Husband's Job Loss during the "Great Recession": Are Wives Picking up the Slack?

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Abstract

American families are experiencing the effects of the "Great Recession." Most of the job losses are accruing to men, so families may find it strategic for wives to enter the labor force, or increase their work hours. We consider this possibility using the May 2008 and 2009 Current Population Survey. Our results suggest that wives of husbands who transitioned out of the labor force are more likely to increase work hours, and more likely to commence or seek work.

Introduction

Families have been affected by the current recession in ways that have not been seen for decades. Some scholars consider this the "Great Recession" and the news media evokes this term to discuss the current economic climate (Isidore, 2009), alluding to the historic Great Depression of 1929 and often drawing parallels between the two. The current recession, which officially began in December of 2007 (National Bureau of Economic Research, 2009), has set new benchmarks in terms of job loss, unemployment rates, and length of time unemployed. From December 2007 to June 2009, the U.S. economy lost 7.2 million jobs, with the bulk of job loss occurring in the first quarter of 2009 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009). Over the 18 months of this recession, the unemployment rate has increased 4.6 percentage points, from 4.9 percent to 9.5 percent, which translates into 14.7 million unemployed workers in America; this figure would swell to 25.9 million if the marginally attached workers and involuntary part-time workers were also included (Shirholz, 2009). With the scarcity of jobs, the unemployed are remaining jobless for long periods of time—the average length of time in unemployment is 22.5 weeks, a record high (Weller, 2009) and 29 percent of unemployed workers have been jobless for over 6

months (Shirholz, 2009). These statistics in conjunction with high losses to investments, unprecedented housing price declines and mortgage foreclosures (see Weller, 2009) earn this recession the dubious distinction of the worst recession in decades, or the "Great Recession." Despite signs that the recession may be easing, rising job loss and unemployment are projected for another year, pushing more families into poverty and causing more financial strain.

Vast research suggests the negative outcomes children and families may suffer when faced with poverty or familial economic pressure (see, for example, Bradley & Corwyn, 2002; Conger, In press; McLoyd, 1998; Mistry, Vanderwater, Huston, & McLoyd, 2002). Other scholars have documented the negative health affects accruing to those who experience job loss (e.g. Strully, 2009), which may in turn put additional strain on marriages and families. This research on economic strain suggests the importance of understanding how families seek to make ends meet during economic downturns.

Some of the consequences of this great recession reflect dramatic changes in the roles of women and men in society. In a recent *New York Times* article, Rampell (2009) reports that women may soon, for the first time in history, surpass men in the labor force due to higher male job loss. Given that 75 percent of the job losses have been on the shoulders of men, many married women have increased their role as economic providers (Boushey, 2009). An unanticipated consequence of this recession is the increased number of families relying on wives' paychecks; but is this by default or are families engaging in strategies to buffer the negative economic impact of the recession, by calling upon wives to enter the labor force or step up the number of hours they are working? Previous research shows that the majority of primary provider wives hold that distinction for short periods of time (Winkler, McBride, & Andrews, 2005; Winslow-Bowe, 2006), with few wives persistently the primary provider year after year,

suggesting that wives' economic advantage is more of a transitory or temporary phenomenon, coming into play as a result of their husbands' economic vulnerability.

Long and deep recessions, such as the current recession, force American families to devise strategies to cope with financial strain due to job loss. We seek to understand how married couples are adapting their labor force behavior to make ends meet, and once this is understood we consider how these changes could have longer term social consequences. Faced with long term job loss among husbands who are typically the primary breadwinner, are families turning to wives to pick up the slack by either entering the labor force or increasing their hours in market work? Female occupations, particularly in the health and education industries, have actually added jobs or remained steady throughout the recession, potentially making wives' earnings a more reliable and steady source of income for families. This paper investigates whether wives enter the labor force or increase their hours worked in response to a husband's job loss using Current Population Survey monthly data from May 2008 (6 months into the recession) and May 2009 (the most recent data available).

Theoretical Framework and Previous Literature

Economic theory on family labor supply: the added worker effect

Families respond to economic hardship by cutting back on expenditures and generating additional income (Conger & Elder, 1994). Reducing consumption on entertainment or food, postponing major purchases, and moving to less expensive housing are strategies families use to reduce expenditures (Yeung & Hofferth, 1998). Some families can generate income through participation in public assistance programs, such as food stamps and welfare, or through unemployment insurance benefits. However, a common strategy to generate additional income

in the face of husband's job loss is for the wife to either enter the labor force or increase her hours spent working.

