more likely to be unmarried, and children born to high-

skill women tend to enter a married family during their peak earning years (Wilde et al. 2010). The result is that married households have increased advantages over unmarried households. Thus, a stronger negative association between marriage and child poverty may have resulted.

Conversely, there are at least two plausible reasons why the association between marriage and child poverty may have gotten weaker. First, an increasing number of children are living with cohabiting parents (Manning & Brown 2006). Even in the short-term or transiently, these households potentially benefit from economies of scale and having two earners, as they generally fare better economically than single parent households (Manning & Brown, 2006; Thomas & Sawhill, 2005). Therefore, any penalty for a child being in an unmarried household may have weakened due to rising cohabitation, which has created more dual-earner non-marital households. Second, single parents have generally become less homogenous. Employment among single mothers has risen dramatically (Lichter & Crowley, 2004). Single motherhood has increased even in the middle of the education distribution (Ellwood & Jencks, 2004), and single fathers, who have greater income and are more likely to cohabitate than single mothers, are on the rise (Livingston, 2013). Thus, single parents have become less uniformly disadvantaged, which could have weakened the negative association between marriage and poverty.

The Case for Changes in the Association between Work and Child Poverty

One factor that may have led to a stronger negative association between work and child poverty is the long term stagnation in median worker earnings that increased pressure for dual-earners. Earnings inequality rose dramatically in the 1980s, and by the late 1990s, most families experienced declines in real incomes (Bluestone & Harris, 2001). Partly as a result, female labor participation increased (Bianchi, 2000; Lichter & Crowley, 2004), and women's incomes have constituted a growing share of family income in all family types (U.S. Department of Commerce,

2011). This may explain why increases in women's employment coincided with declines in child poverty (Lichter & Crowley, 2004). Additionally, families have had to increasingly rely on paid earnings due to dramatic decreases in welfare recipiency and the value of welfare transfers following 1996 welfare reform (Danziger, 2010). Further, the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), which requires work, has expanded greatly into the largest family assistance program (Danziger, 2010), and considerable evidence demonstrates the EITC reduces child poverty (Handler & Hasenfeld, 2007). Thus, the transition from work-free welfare to social assistance contingent upon work may have increased the necessity of work for avoiding child poverty.

Conversely, the changing nature of jobs and greater job insecurity may have weakened the association between work and child poverty. There has been a decline in well-paid blue-collar jobs, abundant low wage work, and technological changes that contributed to skill- and spatial-mismatches that have disadvantaged low-skilled and low-educated workers (Kalleberg, 2007). Despite rising consumer costs, workers with less than a high school education or some college are earning increasingly less, and those with at least a bachelor's degree are making only slightly more than those in the 1970s. (Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], 2013). Further, the Great Recession has exacerbated job insecurity, with minorities and the low-educated most adversely affected (BLS, 2012). These changes, in light of the increasing poverty among workers (Brady, Baker, & Finnigan, 2013), suggest work may be less protective against child poverty.

METHODS

To scrutinize the potentially changing relationships of marriage and work with child poverty over time, I use Current Population Survey (CPS) data from the Luxembourg Income Study Database (LIS). The LIS is advantageous because of its high quality measure of disposable household income (DHI) that incorporates taxes, transfers, and tax credits like the EITC.

Because DHI provides a more comprehensive and accurate measure of household income than even the underlying CPS, calculations of poverty are more valid and reliable (Brady, 2003; Rainwater & Smeeding, 2004). I employ all available U.S. waves: 1974, 1979, 1986, 1991, 1994, 1997, 2000, 2004, 2007, and 2010, and only include households with children under age 18. I weigh households using a LIS-constructed child weight accounting for the number of children in the household. Thus, the unit of analysis is 192,515 individual children.

Variable Measures

The dependent variable includes two measures of *child poverty*. Following recent studies using LIS data (Brady et al. 2013; Chen & Corak, 2008; Gornick & Jäntti, 2012; Rainwater & Smeeding, 2004), I employ a standard *relative* measure of poverty in which the threshold is 50 percent of median equivalized, post-tax and post-transfer household income. All children in households below this threshold are poor. My second measure employs an *anchored* threshold based on the 1974 median adjusted for inflation over time (using the Consumer Price Index) so that the measures are fixed (Chen & Corak, 2008). While the standard relative measure may be less sensitive to the business cycle and improvements in standards of living and economic development, the anchored measure should be more responsive. Compared to the official poverty measure, these measures (and the income definition underlying them) not only better capture the resources available to families, they are also more consistent with leading conceptualizations of poverty, like social exclusion and capability deprivation (Chu & Corak, 2006; Deaton, 2006).

