

## “Parental Employment, Child Care, and Child Outcomes in Immigrant Families.”

The focus of our proposed paper is on parental work and child care arrangements and how they influence the early cognitive and behavioral development of children of immigrants in the United States. A large literature has examined the effects of parental employment and child care arrangements on child outcomes, but rarely with an explicit focus on children of immigrants. This is an important omission, because immigrant families are likely to have quite different work and child care arrangements than their native born peers. Immigrant parents, we hypothesize, would be more likely to be employed, would work longer hours, would work for jobs with fewer benefits (e.g., sick leave, child care assistance), and would be more likely to work non-standard schedules than native-born parents. In addition, immigrant families, on average, would be less likely to use formal child care for their preschool age children and more likely to rely on informal and family-based care.

Our paper uses data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Birth Cohort (ECLS-B), a large nationally representative birth cohort study that collects extremely rich data on children and families at 9 months, 2 years, 4 years, and 5 years post-birth. The ECLS-B has a large sample of children of immigrants and extensive data on child cognitive and behavioral development. We use the ECLS-B to 1) document patterns of parental employment and child care arrangements for children of immigrants in comparison to children of native-born parents and 2) to estimate the effect of those parental employment and child care arrangements on child outcomes for both groups. Where sample sizes permit, we will also carry out some analyses for specific sub-groups of immigrant families (e.g. families from Mexico). We define children of immigrants as children who have at least one parent born outside the United States.

Our preliminary descriptive results, shown in Table 1, confirm that children of immigrants tend to rely on informal and family-based care. In contrast, parental employment patterns are more complicated than hypothesized. For example, foreign-born mothers were less likely to be working and to be working at nonstandard hours than the native-born. However, foreign-born mothers tend to have fewer benefits associated with their jobs than the native-born, despite they were equally likely to work at full-time hours. On the other hand, foreign-born fathers were equally likely to be working and working at full-time hours than native-born fathers. However, foreign-born fathers were more likely to work at evening hours or split shift and to have jobs with fewer benefits than native-born fathers.

These differences in employment patterns between foreign-born and native-born and between mothers and fathers highlight the important scenario that immigrant couples are likely to have different parental employment patterns than the native-born. And these differences in parental employment patterns may make a difference in their children’s well-being. These differences in parental employment patterns may also be related to differential use of child care arrangements (for example, mothers of immigrants may be more likely to take care of their young children and thus opt for not working than those of native-born mothers). And these differences in parental employment patterns, and child care arrangements, may in turn be related to children’s well-being. Our study therefore fills a knowledge gap by answering questions regarding the interplay between child care arrangements and parental employment patterns, and between mother’s and father’s employment patterns, how such interplay might differ between foreign-born and native-born families, and how in turn these differences may be related to their children’s well-being.