Economic theory provides a basic model of family labor supply decisions (Ashenfelter & Heckman, 1974). A reduction in income due to a husband's job loss, coupled with the inability to borrow against future earnings or rely on savings, will force some women not currently in the labor market to enter and will increase the labor supplied by those women already in the market (Moehling, 2001). This phenomenon has been dubbed the added worker effect, whereby the added worker enters the labor force to smooth out family income and consumption. Since families can adapt to financial hardship in several ways, one of which is increasing the labor supply of the wife, the magnitude of the added worker effect should be related to the costs and benefits of other methods, such as borrowing or more intensive job search by the husband (Lundberg, 1985).

When temporary spells of unemployment are considered within a life-cycle context, economists argue that the added worker effect should be small in the absence of credit constraints because, as Heckman and Macurdy (1980) find, the income reduction from a temporary spell of unemployment is small compared to the husband's lifetime earnings. If however, liquidity restraints exist—such as may be the case for families during the current recession because of tighter credit and losses to investments—families may need wives to increase their labor supply during the husband's spell of unemployment to maintain family income (Bingley & Walker, 2001). Yet, married women's lower earnings potential relative to their husbands limits the ability of families to maintain family income levels by substituting the wife's labor for the husband's during economic hardship. The added worker effect may depend, in part, on the effect of the husband's unemployment spell on the value of the wife's nonmarket

time. That is, whether the loss of husband's income and the increase in his nonmarket time translate into a reduction in the value of the wife's nonmarket time, thus increasing the value of her market time.

Economic theory also contends that wives of men with higher unemployment risk should have higher hours of employment permanently, not only during times of husband's unemployment, somewhat as a safeguard or safety net. If this is the case, then there would likely not be a large added worker effect because the wives of men with larger risk of unemployment would already be in the labor market. Since this recession has produced massive layoffs for longer periods than many families may have anticipated, across several sectors of the economy, husbands with both high and low unemployment risk may be experiencing job loss. If this is the case, the added worker effect may be large.

Prior research on family adaptation to financial strain

Research on the added worker effect has produced varied results, with some finding an effect while others have not. Several studies focus on the impact of husband's unemployment on his wife's decision to enter the labor force. Lundberg (1985) finds a small added worker effect for white wives. When the husband becomes unemployed, the probability that white wives enter the labor force (either by seeking or finding a job) increases but the probability that they move from being unemployed to employed falls. Thus, it appears a wife may be looking for work after a husband's job loss, but she is often unsuccessful in obtaining employment. Tano (1993) also finds an increase in wives moving from out of the labor force (or "keeping house") to employment when husbands become unemployed or move from unemployment to out of the labor force (and no longer seeking work). In contrast, Maloney (1991) and Juhn and Murphy (1996) find no added worker effect. Yeung and Hofferth (1998) did not find that white wives

compensated for major income loss by increasing work hours in their analysis of the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, yet black wives may have increased their employment to prevent a loss of income.

Other studies investigate whether wives' work hours respond to husbands' unemployment. Heckman and Macurdy (1980) find a significant and positive effect of husband's unemployment on wives' hours of work. Cullen and Gruber (2000) find little evidence of an added worker effect, but believe that a "crowding out" effect on spousal labor supply may be triggered by unemployment insurance, as unemployment insurance lowers the probability of wives' labor supply. Cullen and Gruber (2000) estimate that women's work hours would be approximately 30% higher during their husband's unemployment spell in the absence of unemployment insurance benefits. This points to the importance of considering how long a husband is or expects to be unemployed since unemployment insurance is temporally limited. While the CPS does not gauge expectations, we can control for the duration of unemployment and know that in this recession, unemployed persons are remaining unemployed for longer durations than in the past. The Center for American Progress (Weller, 2009) reports that average unemployment is the longest ever since the Bureau of Labor Statistics began recording such data in 1948! Thus, we might expect more wives to adjust their labor force participation. Moehling (2001) describes the time associated with finding a job and suggests wives may only do so when the expected unemployment spell is long. However, Moehling notes such time costs may not be associated with increased hours so one might expect working wives to increase work hours regardless of how long their partners have been unemployed.

Coupled with long unemployment during the recession may be a discouraged worker effect, whereby unemployed workers see little opportunity and high costs to job seeking (see,

Lundberg, 1985; Tano, 1993). These individuals may stop seeking work and fall completely out of the labor force. Wives of men who become discouraged will likely find it necessary to adjust their labor force participation, either by entering the labor force, or increasing work hours, wherever possible.

