

# Economic Trends

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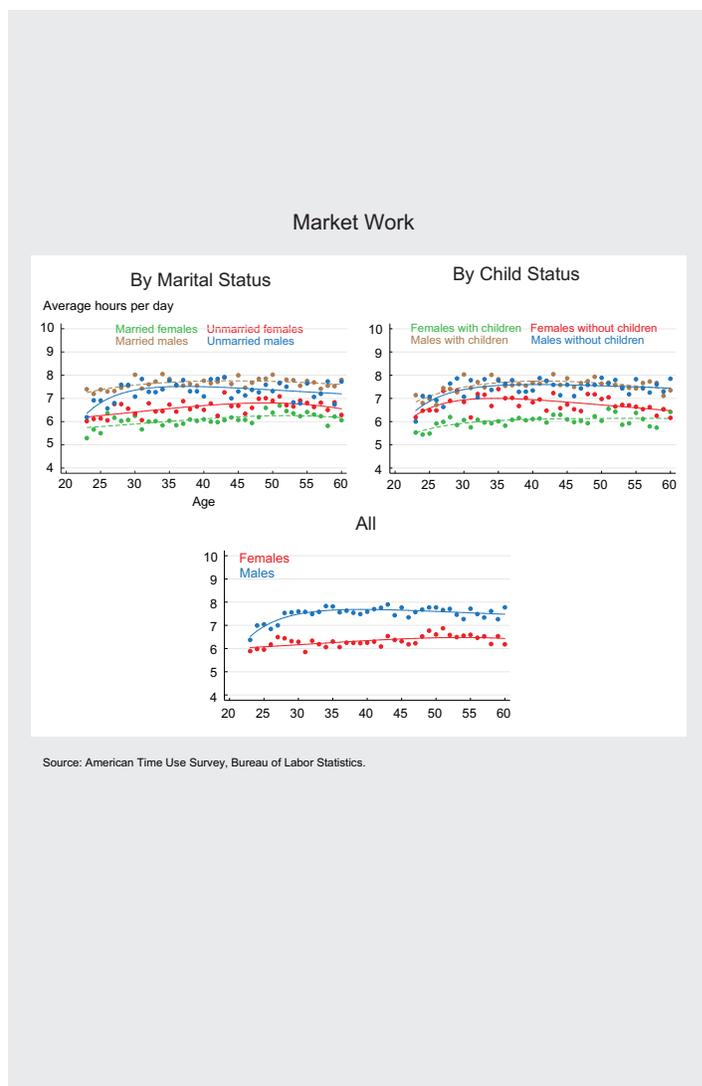
## Market, Nonmarket, and Total Work of Males and Females

Dionissi Aliprantis and Anne Chen

In this article we investigate the time use patterns of employed males and females. We look at market work and nonmarket work, first separately, and then together. We define nonmarket work as household chores (like food preparation and interior cleaning) and childcare, and define total work to be the sum of market and nonmarket work. We use the employed subsample of the American Time Use Survey (ATUS) to look at changes in time use throughout the life cycle in the United States with survey years 2003 to 2014, and find notable differences between males and females. We find that child status is the key predictor of differences across genders.

Over the life cycle, males engage in one to one and a half hours more per day in market work than do females. However, this gap comes from the large difference between married males and females with children; unmarried females without children work about the same amount as do married males with children. Since males tend to work about the same amount of hours regardless of their marital or child status, this implies that the largest gaps across genders are for those who are married and those with children.

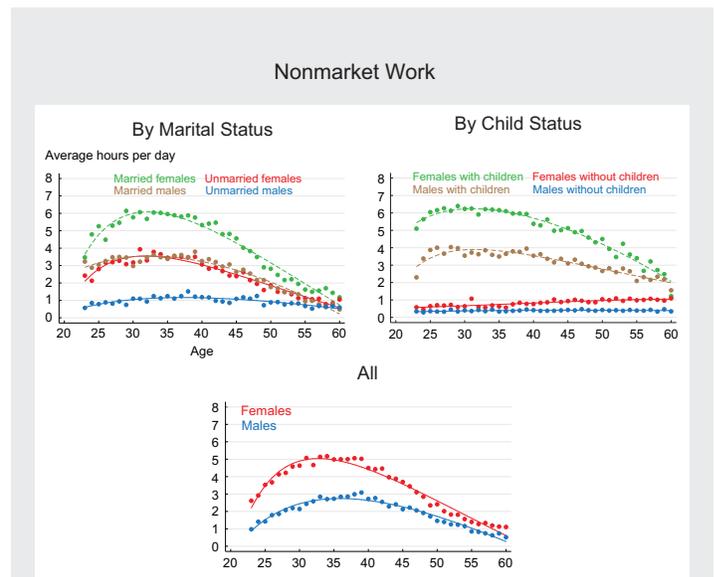
In contrast, females engage in up to two hours more per day of nonmarket work, which we define as



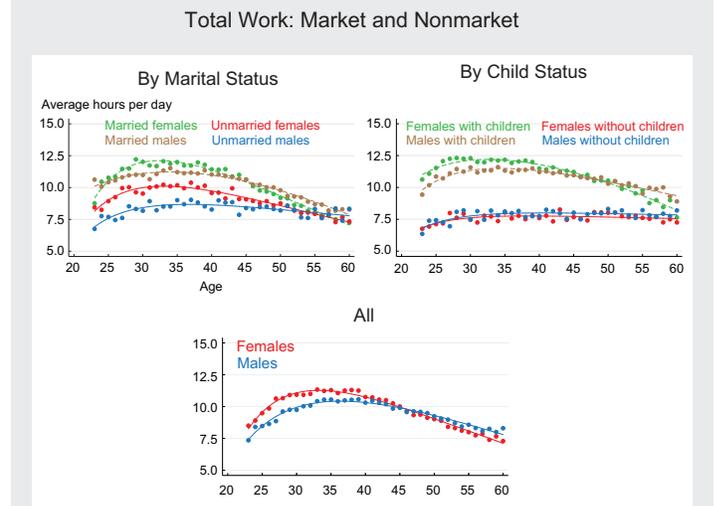
household chores and childcare. Among those who are married, females tend to engage in much more nonmarket work than males, with unmarried females engaging in similar amounts as married males. These data are consistent with the notion that males and females have different preferences for market and nonmarket work.

While marital status is one possible explanation for the patterns observed in the data, the final panel above suggests that the key driver of nonmarket work is child status, as males with children engage in much more nonmarket work than females without children. Nevertheless, among those with children, females engage in much more nonmarket work than their male counterparts (typically two and a half hours more per day).

When market and nonmarket work are combined into total work, we see that until the mid-40s, females worked up to an hour per day more than their male counterparts. This is because the gap in nonmarket work is larger than the gap in market work. Past the mid-40s, the gap in market work is stable but the gap in nonmarket work closes, so that males actually (slightly) surpass females in terms of total work. Again, while we can see a gender gap by marital status in total work, the largest gap is by child status. Males and females without children tend to work very similar total hours per day. And while there is a gap between males and females with children in terms of their total work, the larger gap is between those who have children and those who do not.



Source: American Time Use Survey, Bureau of Labor Statistics.



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