**Table 1. Selected Descriptive Characteristics of Analyzed Sample, ECLS-B (Weighted)**

| Variables                             | Total<br><i>M (SD) / %</i> | U.S. born<br><i>M (SD) / %</i> | Foreign born<br><i>M (SD) / %</i> | <i>t / <math>\chi^2</math></i> |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Parent characteristics</i>         |                            |                                |                                   |                                |
| Mother's age at birth                 | 27.31 (6.18)               | 27.19 (6.25)                   | 27.74 (5.89)                      | -2.99**                        |
| Father's age at birth                 | 39.07 (23.72)              | 39.48 (24.42)                  | 37.57 (20.91)                     | 2.77**                         |
| Mother's highest education            |                            |                                |                                   | 575.20***                      |
| Less than high school                 | 27.4                       | 22.0                           | 47.1                              |                                |
| High school                           | 21.8                       | 22.8                           | 18.1                              |                                |
| Some college                          | 26.3                       | 28.9                           | 16.9                              |                                |
| More than college                     | 24.5                       | 26.3                           | 18.0                              |                                |
| Father's highest education            |                            |                                |                                   | 734.09***                      |
| Less than high school                 | 21.6                       | 14.8                           | 43.5                              |                                |
| High school                           | 22.9                       | 24.6                           | 17.6                              |                                |
| Some college                          | 26.1                       | 28.8                           | 17.5                              |                                |
| More than college                     | 29.4                       | 31.9                           | 21.4                              |                                |
| <i>Child care arrangements</i>        |                            |                                |                                   |                                |
| No non-parental care                  | 50.0                       | 47.2                           | 60.3                              | 189.18***                      |
| Relative care                         | 25.7                       | 25.8                           | 25.3                              |                                |
| Non-relative care                     | 15.2                       | 16.4                           | 10.6                              |                                |
| Center-based care                     | 8.5                        | 9.8                            | 3.6                               |                                |
| Multiple arrangement                  | 0.7                        | 0.8                            | 0.3                               |                                |
| <i>Employment characteristics</i>     |                            |                                |                                   |                                |
| Mother worked before a birth          | 71.3                       | 76.0                           | 54.3                              | 406.37***                      |
| Work hours before a birth             | 36.16 (11.28)              | 36.19 (11.26)                  | 35.99 (11.40)                     | 0.43                           |
| Taking maternity leave                | 65.4                       | 66.8                           | 58.5                              | 30.55***                       |
| Weeks of maternity leave              | 11.17 (8.34)               | 11.21 (8.32)                   | 10.96 (8.45)                      | 0.55                           |
| Mother's employment continuity        |                            |                                |                                   | 420.46***                      |
| WBB & WAB                             | 45.1                       | 48.8                           | 31.9                              |                                |
| WBB & NWAB                            | 26.2                       | 27.2                           | 22.4                              |                                |
| NWBB & WAB                            | 5.5                        | 4.8                            | 7.9                               |                                |
| NWBB & NWAB                           | 23.2                       | 19.2                           | 37.8                              |                                |
| Mother's work status at 9 months      |                            |                                |                                   | 155.55***                      |
| Not working                           | 47.8                       | 44.7                           | 59.1                              |                                |
| Full time                             | 32.3                       | 33.7                           | 27.2                              |                                |
| Part time                             | 19.9                       | 21.6                           | 13.8                              |                                |
| Mother's work status at 24 months     |                            |                                |                                   | 131.75***                      |
| Not working                           | 44.9                       | 42.0                           | 55.8                              |                                |
| Full time                             | 34.8                       | 36.1                           | 29.9                              |                                |
| Part time                             | 20.3                       | 22.0                           | 14.3                              |                                |
| Mother's work status at preschool     |                            |                                |                                   | 86.52***                       |
| Not working                           | 40.5                       | 38.1                           | 49.6                              |                                |
| Full time                             | 39.6                       | 40.6                           | 36.0                              |                                |
| Part time                             | 19.9                       | 21.3                           | 14.5                              |                                |
| Mother's work status at kindergarten  |                            |                                |                                   | 97.52***                       |
| Not working                           | 37.0                       | 34.0                           | 48.1                              |                                |
| Full time                             | 43.0                       | 44.6                           | 36.7                              |                                |
| Part time                             | 20.1                       | 21.4                           | 15.2                              |                                |
| Mother's benefits through current job |                            |                                |                                   |                                |
| Any benefit                           |                            |                                |                                   |                                |
| At 9 months                           | 75.3                       | 78.1                           | 61.9                              | 104.15***                      |
| At 24 months                          | 74.0                       | 75.8                           | 65.2                              | 43.24***                       |
| At preschool                          | 82.6                       | 84.5                           | 73.8                              | 61.94***                       |
| At kindergarten                       | 84.1                       | 86.6                           | 72.5                              | 93.63***                       |
| Number of benefits                    |                            |                                |                                   |                                |
| At 9 months                           | 2.12 (1.61)                | 2.21 (1.59)                    | 1.66 (1.63)                       | 7.36***                        |
| At 24 months                          | 2.08 (1.62)                | 2.14 (1.60)                    | 1.79 (1.67)                       | 4.27***                        |
| At preschool                          | 2.21 (1.51)                | 2.28 (1.49)                    | 1.85 (1.54)                       | 6.04***                        |
| At kindergarten                       | 2.31 (1.52)                | 2.39 (1.48)                    | 1.92 (1.61)                       | 5.61***                        |
| Mother's work shift at 9 months       |                            |                                |                                   | 13.96                          |