The first key independent variable is a binary measure indicating whether the head of household is *married*. Although some children reside in households where a parent is not the head, 96 percent of heads in my sample live with their own children under 18. My second key independent variable is the total *number of earners*, which is all persons with positive earnings in

the household. In a variety of sensitivity analyses, I experimented with alternative work variables: the total *weekly work hours, annual full-time hours,* and *annual part-time hours* among all earners in the household. The main conclusions were generally consistent with these alternative work measures. However, because of issues with missing data and model non-convergence for these alternative work measures, I focus on *number of earners* in this study.

Following previous research (Brady et al. 2013; Chen & Corak, 2008; Christopher, 2005; Rainwater & Smeeding, 2004), I adjust for several variables associated with poverty: age, education, race, and household composition. *Age* of the head of household and Age^2 are in years, and a binary variable indicates whether the head is *under age 25*. Two binary variables indicate whether the head's education is *less than high school* or a *college degree* (reference group = high school diploma and some college). *Black, Latino, and Other* are binary measures of the head's race/ethnicity (reference = White). I also include measures of the *number of working-aged* (18 to 64) *adults* in the household, the total *number of children* under age 18 in the household, and whether *adults over age* 65 reside in the household.

Analytic Strategy

After presenting descriptive trends, I utilize logistic regression models to assess the relationships of marriage and work with child poverty. The first analysis pools the ten waves into one combined sample to examine the associations of marriage and work with child poverty when interacted with linear time. I employ a count measure for each of the ten LIS waves based on years (i.e. 1974=0, 1979=5… and 2010=36). Because the results may vary in a non-linear way, the next analyses include interactions with year binary variables (reference year = 1974). Individual year measures also control for unobserved year-specific factors (e.g. business cycle).

RESULTS

Descriptive Trends

Table 1 displays all variable means by year. Both child poverty measures have similar trends, with anchored poverty consistently having lower rates than relative poverty. From 1974 to 1991, relative and anchored child poverty rates increased from 15% to 25% and 23%, respectively. From 1994 into the early 2000s, child poverty declined slightly and stabilized. After 2007, child poverty increased again to 23% (relative) and 18% (anchored) in 2010.

[TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

The percent of children who live in a household with a married head has steadily declined since 1974 (with the slight exception of 2000). While in 1974, 84% of all children lived in married-headed households, by 2010, only 67% of children did. This decline of almost 20% in children who live in households with married heads is consistent with the declining marriage rates among adults in general, which went from 72% in 1970 to 51% in 2011 (Fry, 2012).

The mean number of earners increased from 1.78 in 1974 to 1.83 in 1979, then declined in 1986, and changed little through the 1990s. However, by 2000, the mean number of earners increased to 1.8 and then declined until 2010, when children had only 1.63 earners in the household on average, the lowest mean of all ten time points. Of course, the long-term trends in the number of earners combines both a rise in two-earner households the number of households containing only one working-aged adult (e.g. single mother households)

Given the nature of this study, in addition to descriptive trends of the pooled sample, it is also important to consider trends in poverty rates by parental marital status and the number of earners in the household. Figure 1 and Figure 2 display these descriptive trends. Child poverty rates for unmarried headed households are much higher than married headed households, as

expected (see Figure 1). In 1974, child poverty rates for unmarried and married households are 47.8% and 9.3%, compared to 2010 rates of 43.8% and 13% (relative measure) and 36.14% and 8.67% (anchored measure), respectively. Regardless of the measure, the gap in child poverty rates for married and unmarried households have narrowed over time.

[FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE]

Figure 2 shows the child poverty rates by number of earners (i.e. no earners, one earner, and two or more earners). In 1974, child poverty rates for children in no earner, one earner, and two or more earners households, was 83.4%, 19.6%, and 7.2%, respectively. In 2010, the corresponding child poverty rates were 89.6%, 33.9%, and 7.8% (relative measure) and 85.8%, 24.5%, and 4.5% (constant measure). Despite some fluctuations here and there (e.g. the decline in anchored child poverty to 4.5% in 2010), these graphs illustrate an overall trend that the child poverty gap between number of earners, has widened over time.

[FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE]

Pooled Analyses with Linear Time Interactions

Table 2 displays the logistic regression results for marriage and earners on child poverty for the pooled sample. Across all models, marriage and the number of earners decrease the odds of both measures of child poverty. For instance, in the baseline Model 1, having a married head reduces relative and anchored child poverty by a factor of 2.72 and 2.78 (factor calculated by dividing 1 by the odds ratio, e.g. 1/.377 = 2.72; 1/.360 = 2.78). Each additional earner reduces relative and anchored child poverty by factors of 3.74 and 3.98.