While most of the extant research was conducted without explicit consideration of an economic recession, some scholars have analyzed the added worker effect during financial crisis. Skoufias and Parker (2006) analyzed the added worker effect during the Mexican peso crisis and found that non-working wives were likely to enter the labor force following husbands' unemployment: over 15% of such wives commenced work and nearly 2% were seeking work. Although the cultural climate and labor market in Mexico and the United States may be very different, this work suggests that families adapt by having wives commence or increase work during deep economic recessions.

The current study advances our understanding of how wives adjust their employment in response to their husbands' job loss in several ways. First, we provide a very contemporary perspective, analyzing data that was very recently released by the Census Bureau. Second, we consider multiple labor force outcomes including the transition into the labor force (which includes entering unemployment and employment), and increasing hours. Third, our focus on the current recession is an interesting lens for understanding the added worker effect in atypical circumstances that may have long lasting and severe implications for families, and particularly children (see Bruce (2009) for an account of the negative and far reaching implications for children who fall into poverty during a recession).

Other factors associated with wives' employment patterns

We include several variables as controls that have been shown to be linked to wives' labor force participation in our multivariate models including wives' characteristics (such as her education, age, and race/ethnicity); husbands' characteristics (such as his education, age and race/ethnicity); family variables (such as number of children under 18 and presence of children under 5, and family income level); and geographic variables (such as region and place of residence). Women with higher human capital, such as that attained by higher levels of education, command higher earnings and are more likely to work (Becker, 1991; Blau, Ferber, & Winkler, 1998). Black women have historically worked more than white women (see Amott & Matthaei, 1991; Casper & Bianchi, 2002). Husband's characteristics proxy for his ability to conduct an effective job search and find employment, and the presence of young children has been shown to be a strong negative predictor of wives' employment after a husband's job loss (Cullen & Gruber, 2000; Maloney, 1991). We include region in our models to control for differences in unemployment and place of residence as there are typically more job opportunities in urban than rural areas.

Research Questions

Guided by economic theory on family labor supply after a husband's job loss, as well as by previous literature on the added worker effect and female employment, we address the following two research questions:

1) Are wives entering the labor force or increasing their work hours more often when husband's lose their job or stop working during the economic downturn?

2) What other factors are associated with wives' entering the labor force or increasing their work hours in the context of this deep recession?

Method

Data

We analyze the monthly data files for May 2008 and 2009 of the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is collected monthly by the U.S. Census Bureau and includes a nationally representative sample of roughly 57,000 households each month. Each household is included in the CPS for two years, and a total of eight interviews during the same four months of each year. Thus there are two May surveys with each household. For example, roughly half of respondents interviewed in 2009 were also interviewed in 2008. These respondents who are married at both time points constitute the base of our analytic sample (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008).

We matched respondents in 2008 and 2009 in consultation with Census Bureau employees. In addition to linking respondents' by their household identifiers and person line numbers, we required them to match on nativity, sex and race, and allowed only minimal variation in educational attainment and age. Cross-tabulations of the data indicate that we captured individuals in Months 1-4 of their interviews in May, 2008 and 5-8 in May, 2009. Further, we limited our sample to wives (and their husbands) between the ages of 18 and 65 with valid spouse information. These steps yield a sample of 8,825 wives (the sample of wives not in the labor force in May 2008 is 2,243 and the sample of wives working part-time in May 2008 is 1,785).

The CPS data are well suited for our analyses for several reasons. First, the monthly files provide sufficient economic and demographic information to assess changes in family labor force status. Second, it has very detailed information about time committed to the labor force. Third, the CPS also provides very timely information that can be used to assess the impact of the

current recession. Finally, the CPS tracks addresses over two years, allowing us to see changes within families as the financial downturn unfolded. Since the current recession officially began in December, 2007 (see National Bureau of Economic Research, 2009), we will be able to look at employment 6 months after the onset of the recession (in May 2008) and well into the recession (in May 2009). Due to survey design, the best way to capture the most respondents longitudinally is to use surveys conducted 12 months apart. Theoretically, fifty percent of all households will be in both samples. Sample attrition, household moves, and other data collection factors lower this number in reality. One limitation of the CPS is that it does not track movers. In the context of a recession with both higher than average foreclosures and frozen housing markets, it is unclear whether those same families experiencing husbands' job loss are more apt to move. In any event, our results are limited to those who do not move. Other available data, including the Survey of Income and Program Participation, that provide income, earnings, and work hours information, and track movers are not as timely as the CPS. Thus, the CPS is the best available data for examining wives' labor force participation following husbands' job loss during the current economic recession.