|                                       |             |             |             |           |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| Regular day time shift                | 70.8        | 70.3        | 73.5        |           |
| Regular evening shift                 | 12.2        | 12.1        | 12.5        |           |
| Regular night shift                   | 3.5         | 3.6         | 3.2         |           |
| Rotating shift                        | 6.2         | 6.5         | 5.2         |           |
| Split shift                           | 2.0         | 2.3         | 0.6         |           |
| Other schedule                        | 5.3         | 5.3         | 5.1         |           |
| Mother's work shift at 24 months      |             |             |             | 16.37     |
| Regular day time shift                | 73.9        | 73.3        | 77.0        |           |
| Regular evening shift                 | 11.7        | 11.6        | 12.4        |           |
| Regular night shift                   | 3.5         | 3.7         | 2.6         |           |
| Rotating shift                        | 5.8         | 6.2         | 3.5         |           |
| Split shift                           | 1.5         | 1.5         | 1.7         |           |
| Other schedule                        | 3.6         | 3.8         | 2.9         |           |
| Mother's work shift at preschool      |             |             |             | 23.37*    |
| Regular day time shift                | 74.1        | 73.7        | 76.0        |           |
| Regular evening shift                 | 9.2         | 8.8         | 10.9        |           |
| Regular night shift                   | 4.0         | 4.2         | 3.0         |           |
| Rotating shift                        | 7.3         | 7.4         | 6.9         |           |
| Split shift                           | 1.6         | 1.6         | 1.6         |           |
| Other schedule                        | 3.9         | 4.4         | 1.6         |           |
| Mother's work shift at kindergarten   |             |             |             | 17.08+    |
| Regular day time shift                | 74.8        | 74.2        | 77.7        |           |
| Regular evening shift                 | 6.9         | 6.6         | 8.5         |           |
| Regular night shift                   | 4.4         | 4.5         | 3.9         |           |
| Rotating shift                        | 5.6         | 5.8         | 4.8         |           |
| Split shift                           | 1.4         | 1.6         | 0.7         |           |
| Other schedule                        | 6.9         | 7.4         | 4.5         |           |
| Father's work status at 9 months      |             |             |             | 28.95***  |
| Not working                           | 7.7         | 7.0         | 10.3        |           |
| Full time                             | 87.4        | 88.4        | 83.9        |           |
| Part time                             | 4.9         | 4.6         | 5.7         |           |
| Father's work status at 24 months     |             |             |             | 8.39+     |
| Not working                           | 7.1         | 7.5         | 5.8         |           |
| Full time                             | 87.2        | 87.1        | 87.6        |           |
| Part time                             | 5.7         | 5.5         | 6.6         |           |
| Father's work status at preschool     |             |             |             | 8.20      |
| Not working                           | 6.3         | 6.7         | 5.0         |           |
| Full time                             | 89.2        | 89.0        | 89.6        |           |
| Part time                             | 4.5         | 4.3         | 5.3         |           |
| Father's work status at kindergarten  |             |             |             | 9.58+     |
| Not working                           | 6.8         | 7.1         | 5.6         |           |
| Full time                             | 88.5        | 88.5        | 88.2        |           |
| Part time                             | 4.8         | 4.4         | 6.2         |           |
| Father's benefits through current job |             |             |             |           |
| Any benefit                           |             |             |             |           |
| At 9 months                           | 80.2        | 84.6        | 65.9        | 292.93*** |
| At 24 months                          | 79.4        | 84.1        | 64.0        | 307.20*** |
| At preschool                          | 83.8        | 87.7        | 70.4        | 241.94*** |
| At kindergarten                       | 82.1        | 86.3        | 67.9        | 198.04*** |
| Number of benefits                    |             |             |             |           |
| At 9 months                           | 2.37 (1.56) | 2.55 (1.49) | 1.77 (1.61) | 13.80***  |
| At 24 months                          | 2.36 (1.57) | 2.54 (1.50) | 1.77 (1.64) | 12.59***  |
| At preschool                          | 2.37 (1.46) | 2.53 (1.39) | 1.84 (1.55) | 11.44***  |
| At kindergarten                       | 2.38 (1.50) | 2.55 (1.43) | 1.79 (1.57) | 10.78***  |
| Father's work shift at 9 months       |             |             |             | 41.89***  |
| Regular day time shift                | 78.0        | 77.7        | 78.8        |           |
| Regular evening shift                 | 6.6         | 5.9         | 8.8         |           |
| Regular night shift                   | 3.6         | 4.0         | 2.4         |           |
| Rotating shift                        | 6.2         | 6.5         | 4.9         |           |
| Split shift                           | 1.5         | 1.3         | 2.0         |           |

|                                     |      |      |      |          |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|------|----------|
| Other schedule                      | 4.2  | 4.5  | 3.1  |          |
| Father's work shift at 24 months    |      |      |      | 73.47*** |
| Regular day time shift              | 79.2 | 79.9 | 76.9 |          |
| Regular evening shift               | 6.5  | 5.3  | 10.4 |          |
| Regular night shift                 | 3.6  | 3.8  | 2.9  |          |
| Rotating shift                      | 6.0  | 6.0  | 6.1  |          |
| Split shift                         | 1.1  | 0.9  | 1.6  |          |
| Other schedule                      | 3.6  | 4.1  | 2.1  |          |
| Father's work shift at preschool    |      |      |      | 74.57*** |
| Regular day time shift              | 79.3 | 79.4 | 79.1 |          |
| Regular evening shift               | 5.2  | 4.1  | 8.9  |          |
| Regular night shift                 | 3.7  | 3.9  | 3.0  |          |
| Rotating shift                      | 7.1  | 7.7  | 5.3  |          |
| Split shift                         | 1.2  | 1.0  | 1.6  |          |
| Other schedule                      | 3.5  | 3.9  | 2.1  |          |
| Father's work shift at kindergarten |      |      |      | 47.49*** |
| Regular day time shift              | 79.9 | 79.4 | 81.5 |          |
| Regular evening shift               | 5.1  | 4.6  | 6.9  |          |
| Regular night shift                 | 3.6  | 3.5  | 3.8  |          |
| Rotating shift                      | 5.9  | 6.4  | 4.3  |          |
| Split shift                         | 0.6  | 0.4  | 1.3  |          |
| Other schedule                      | 4.9  | 5.7  | 2.3  |          |

*Note.* WBB=work before birth; WAB=work after birth; NWBB=no work before birth; NWAB=no work after birth. +p < .10; \*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001