Model 2 interacts marriage and number of earners with linear year. Both marriage and number of earners still remain significant and decrease the odds of child poverty. However, the interactions suggest a divergence in their relationships with poverty over time. The marriage and

year interactions for both relative (O.R.=1.021) and anchored (O.R.=1.023) child poverty suggest an overall weakening in the negative association between marriage and child poverty. However, the number of earners and linear year interactions for both relative (O.R.=.983) and anchored (O.R.=.976) child poverty suggest a stronger negative association with work and child poverty. Both sets of interactions are statistically significant, thus indicating a noteworthy change in the magnitude of the association between marriage and work and child poverty over time. Importantly, these results are consistent with the trends in child poverty by marital status and number of earners displayed in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

[TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE]

Pooled Analyses with Nonlinear Time Interactions

Because the observed trends for marriage and work in Model 2 might vary in a non-linear way, Model 3 includes binary variables for each year (reference year = 1974), and interactions with marriage and work with each year. As in Model 1 and Model 2, a married head leads to reduced odds of relative and anchored child poverty, by a factor of 4.6 and 4.59, respectively. However, the main effect of the number of earners has a weaker association than in Model 2, as it reduces the odds of child poverty by a factor of only 2.7 and 2.67. Overall, the interactions in Model 3 also suggest change over time. With the exception of 1979 and 1986 in the relative poverty model and 1979 in the anchored poverty model, all interactions are significant. Compared to the reference year 1974, the association between marriage and child poverty has weakened in both the relative and anchored models. By contrast, the interactions for the number of earners illustrate the opposite trend.

For substantive interpretation, Figure 3 graphically displays the inverse odds of the interactions from Model 3 in Table 2. An increasingly negative association implies a greater

reduction in the odds of child poverty. Panel A displays results for the marriage and time interactions. Over time, the magnitude of the negative association between marriage and child poverty has weakened. From 1974 to 1991, the strength of the relationship weakened and remained rather stable until 2007 when it increased in magnitude slightly. As Panel B shows, from 1974 to 1979, the strength of the association for number of earners and child poverty is relatively stable. However from 1986 onward, it has a greater reduction on the odds of child poverty. This trend remains stable throughout the 1990s, and despite a small decline in 2000, by 2004, number of earners has an even greater reduction on the odds of child poverty and remains fairly stable through 2010. Especially noteworthy is that when comparing the inverse odds for the interactions of marriage from 1974 to 2010, the magnitude of the relationship with child poverty is almost halved. Conversely, the magnitude of the relationship between the number of earners and child poverty nearly doubles. The observed trends are even more pronounced for the anchored child poverty measure than that of relative child poverty. This offers further support of a noteworthy change in the association between marriage and work and child poverty over time.

[FIGURE 3 ABOUT HERE]

Beyond these results, three additional sensitivity analyses warrant mention. First, because the sample size increases over three-fold from 1986 to 1991, I conducted a robustness check to ensure changes in sample sizes were not affecting the results by reestimating the analyses with random samples of 4,200 per wave (the minimum N of all years). Second, to address the concern that marriage and number of earners are inherently conflated, I estimated all models without number of earners in the model. Third, I reestimated the analyses as linear probability models. The results for all these sensitivity analyses are consistent with the presented results.

DISCUSSION

Motivated by the fundamental changes in marriage and work over the past four decades, this study contributes to the literature on poverty and inequality by examining the extent to which the magnitude of the associations between marriage, work, and child poverty have changed. Regression results suggest that although marriage and work have both maintained a negative association with child poverty, marriage has generally become a weaker defense against child poverty, while work has become a stronger defense against child poverty. These results are consistent with a narrowing of the child poverty gap in unmarried and married households (see Figure 1) and a widening of the child poverty gap between no earner, one earner, and two or more earners (see Figure 2). Further, these findings demonstrate the historically-varying relationship of demographic characteristics and poverty over time and illustrate that sources of stratification in modern society are not static.

The overall weaker association between marriage and child poverty may be attributable to: 1) the increased proportion of children in cohabiting households, and 2) the increased heterogeneity among unmarried parents making them less uniformly disadvantaged. Conversely, the stronger association between work and child poverty may be attributable to: 1) economic changes creating increased pressure for multi-earner households, and 2) welfare changes making work more essential for staying out of poverty. While it is beyond the scope of this study to fully analyze these plausible explanations, additional descriptive characteristics of children in married and unmarried headed households shed some light (see Appendix A). While the mean number of earners increased from 1.15 to 1.24 for children in unmarried headed households, it decreased in married headed households from 1.90 to 1.81. Both households with married and unmarried heads had increases in total weekly and annual work hours in the household and the education of

the head of household. Particularly noteworthy, however, is among children in unmarried households, the percent of heads with less than a high school degree has decreased from 45.31% in 1974 to 20.86% in 2010, whereas the percent with four or more years of college increased from 7.29% to 14.55%. These findings illustrate the changing characteristics of both married and unmarried households, providing possible insight into this study's findings.

