

Weekend Couples as Manifestation of Gender Equality:
Household Labor and Subjective Well-being
of Wives and Husbands among Korean Weekend Couples

Abstract

Some wives and husbands maintain separate residences. This form of couples is understood as manifestation of major transition in the gender arrangement of work and family. Using a sample of “weekend couples,” where wives and husbands live separately in Korea, this study 1) compared weekend and typical couples in time spent on housework and 2) examined whether time on housework is associated with life satisfaction to weekend and typical couples. I found that while females in weekend couples use much less time on household chores compared to females in typical couples, males in weekend couples assign more time to housework compared to their counterparts. Additionally, I found that for women in both weekend and typical couples, more household tasks are related to lower levels of general satisfaction. The results suggested that maintaining separate residences may balance time use patterns between two partners and so have important implications for subjective well-being of weekend couples.

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Introduction

Increasing numbers of wives and husbands maintain separate residences, challenging the long-established convention that couples in love live together under one roof. Women with high educational degrees and/or ambitious career aspirations refuse to be trailing spouses to follow their partners transferred to different countries (van der Klis & Mulder, 2008) or do not mind seeking employment opportunities outside the residential areas, leaving their spouses and children for a while (Homes, 2014). Besides, because it requires much energy and money to settle down in unfamiliar areas, spouses (usually mothers), especially those with school-aged children, are hesitant to accompany their spouses who relocate far away. This arrangement seems to proliferate not only in developed countries (e.g., McBride & Bergen, 2014; Reuschke, 2010), but also in developing countries experiencing rapid economic growth (e.g., Fan, 2003; Lau et al., 2012).

This recently expanding lifestyle is often conceptualized as “an extreme manifestation of major transitions in the nature of work and family” (Lindemann, 2017, p. 1420). In the past, spouses, particularly wives, turned down even lucrative and promising employment opportunities located far away or gave up current jobs to be together with spouses who were transferred to remote workplaces (Gill & Haurin, 1998). However, these days, female as well as male partners negotiate desired work and family arrangements, and spouses are expected to accept the other spouses’ personal choices, including maintenance of their own households.

Accordingly, this new trend is viewed as an aspect of gender equality. On the whole, empirical studies appear to support this conceptualization. A larger number of women are willing to accept positions even in foreign branches (Wong, 2017), and some males will gladly be “trailing husbands” (Stockdale, 2017). Both female and male employees in this arrangement work at night and on the weekend to achieve occupational promotions and bonuses (Jackson et al., 2000). Moreover, the literature reports that women and men in this new arrangement are generally satisfied with this lifestyle because they can arrange work and family life as they wish (Evertsson & Nyman, 2013).

However, the research conclusions about family responsibilities, particularly division of household labor, have been inconsistent. Some studies have reported that individuals in this kind of couples are usually career-oriented and try to get away from burdens of household tasks (Duncan, 2015). Others have indicated that these spouses have to perform so many domestic chores on their own that they have to cut down work hours (van der Klis & Karsten, 2009a). One reason for these conflicting results is that most studies are based on in-depth interviews of small selective samples, focusing, for example, on certain age groups (Evertsson & Nyman, 2013) or specific occupation holders (Homes, 2014). Using time diary data from a nationwide sample in Korea, this study examined 1) how much time wives and husbands in this form of couples spend on housework and 2) whether time on housework is associated with life satisfaction. This study produced reliable estimates of division of household labor for wives and husbands in this new form of couples in a country where increasing number of couples decide to live separately regardless of documented severe gender inequality regarding division of labor (Kan & Hertog, 2017).

Literature Review

Weekend Couples in Korea

An increasing number of partners keep their own households even though they are in love (e.g., Duncan & Phillips 2010; Reimondos et al., 2011; Strohm et al., 2009). The literature explains that this phenomenon is due to (1) gradual rises in women's labor force participation, (2) global and regional expansions in corporations, (3) far-reaching diffusion of individualism, (4) developments in communication technology and public transportations, and (5) recent worldwide recessions (Green et al., 1999; Ravalet et al., 2017). Commuter marriage has been used to describe dual-earner married couples where spouses live separately because workplaces are located too far to commute on a daily basis (van Der Klis, 2008). In addition, the term LAT (living apart together) has been widely employed to define those who are in a committed relationship but sustain separate residence (Connidis et al., 2017).

Similar trends have been observed among Korean marital couples. Due to the steadfast parental drive to raise academically competitive children, regardless of child's gender, Korean females have attained successful educational achievements, recently surpassing boys in rates of entrance into college (Seong, 2014). With diploma from college or higher educational institutes, women pursue career opportunities everywhere in the country as well as abroad, even after marriage. On the other hand, Korean husbands cannot enjoy lifetime employment anymore, and they have been afraid of unexpected laid-off since the 1997 IMF financial crisis (Yoon et al., 2017). Accordingly, they are more open to gender equality compared to older generations (Chung, 2005). Hence, they condone or support their spousal quest for career opportunities. Moreover, children play a significant role in the decision to

adopt a commuting lifestyle in Korea and Western countries (van der Klis & Mulder, 2008). Korean parents, who always prioritize their children when making life plans (Kim, 2015), tend to believe that children have a better life in one familiar and stable location; therefore, if one parent gets a job at a great distance from the family home, they opt for a commuter partnership rather than family migration. Especially if families reside in some Metropolitan areas where educational environments are superior and one parent must be transferred to rural regions, parents certainly do not hesitate to choose to maintain separate households.