Measures

Table 1 presents the distribution of all wives by labor force participation status at time 1 for all variables used in our analyses.

[Table 1 About Here]

Dependent Variables. There are three dependent variables in our analyses. First a dichotomous variable indicating whether the wife entered the labor force by May 2009, coded 1 if the wife transitions from not in the labor force to employed or unemployed and 0 otherwise. Second, a categorical variable that indicates whether the wife transitions a) from not in the labor

force to employed, b) from not in the labor force to unemployed, or c) if she remains not in the labor force. Third, a dichotomous variable indicating whether wives who work part-time in May 2008 increase their hours spent working for pay by May 2009.

Husbands' Unemployment. The principal measure of interest is the variable measuring whether the husband becomes not employed. This variable is coded 1 if the husband is employed in May 2008 and transitions to either unemployed or not in the labor force by May 2009. This measure is broader than one looking at transitions from employment to unemployment only since we want to include husbands who have become discouraged and have given up their job search. A second measure of husband's job loss is the duration of time he has been unemployed. A dichotomous variable coded 1 if the husband had been unemployed for 12 or more months at time 1 is included.

Wives' and Husbands' Characteristics. Categorical variables indicating whether the wife's education level is less than high school (reference category), high school graduate, some college and college graduate are included in the models. We include a continuous variable of age, and whether the wife is white, non-Hispanic (reference category), black, non-Hispanic, other race, non-Hispanic or Hispanic. Similar variables are included for the education level, age and race and ethnicity of the husband. All of these measures are constructed for May 2008.

Family Variables. A continuous variable indicating the number of children in the household and a dichotomous variable measuring the presence of a child under 5 are included. Family income in May 2008 is divided into $25,000 increments up to $100,000, with dummy variables included in the model (less than $25,000 is the reference group). A dummy variable indicating whether family income is missing is also included.

Geographic Controls. Four dummy variables are constructed indicating the region of residence, Northeast (reference category), Midwest, West and South. In addition, measures of rural and urban (reference category) residence are included in the models. Rural refers to persons living outside the officially designated metropolitan areas, while urban refers to persons living within metropolitan areas. Metropolitan residence is based on Office of Management and Budget delineation at the time of data collection, in 2008.

Data Analyses

We begin by presenting the employment status of all husbands and all wives in May, 2008 and May, 2009. Multivariate regression analyses are used to assess the extent to which wives respond to their husbands' job loss by entering the labor force or increasing their work hours between May 2008 and May 2009, during the current economic recession. First, we present a logistic regression model to assess the relationship between a husband's job loss and a wife's transition from being not in the labor force to being in the labor force (unemployed or employed) among non-working wives. We then disaggregate our outcome variable into 3 categories: A) no change in wives' employment status, remaining out of the labor force (comparison group); B) transition from not in labor force to employed; and C) transition from not in labor force to unemployed and seeking work. Finally, we limit our sample to wives employed part-time in May 2008 and run a logistic regression model predicting whether their work hours have increased. All analyses are weighted to account for sample design.

Results

Table 2 presents the labor force distribution of wives and husbands at time 1 and time 2. In May, 2008, almost 80 percent of all wives were employed. This falls by 2.3 percent by May 2009 when more wives are unemployed and not employed. The pattern is the same for men;

however, a higher percentage, almost 87 percent, were employed at time 1, and a larger percentage, almost 4 percent, are either not in the labor force or unemployed by time 2. This is not inconsistent with the possibility of an added worker effect. During the recession, we would expect some women to decrease their employment due to job loss or layoff; however, these numbers may be offset by wives who enter the labor force.

[Table 2 About Here]

To explore this further, we turn to our multivariate models. Table 3 presents results from logistic regression models predicting wives entering the labor force by May 2009. The analytic sample is wives who were not in the labor force (e.g. keeping house, retired, disabled, discouraged workers) in May 2008. We find a strong, statistically significant effect of husband's job loss on wives' entering the labor force. Wives of husbands who exited the labor force have 1.9 times the odds of entering the labor force as those whose husbands remained in the labor force. While we employ this broad measure of transition, we found similar results in preliminary models that examined husband's transition from employment to unemployment. We use this broader measure because, in times of economic downturn, retirements may be less voluntary and discouraged workers may be common. Additionally, the loss of income associated with the transition to exiting the labor force may require novel strategies given the other economic problems caused by the recession (e.g. tighter credit, losses on investments). We find no effect of a husband's long term unemployment. This may be because wives of such men had already found jobs by time 1, or because they had made a decision not to seek employment.