There are a several areas in which future research would be valuable. First, while this study provided plausible explanations for the changing associations between marriage, work, and child poverty, future research is necessary to test the extent to which these mechanisms account for the observed trends. For example, longitudinal data would allow for the examination of families with children over time to explore potential causal mechanisms (e.g. cohabitation, welfare supports, etc.) that may help explain the outcomes observed in this cross-sectional data. (Unfortunately, LIS data do not enable precise over time comparisons of cohabitation as cohabitation data is not available or is not precisely identified in some years.) Second, this study concerns only ten time points. Replication of the analyses with data for consecutive years could reveal important nuances in results unobserved in this study. Third, given the distinctively higher poverty among Black and Latino children and racial differences regarding changes in family structure and work patterns (e.g. Lichter & Crowley 2004; Nichols, 2013), future research is necessary to examine possible differences by race. In a sensitivity analysis, I reestimated the final model for Whites, Blacks, and Latinos. While the results reflect similar general trends across races, there are notable differences in the non-linear analyses, such as the negative association between work and poverty being strongest for Blacks, but not consistently increasing for Latinos. Thus, the role of racial/ethnic differences warrants more thorough inquiry.

Finally, this study has implications for anti-poverty policy. The observed weakened

relationship between marriage and child poverty is notable for a society that has placed a rather strong emphasis on marriage and "family values" in anti-poverty policy (Cherlin, 2009). While it is clear marriage still has a strong, positive impact on children's economic well-being, perhaps policymakers have relied too heavily on marriage alone. As Haskins (2014) notes, "the changes in family composition have been proceeding for more than four decades and show no signs of abating, despite a host of efforts by policy makers." Moreover, almost half of unmarried parents would have continued to earn below the Federal Poverty Line even if they were to marry (Sigle-Rushton & McLanahan, 2002), and earnings have a positive influence on marriage selection, particularly among low-income mothers (McLanahan & Percheski, 2008, Gibson-Davis, 2009). These findings, coupled with the present study, suggest focusing on increasing parent's earnings will not only help improve children's economic well-being, but perhaps increase the probability of financially stable marriages, which in turn could further reduce child poverty.

That results show the negative association between work and child poverty has strengthened should also inform policy debates. The analyses demonstrate how essential employment is for the economic security of families with children. Rainwater & Smeeding (2004) found employment, the labor market, and work supports (e.g. work tax credits, child care subsidies) have the largest impact on a country's child poverty rate, yet this has been relatively neglected in American poverty policy discussions. Instead, emphasis on work has often focused on simply getting people to work and cultivating their work ethic. However, it is equally important to have policies that help families maintain employment. Because single parent households are more vulnerable to child poverty and such families are less likely to have multiple earners, it is essential to facilitate the gainful and secure employment of single parents. Further, even though work is essential, it does not guarantee an escape from poverty, as working-

poverty rates remain relatively high in the U.S. (Brady et al. 2013). Therefore, policies designed to boost wages for typical workers and expand work supports (see Sawhill & Karpilow, 2014) would also help to effectively reduce child poverty.

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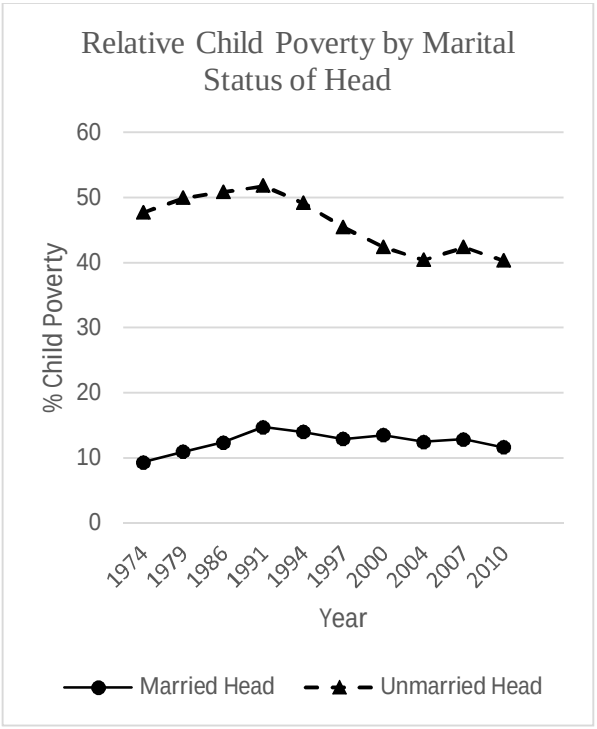
Table 1: Variable Means (Standard Deviations) by Year

Variable	**1974**	**1979**	**1986**	**1991**	**1994**	**1997**	**2000**	**2004**	**2007**	**2010**
Relative poverty	.15 (.36)	.19 (.40)	.22 (.41)	.25 (.43)	.24 (.43)	.22 (.42)	.22 (.41)	.21 (.41)	.22 (.42)	.21 (.41)
Anchored poverty	.15 (.36)	.18 (.40)	.19 (.40)	.23 (.42)	.22 (.42)	.18 (.39)	.15 (.36)	.15 (.36)	.15 (.36)	.15 (.36)
Married head	.84 (.37)	.78 (.41)	.76 (.43)	.73 (.45)	.72 (.45)	.71 (.45)	.72 (.45)	.70 (.46)	.69 (.46)	.68 (.47)
# Earners	1.78 (.97)	1.83 (1.04)	1.76 (.90)	1.72 (.95)	1.72 (.92)	1.75 (.89)	1.81 (.88)	1.69 (.87)	1.69 (.85)	1.63 (.86)
Age of head	38.32 (10.36)	38.06 (9.82)	37.86 (9.33)	38.06 (9.27)	38.40 (9.36)	38.85 (9.53)	38.73 (9.53)	38.96 (9.86)	39.46 (10.06)	39.60 (10.34)
Head under age 25	.07 (.25)	.06 (.23)	.04 (.20)	.04 (.20)	.05 (.21)	.05 (.21)	.05 (.23)	.05 (.23)	.05 (.21)	.05 (.22)
No high school degree	.30 (.46)	.26 (.44)	.19 (.39)	.20 (.40)	.19 (.39)	.19 (.39)	.17 (.38)	.17 (.37)	.15 (.36)	.15 (.36)
College degree	.17 (.38)	.20 (.40)	.22 (.41)	.21 (.41)	.23 (.42)	.23 (.42)	.25 (.43)	.26 (.44)	.28 (.45)	.30 (.46)
Black head	.11 (.31)	.15 (.36)	.14 (.34)	.16 (.36)	.16 (.36)	.16 (.36)	.15 (.36)	.15 (.36)	.15 (.36)	.15 (.35)
Other race head	.01 (.11)	.02 (.15)	.03 (.16)	.04 (.19)	.04 (.19)	.05 (.21)	.05 (.22)	.07 (.25)	.07 (.26)	.08 (.27)
Latino head	.06 (.23)	.08 (.26)	.09 (.29)	.12 (.33)	.13 (.34)	.15 (.35)	.16 (.37)	.19 (.39)	.20 (.40)	.21 (.40)
# Working age adults	2.08 (.64)	1.76 (.45)	2.01 (.64)	2.04 (.76)	2.02 (.73)	2.01 (.71)	2.06 (.77)	2.04 (.76)	2.04 (.76)	2.09 (.82)
# Children	2.30 (.95)	2.57 (1.34)	2.09 (.84)	2.43 (1.25)	2.40 (1.17)	2.42 (1.24)	2.41 (1.26)	2.39 (1.19)	2.40 (1.20)	2.39 (1.21)
Adults over age 65	.03 (.18)	.02 (.13)	.03 (.17)	.03 (.17)	.03 (.17)	.03 (.18)	.04 (.19)	.04 (.20)	.04 (.20)	.05 (.21)
N	4,611	6,007	4,261	22,229	21,627	19,005	18,121	33,745	32,114	30,827

FIGURE 1: CHILD POVERTY BY HEAD MARITAL STATUS, 1974-2010



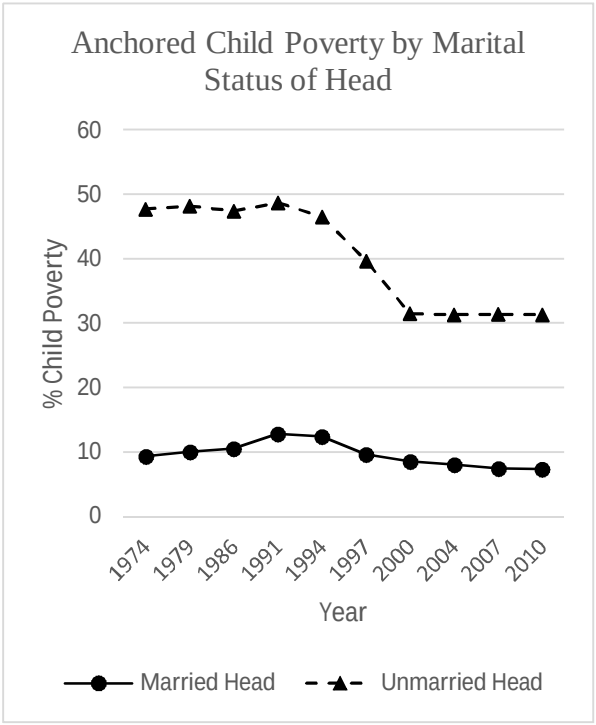
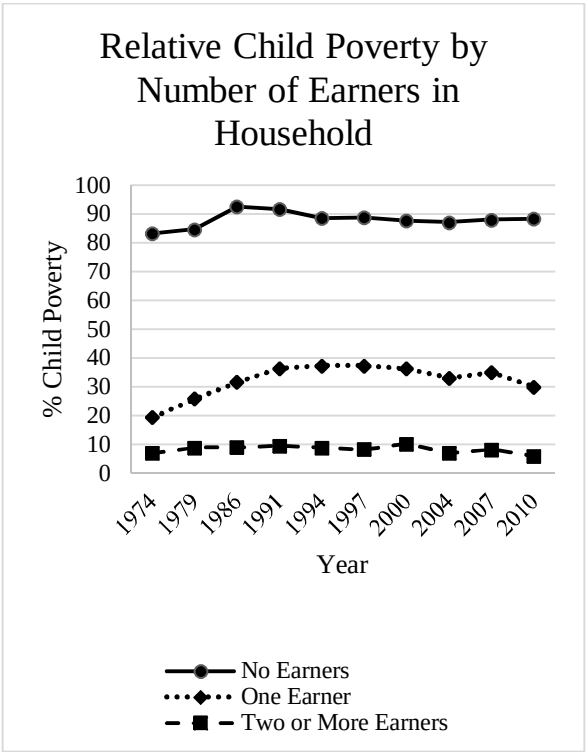