[Table 3 About Here]

Consistent with our expectations, we find that wives with higher levels of education and Black wives are more likely to enter the labor force, net of other factors and older women are

less likely to seek or find a job. Husband's education level and age are not associated with wives' labor force entrances, but wives of Black husbands are less likely and wives with husband's of other non-Hispanic races are more likely to enter the labor force. The number of children in the home does not depress, but rather increase women's likelihood of entering the labor force. However, the presence of a pre-school age child (under 5 years) depresses her odds of looking for or commencing work. Family income has little effect on the probability that wives enter the labor force. We did not find any regional differences, but do find that rural wives are less likely to enter the labor force.

In Table 4 we take a more nuanced look at labor force transitions among wives who were not in the labor force at time 1. Table 4 presents the results of multinomial regression models comparing wives who commence work and wives who seek work to those who remain out of the labor force. We find that when a husband transitions out of the labor force, wives are significantly more likely to become employed. Additionally, wives are about three times as likely to seek employment when her husband transitions out of the labor force. These findings are consistent with an added worker effect. Our results show that wives are more often seeking, but also finding work during this deep recession. In this model, we do see an effect of long term husband unemployment. It appears that wives whose husbands' have been seeking work for more than a year are 3.75 times as likely to be seeking, but not finding work.

[Table 4 About Here]

Wives' educational attainment continues to matter for transitioning into work, but is irrelevant in the transition from being out of the labor force to seeking work. That is, the positive effect of having a high school degree or higher seen in Table 3 is driven by wives entering employment rather than entering unemployment, suggesting that higher levels of education

enable wives to secure a job. Black wives are more likely than white wives to seek work and find work, but the effect is much larger for seeking work. This suggests that many black wives are finding it difficult to get a job in this economic climate, or may be a result of so many black wives already working. Net of other characteristics, women who are not black, white, or Hispanic are less likely to get a job, relative to staying out of the labor force. Older wives are less likely to find work, despite not being very different in job seeking. Having more children increase the odds that a wife finds a job, yet young children suppress the likelihood of seeking or finding a job. Income and region have little relationship to wives' transitioning into the labor force. Rural wives are less likely to seek employment than their urban counterparts.

We now turn to logistic regression models predicting the likelihood that wives working part-time increase their work hours when their husband drops out of the labor force. We find a 38 percent increase in the odds that a wife increases her work hours when her husband stops working, as compared to wives whose husbands continue working. Women who are already working may be more readily able to adapt to changing family economics, and increasing hours can occur more quickly than finding and beginning a new job. We do not see any change for wives whose husbands have been unemployed for at least a year, suggesting that if they were going to increase their hours, they had already done so by May, 2008.

[Table 5 About Here]

According to Table 5, educational attainment does not affect the likelihood of increased work hours; however, younger women and black women are more likely than other women to increase work hours. Young children inhibit women's increased work time, as we might expect given their needs and the cost of child care. As expected, we find that wives living in families with very low family income are most likely to increase work hours, as they likely have less of a

cushion upon which to fall back on during hard financial times. We do not find any effect for region or place.

Conclusions and Discussion

In response to our first research question: Are wives entering the labor force or increasing their work hours in response to their husband's job loss due to the economic downturn? We find that wives are indeed entering the labor force, and that they are doing so more often when their husbands transition out of employment. Our finding is striking since many women whose husbands remain in the labor force may also seek employment, either to offset the loss of a second job on his part, or as insurance during this deep economic recession. Our multinomial results suggest that while wives of husbands who stop working very often commence a job search, they are also more likely to secure a job, although the increased likelihood of finding a job is not as great as the increased likelihood of seeking a job suggesting that many more wives are seeking jobs than are finding them. Thus, it is likely that the desired outcome of increasing family income cannot be realized by many families given the dearth of jobs in this economic climate. However, wives who are already in the labor force, but who do not work full time are very likely to add work hours when their husband leaves work.