FIGURE 2: CHILD POVERTY BY NUMBER OF EARNERS IN HOUSEHOLD, 1974-2010



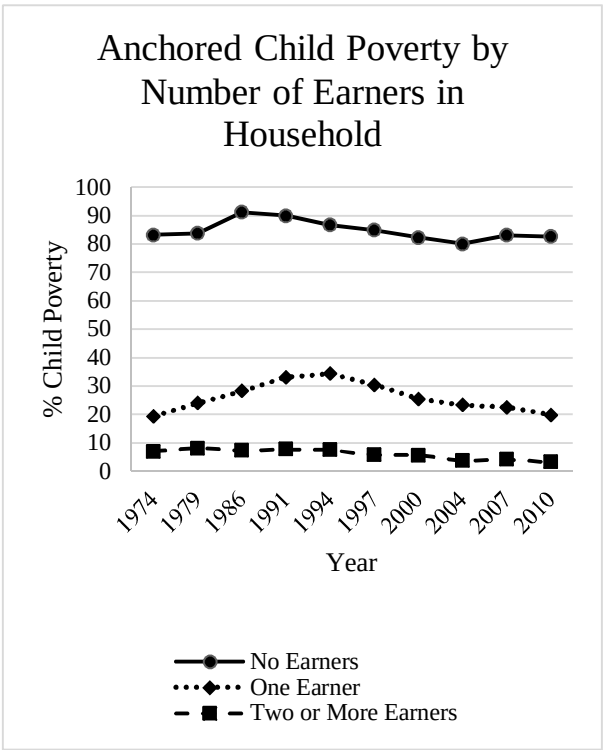
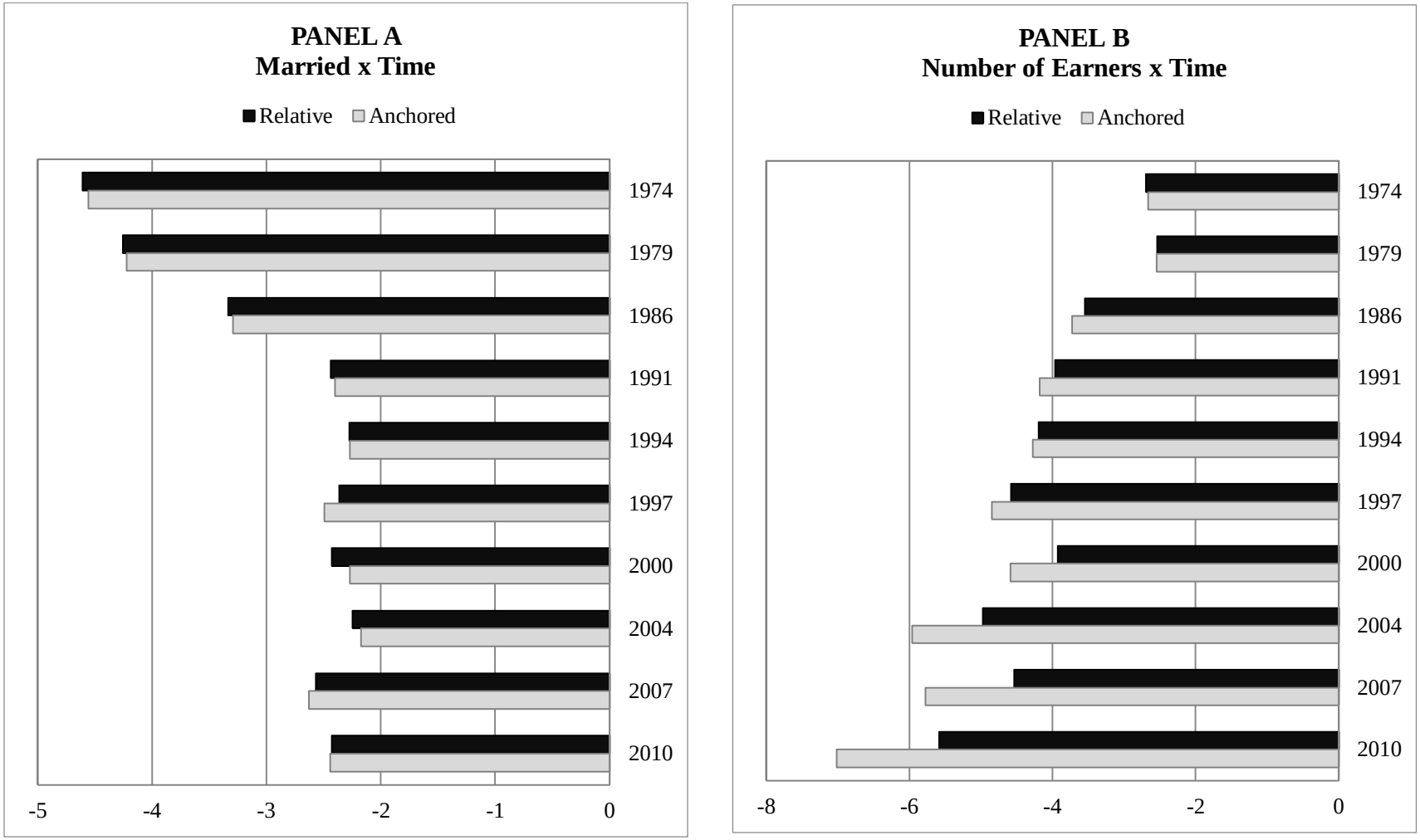