In our second research question, we asked: What other factors contribute to wives' entering the labor force or increasing their work hours in the context of this deep recession? We find that wives with higher levels of educational attainment are more likely to enter the labor force and more likely to find employment. However, education has little influence on a wives' increased work hours if she worked part-time at time 1. Black wives are more likely than white wives both to seek and find work during this recession. If they were working part time in May,

2008, they are more likely than such white wives to have increased work hours by May, 2009. This is not surprising, given the high toll this recession has taken on black men's employment. Older women have a harder time getting a job even though they are no different from younger wives in their likelihood of transitioning to unemployment (from being out of the labor force) and are also less likely to increase work hours if they were working part-time at time 1. This suggests that older couples may be hard hit by the economic climate. Children play an interesting role. More children are associated with higher odds of entering the labor force, and, more specifically, of finding work. More children also are associated with increased work hours for wives' working part-time, suggesting that the higher costs associated with having more children may play a factor in wives employment. However, the presence of a young child inhibits labor force participation and increased work hours among wives. Children require financial means for support, but the child care and emotional needs of young children may outweigh financial concerns. Relative to those with family income less than $25,000 per year, wives in higher income families were less likely to increase work hours if they were working part-time, but family income was not related to entering the labor force. Families with higher family income may have savings to help them weather financial hard times, or they may expect the husband's job loss to be temporary. Finally, worth noting is that rural women are less likely to enter the labor force in this recession than are women in urban areas, driven by their lower propensity to seek work. This highlights the need for attention to rural places during this recession. Rural places may have fewer opportunities for work, and child care may not be available or travel to work may be too difficult.

This research sheds light on the question of whether or not wives can and do eliminate some of the (often temporary) reduction in household income following a husband's transition

out of the labor force. Our findings strongly suggest that wives try and often succeed in entering the labor force by either commencing, seeking, or expanding work. Bane and Ellwood (1986) stress the importance of the earnings of wives in ending family poverty spells. Yet, even if wives' are entering the labor force and/or increasing their work hours, families are still taking a hit financially by relying primarily on wives' earnings, because wives' earnings tend to be lower than husbands'. Thus, many American families need a safety net to help them weather the storm of the Great Recession.

Our research also suggests that many wives seek but cannot find work. During this deep recession, when jobs are not plentiful and access to other sources of income are rare, it may be especially challenging for families to meet their needs when a husband losses his job.

Steps taken by the Obama administration to expand Unemployment Insurance through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act may benefit some of these families and help them stay afloat. Further expansion of the safety net to families having trouble finding work, for example by extending full eligibility to tax credits including the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Child Tax Credit, and the Making Work Pay Tax Credit to all who seek work regardless of earnings may be an important aid through this financial crisis. Additionally expansion of public assistance and food stamps may help families stay afloat and be an important preventive measure for preserving child and family well-being.

Table 1. Percent Distribution of Wives on Dependent and Independent Variables by Labor Force Participation Status in May 2008

Characteristics	All Wives	Wives Not in Labor Force	Wives in Labor Force	
			Part-time	Full-time
Wife enters labor force	3.8	14.2	N/A	N/A
Wife increases hours	18.3	10.0	43.8	12.1
Husband becomes unemployed	3.8	3.5	4.1	3.7
Husband becomes not employed	6.8	6.5	5.9	6.3
Wives' Characteritics				
Wives' Education				
Less than high school	7.3	14.4	6.1	4.1
High school graduate	29.0	33.9	27.3	27.2
Some college	28.3	25.4	29.6	29.4
Bachelor's degreee or higher	35.3	26.4	37.0	39.4
Wives' Age (mean)	43.9	44.7	43.4	43.7
Wives' Race and Ethnicity				
White non-Hispanic	74.7	70.1	79.4	75.3
Black non-Hispanic	6.7	5.6	4.7	8.0
Other non-Hispanic	7.0	8.1	6.5	6.7
Hispanic	11.6	16.3	9.5	10.0
Husbands' Characteritics				
Husbands' Education				
Less than high school	9.1	14.8	8.4	6.5
High school graduate	28.5	28.6	26.9	29.1
Some college	25.9	22.3	23.6	28.9
Bachelor's degreee or higher	36.5	34.4	41.2	35.6
Husband's Age (mean)	45.9	46.7	45.3	45.7
Husbands' Race and Ethnicity				
White non-Hispanic	75.8	71.4	79.7	76.5
Black non-Hispanic	7.0	5.7	5.3	8.4
Other non-Hispanic	6.0	7.0	5.5	5.6
Hispanic	11.2	15.8	9.5	9.6
Family Variables				
Number of Children under 18				
0 children	48.1	47.5	41.0	51.4
1 child	19.7	16.0	19.9	21.6
2 children	21.2	21.0	25.1	19.7
3 or more children	11.0	15.5	13.9	7.3
Child under 5	22.6	29.6	26.2	17.4
Family Income				
Less than $25,000	6.4	12.9	6.9	2.8
$25,000 to $49,999	16.4	22.3	17.7	12.7
$50,000 to $74,999	20.1	17.9	21.5	20.8
$75,000 to $99,999	16.2	12.2	13.8	19.4
$100,000 or more	27.6	18.5	28.8	31.9
Missing family income	13.2	16.4	11.3	12.4
Region				
Northeast	18.4	17.9	18.8	18.5
Midwest	23.6	19.1	26.0	25.0
West	36.8	39.0	30.8	38.1
South	21.3	24.1	24.5	18.4
Residence				
Rural	17.5	17.6	16.1	18.0
Urban	81.8	81.5	83.0	81.4