Table 2: Logistic Regression Models of Child Poverty, Pooled Sample 1974-2010, Odds Ratios

	Relative Poverty			**Anchored Poverty**		
Variables	***Model 1***	***Model 2***	***Model 3***	***Model 1***	***Model 2***	***Model 3***
Married (ref: no)	.369***	.225***	.217***	.365***	.216***	.219***
# Earners	.268***	.381***	.371***	.251***	.386***	.376***
Married*Year	----	1.022***	----	----	1.025***	----
Earners*Year	----	.981***	----	----	.976***	----
Married*79	----	----	1.084	----	----	1.080
Married*86	----	----	1.381	----	----	1.385
Married*91	----	----	1.890***	----	----	1.897***
Married*94	----	----	2.023***	----	----	2.007***
Married*97	----	----	1.947***	----	----	1.827***
Married*00	----	----	1.897***	----	----	2.008***
Married*04	----	----	2.050***	----	----	2.095***
Married*07	----	----	1.795***	----	----	1.732***
Married*10	----	----	1.896***	----	----	1.867***
# Earners*79	----	----	1.061	----	----	1.046
# Earners*86	----	----	.759*	----	----	.714*
# Earners*91	----	----	.678***	----	----	.637***
# Earners*94	----	----	.642***	----	----	.622***
# Earners*97	----	----	.588***	----	----	.549***
# Earners*00	----	----	.686**	----	----	.580***
# Earners*04	----	----	.541***	----	----	.446***
# Earners*07	----	----	.594***	----	----	.461***
# Earners*10	----	----	.482***	----	----	.379***
Time	1.005***	1.016***	----	.986***	1.002	----
Year 79	----	----	1.042	----	----	.955
Year 86	----	----	2.186***	----	----	1.893**
Year 91	----	----	2.012***	----	----	1.776***
Year 94	----	----	1.991***	----	----	1.754***
Year 97	----	----	2.073***	----	----	1.568**
Year 00	----	----	1.853***	----	----	1.170
Year 04	----	----	1.857***	----	----	1.250
Year 07	----	----	2.027***	----	----	1.339
Year 10	----	----	1.988***	----	----	1.381*
Age of head	.924***	.997***	.918***	.935***	.928***	.927***
Age of head^2	1.001***	1.001***	1.001***	1.000***	1.001***	1.001***
Head under age 25 (ref: no)	1.758***	1.759***	1.21***	1.787***	1.784***	1.871***
Education (ref. high school degree/some college)	----	----	----	----	----	----
No high school diploma	2.918***	2.887***	2.939***	2.799**	2.761***	2.828***
College degree	.295***	.293***	.296***	.324***	.325***	.328***
Race of head (ref. White)						
Black	1.795***	1.775***	1.769***	1.724***	1.704***	1.699***
Latino	1.904***	1.890***	1.901***	1.738***	1.732***	1.746***
Other Race	1.560***	1.553***	1.584***	1.524***	1.519***	1.582***
# Working age	1.063**	1.123***	1.125***	1.045	1.109***	1.100***
# Children	1.442***	1.438***	1.446***	1.398***	1.393***	1.404***
Adults over age 65 (ref: no)	0.546***	.547***	.534***	.529***	.531***	.514***
N	192,547	192,547	192,547	192,547	192,547	192,547
BIC	46,693.3	46,508.52	46,488.86	42,214.75	41,965.97	41.842.87

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

FIGURE 3: Association between Marriage, Number of Earners, and Child Poverty Over Time, 1974-2010