Note: N/A indicates that the women are currently in the labor force and therefore can not enter the labor force.
Source: Individual Matched 2008-2009 May CPS

Table 2. Change in Employment Status Among Wives and Husbands, May 2008 to May 2009

	All Wives			All Husbands		
	May 2008	May 2009	Percent Change	May 2008	May 2009	Percent Change
Employment Status						
Percent employed	70.9	68.5	-2.3	86.7	82.8	-3.9
Percent unemployed	2.1	3.2	1.0	2.1	4.7	2.6
Percent not in labor force	27.0	28.3	1.3	10.0	11.5	1.6

Source: Individual Matched 2008-2009 May CPS

Table 3. Logistic Regression Analysis Predicting Wives Entering the Labor Force by May 2009, Among Wives Not in the Labor Force in May 2008

	B		SE	Odds Ratio
Husband becomes not employed	0.643	***	0.148	1.903
Husband unemployed 12 or more months	0.237		0.442	1.267
Wives' Characteritics				
Wives' Education				
Less than high school	R			
High school graduate	-0.026		0.160	0.974
Some college	0.490	**	0.172	1.632
Bachelor's degreee or higher	0.605	***	0.189	1.832
Wives' Age	-0.029	***	0.009	0.971
Wives' Race and Ethnicity				
White non-Hispanic	R			
Black non-Hispanic	1.928	***	0.497	6.876
Other non-Hispanic	-0.825	**	0.284	0.044
Hispanic	0.261		0.219	1.299
Husbands' Characteritics				
Husbands' Education				
Less than high school	R			
High school graduate	-0.117		0.158	0.889
Some college	-0.319		0.174	0.727
Bachelor's degreee or higher	-0.286		0.184	0.751
Husband's Age	-0.001		0.009	0.999
Husbands' Race and Ethnicity				
White non-Hispanic	R			
Black non-Hispanic	-2.075	***	0.517	0.126
Other non-Hispanic	0.571	*	0.274	1.771
Hispanic	-0.309		0.227	0.734
Family Variables				
Number of Children under 18	0.106	*	0.046	1.111
Child under 5	-0.530	***	0.121	0.589
Family Income				
Less than $25,000	R			
$25,000 to $49,999	-0.061		0.145	0.940
$50,000 to $74,999	0.049		0.154	1.050
$75,000 to $99,999	0.131		0.168	1.140
$100,000 or more	-0.228		0.171	0.796
Missing family income	-0.292		0.166	0.747
Region				
Northeast	R			
Midwest	0.112		0.133	1.119
West	-0.060		0.033	0.942
South	-0.120		0.119	0.887
Residence				
Rural	-0.269	*	0.120	0.764
Constant	-0.399			
N			2,243	
df			27	
-2 Log Likelihood			4,025.384	
Note: R indicates the reference cateogry				
* p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001				

Table 4. Multinomial Logistic Regression Analysis Predicting Wives Becoming Employed or Unemployed by May 2009, Among Wives Not in the Labor Force in May 2008