***Note*:** Graph illustrates results from Model 3 of Table 2 for substantive interpretation. To calculate the inverse odds ratio, I used the following equation (e.g. for the year 1979): -1 / (Married79 Odds Ratio * Married Odds Ratio)

Appendix A: Variable Means for Children by Marital Status

PANEL A: MARRIED HEADED HOUSEHOLD

	1974	1979	1986	1991	1994	1997	2000	2004	2007	2010
Relative poverty (%)	9.34	10.99	12.42	14.76	14.02	12.95	13.56	12.49	12.91	11.66
Anchored poverty (%)	9.34	10.03	10.60	12.84	12.48	9.64	8.62	8.12	7.52	7.41
# Earners	1.90	2.01	1.95	1.94	1.94	1.95	1.96	1.87	1.86	1.81
Weekly work hours	57.13	--	64.07	71.44	67.77	67.94	65.26	62.35	63.27	60.25
Annual full-time hours	2441.03	--	2711.06	3001.40	--	2998.95	2887.88	2752.26	2820.14	2643.09
Annual part-time hours	254.89	--	330.35	347.06	--	322.89	281.53	273.62	266.57	274.96
# Working age adults	2.22	1.98	2.19	2.23	2.22	2.21	2.24	2.23	2.24	2.28
Age of Head	38.43	38.23	38.04	38.45	39.03	39.42	39.35	39.54	40.10	40.45
Head under age 25 (%)	5.87	4.36	2.56	2.43	2.30	1.96	2.75	2.65	2.23	2.00
No H.S. diploma. (%)	27.34	22.65	15.91	15.87	15.15	15.07	14.39	13.44	12.52	12.08
College degree (%)	19.17	23.98	25.47	26.24	28.50	28.81	30.48	32.44	34.98	37.23
Black head (%)	7.37	9.00	8.20	8.57	8.38	8.96	9.07	8.36	8.48	7.96
Other race head (%)	1.22	2.32	3.03	3.84	4.16	5.07	5.56	7.52	7.79	8.39
Latino head (%)	5.04	7.40	8.51	11.39	12.51	13.98	15.56	17.91	19.24	19.19
# Kids	2.31	2.55	2.11	2.42	2.39	2.41	2.45	2.42	2.43	2.42
Adults over 65 (%)	3.01	1.13	2.54	2.41	2.58	2.85	3.11	3.60	3.77	4.23
N	3,844	4,711	3,251	16,138	15,493	13,377	12,747	23,469	22,049	20,772

PANEL B: UNMARRIED HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

	1974	1979	1986	1991	1994	1997	2000	2004	2007	2010
Relative poverty (%)	47.78	50.04	50.92	51.91	49.24	45.49	42.45	40.51	42.47	40.38
Anchored poverty (%)	47.78	48.29	47.50	48.82	46.62	39.74	31.61	31.40	31.49	31.37
# Earners	1.15	1.18	1.15	1.12	1.17	1.27	1.41	1.29	1.32	1.24
Weekly work hours	26.93	--	33.70	38.23	35.06	38.95	42.14	39.41	40.04	36.85
Annual full-time hours	1004.76	--	1299.73	1468.95	--	1591.56	1761.79	1642.35	1671.02	1485.33
Annual part-time hours	180.18	--	204.75	220.07	--	215.36	214.42	197.93	204.16	228.71
# Working age adults	1.33	0.97	1.44	1.52	1.53	1.53	1.60	1.60	1.61	1.70
Age of Head	37.70	37.42	37.27	37.04	36.84	37.44	37.15	37.60	38.02	37.78
Head under age 25 (%)	11.86	9.95	8.82	9.15	10.68	10.72	12.37	11.84	10.67	11.40
No H.S. diploma. (%)	45.31	39.44	29.89	31.00	28.73	27.73	23.99	23.61	21.39	20.91
College degree (%)	7.29	7.36	11.17	8.84	8.79	9.58	10.95	12.07	13.62	14.55
Black head (%)	30.54	35.97	30.57	34.52	34.25	31.91	31.52	29.80	29.49	28.57
Other race head (%)	1.13	1.80	1.87	3.03	2.38	3.17	4.07	5.76	6.00	6.54
Latino head (%)	8.03	7.87	12.51	14.08	15.38	16.20	17.55	20.37	21.46	23.45
# Kids	2.29	2.61	2.01	2.46	2.43	2.44	2.31	2.33	2.34	2.31
Adults over 65 (%)	5.46	3.36	4.13	4.45	4.47	4.68	4.93	5.35	5.53	5.73
N	767	1,296	1,046	6,091	6,134	5,628	5,374	10,276	10,065	10,055

Note: There is no data available for weekly hours in in 1979 and annual hours in 1974 and 1994. This is why the alternative work measures are not included in the main analyses of this paper. However, to compare trends among children in married vs. unmarried households over time, the work hour data that is available is displayed in the table.