	Wife Becomes Employed					Wife Becomes Unemployed			
	B		SE	Relative Risk Ratio		B		SE	Relative Risk Ratio
Husband becomes not employed	0.474	**	0.169	1.606		1.115	***	0.267	3.048
Husband unemployed 12 or more months	-0.191		0.574	0.826		1.320	*	0.631	3.745
Wives' Characteritics									
Wives' Education									
Less than high school	R					R			
High school graduate	0.183		0.185	1.201		-0.699		0.309	0.497
Some college	0.692	***	0.197	1.998		-0.190		0.345	0.827
Bachelor's degreee or higher	0.753	***	0.214	2.124		0.274		0.386	1.315
Wives' Age	-0.034	***	0.010	0.966		-0.010		0.019	0.990
Wives' Race and Ethnicity									
White non-Hispanic	R					R			
Black non-Hispanic	1.525	**	0.547	4.596		3.276	***	0.763	26.456
Other non-Hispanic	-0.841	**	0.309	0.431		-0.817		0.626	0.442
Hispanic	0.175		0.236	1.191		0.638		0.504	1.892
Husbands' Characteritics									
Husbands' Education									
Less than high school	R					R			
High school graduate	-0.059		0.179	0.942		-0.246		0.303	0.782
Some college	-0.173		0.193	0.841		0.981	**	0.377	2.666
Bachelor's degreee or higher	-0.179		0.205	0.836		-0.721		0.391	0.486
Husband's Age	0.011		0.009	1.011		0.011	**	0.018	1.011
Husbands' Race and Ethnicity									
White non-Hispanic	R					R			
Black non-Hispanic	-1.873	***	0.569	0.154		-2.749	***	0.811	0.064
Other non-Hispanic	0.537		0.296	1.710		0.766		0.601	2.152
Hispanic	0.237		0.245	1.267		-0.697		0.245	0.498
Family Variables									
Number of Children under 18	0.152	**	0.050	1.164		-0.098		0.104	0.906
Child under 5	-0.498	***	0.131	0.608		-0.657	**	0.269	0.518
Family Income									
Less than 25,000 dollars	R					R			
25,000 to 49,999 dollars	-0.152		0.161	0.859		0.297		0.296	1.346
50,000 to 74,999 dollars	0.101		0.166	1.106		-0.383		0.373	0.682
75,000 to 99,999 dollars	0.101		0.183	1.106		0.257		0.366	1.293
100,000 or more dollars	-0.226		0.185	0.798		-0.345		0.398	0.708
Missing family income	-0.367	*	0.184	0.693		-0.589		0.345	0.555
Region									
Northeast	R					R			
Midwest	0.142		0.145	1.153		-0.054		0.285	0.948
West	-0.050		0.037	0.952		-0.116		0.071	0.890
South	-0.008		0.130	0.992		-0.658	**	0.269	0.518
Residence									
Rural	-0.140		0.125	0.869		-1.165	**	0.381	0.312
Constant	-1.223	***				0.470			
N			2,243						
$\chi 2$			4,603.930						
Note: R indicates the reference cateogry									
* p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001									

Table 5. Logistic Regression Analysis Predicting Wives Increasing Hours in Labor Force by May 2009, Among Wives Working Part-time in May 2008

	B		SE	Odds Ratio
Husband becomes not employed	0.323	*	0.148	1.381
Husband unemployed 12 or more months	-0.282		0.505	0.754
Wives' Characteritics				
Wives' Education				
Less than high school	R			
High school graduate	0.210		0.180	1.233
Some college	0.193		0.187	1.213
Bachelor's degreee or higher	0.277		0.193	1.319
Wives' Age (mean)	-0.017	*	0.008	0.983
Wives' Race and Ethnicity				
White non-Hispanic	R			
Black non-Hispanic	1.110	**	0.355	3.034
Other non-Hispanic	-0.114		0.217	0.892
Hispanic	0.006		0.194	1.006
Husbands' Characteritics				
Husbands' Education				
Less than high school	R			
High school graduate	0.144		0.159	1.155
Some college	0.273		0.166	1.314
Bachelor's degreee or higher	0.304		0.171	1.356
Husband's Age (mean)	0.007		0.008	1.007
Husbands' Race and Ethnicity				
White non-Hispanic	R			
Black non-Hispanic	-0.524		0.333	0.592
Other non-Hispanic	0.611	**	0.231	1.843
Hispanic	-0.050		0.189	0.951
Family Variables				
Number of Children under 18	0.027		0.037	1.028
Child under 5	-0.343	***	0.098	0.709
Family Income				
Less than 25,000 dollars	R			
25,000 to 49,999 dollars	-0.277		0.166	0.758
50,000 to 74,999 dollars	-0.516	**	0.165	0.597
75,000 to 99,999 dollars	-0.510	**	0.173	0.601
100,000 or more dollars	-0.505	**	0.164	0.603
Missing family income	-0.682	***	0.177	0.506
Region				
Northeast	R			
Midwest	-0.172		0.103	0.842
West	-0.023		0.027	0.977
South	0.045		0.101	1.046
Residence				
Rural	-0.064		0.096	0.938
Constant	0.272			
N			1,785	
df			27	
-2 Log Likelihood			4,963.884	
Note: R indicates the reference cateogry				
* p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001				

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