In addition, some technological and geographical advantages relieve marital couples of emotional and physical burdens associated with commuting lifestyle (Kim, 2001). Extensive internet networks and almost universal dissemination of smartphones allow wives and husbands who live separately to contact each other anytime anywhere. Due to a relatively small size of the country and well-equipped public transportations, it usually takes a quarter of a day for them to commute back to the main households. Besides, to decrease population centralization in the Seoul metropolitan areas, the Korean government transferred the administrative capital from Seoul to Sejong City and relocated many public institutions all over the country, forcing many civil worker couples to face the choice of living together or apart. In these situations, the commuting lifestyle is a viable or unavoidable option for Korean married couples who want to pursue career paths and secure familial commitments (van der Klis & Mulder, 2008). Partners in these couples live apart from their families on the weekdays and return to their spouses and children on weekends, which is why they are called “weekend couples.” This form of couples has been on the increase recently in Korea. The Local Area Labor Force Survey, a semi-annual national survey, reported that 8.7% and 10.4% of dual-earner marital couples were weekend couples in 2011 and 2015, respectively.

Housework of Weekend Couples in Korea

In general, weekend couples, as a form of living arrangement, is understood as a demonstration of individualization of marriage (Lindemann, 2017). During the last few decades of the 20th century, as material needs were satiated to some degree, people began to turn their attentions to higher goals in life, and personal choices were at the heart of construction of life courses (Bellah et al., 1985). They began to increasingly value self-development, emotional support, and romantic love when deciding to enter marital union or end their relationships if they do not obtain desired benefits (Cherlin, 2009). Wives and husbands are increasingly more expected to pursue their own preferences and intentions. In this sense, some married women and men do not accept the long-established norm of co-residing couples in order to look for career success, individual comfort, or children's development (Holmes, 2004). The literature suggests that this arrangement can promote democratization of intimate relationships and thus preserve autonomy, privacy, and freedom from gendered duties (Connidis et al., 2017; Lindemann, 2017).

In fact, since the initial academic interests in commuting arrangements, the literature has suggested the possibility that commuting arrangement may appeal particularly to women (Gerstel & Gross, 1984). In both cohabitating and married couples, family nurturing, home management, and responsibility for relationships are gendered (e.g., Domínguez-Folgueras, 2013; Miller & Carlson, 2016); thus, these commitments limit women in their everyday scheduling and their decision-making about important areas in life (Saxbe et al., 2011). Home becomes another workplace rather than a place where women can feel autonomy and relaxation. To avoid the gendered structure of social roles in couples, women hope to own their own place as a safeguard against demands and limitations shouldered on them and

maintain more egalitarian relationships with their male partners. By maintaining own households, women have the opportunity for a strategic denial of taken-for-granted patterns of coupledom (Evertsson & Nyman, 2013).

However, the results of empirical research on division of family responsibilities, possibly the most gendered area in life, are not consistent with this rather positive theoretical discussion. Previous studies have provided contrasting expectation about the amount of time that wives and husbands living separately may allocate to household chores.

Wives and husbands living separately tend to focus on occupational careers and often work until late at night (Homes, 2014) and highly regard their personal happiness, being actively involved in various leisure activities (Upton-Davis, 2015). Accordingly, couples making commuting arrangements are expected to spend less time on housework compared to typical couples living together. Consistent with this argument, Van der Klis and Karsten (2009b) reported that commuting spouses often try to minimize everyday household activities, for example, by visiting restaurants or having microwave foods for dinners. Particularly women complain that males create additional tasks at home, and those keeping own households appreciate the chance to get away from traditional division of labor (Duncan, 2015).

However, wives and husbands living separately from spouses must live without spousal contribution to household tasks and thus take the sole responsibility for family duties. If they have children to take care of at home, they must prepare meals, clean the house, and do grocery shopping single-handed, which appears to suggest that weekend couples spend more time on domestic chores. Some studies have reported that commuting women are actively involved in traditional female home-making tasks, and they feel increased family workload as such serious challenge that they have to cut down in work hours (Whalen & Schmidt, 2016).

Van der Klis and Karsten (2009a) argued that even though egalitarian gender role ideology plays an influential role in the decision to accept the commuting arrangement, this lifestyle is “not an guarantee for an equal division of work and care” (p. 342).

I argue that implications of separate residences for allocation of housework differ according to Korean weekend couples’ gender. Husbands living with wives are typically exempt from the burden of household tasks due to spousal contribution to family responsibilities (Kim, 2013). However, married men living without their wives have no choice but to perform some domestic tasks on their own. These household responsibilities may be heightened for husbands who are stationed in rural areas and have less access to outsourcing services, restaurants, and laundrettes. Thus, married men in weekend couples are expected to spend more time on housework compare to their counterparts in typical couples.

Wives in weekend couples, refusing to yield to the conventional lifestyle of living with spouses under one roof, tend to value personal preferences; therefore, they may take household tasks lightly. Moreover, they are free from some home chores that husbands generate, for example, washing husbands’ clothes or preparing side dishes suiting husbands’ tastes (Duncan, 2015). Hence, married women in weekend couples are likely to spend less time on housework compared to their counterparts in typical couples. In sum, I expect that division of labor at home is more gender balanced for weekend couples due to both increased husbands’ and decreased wives’ temporal contribution to housework.

Housework and Subjective Well-Being of Weekend Couples in Korea

Since an increasing number of women and men in unions opt to live independently for the

realization of personal values and enhancement of individual developments, researchers have offered different arguments about the association between this unconventional living arrangement and mental health of women and men in union. Some have proposed that women benefit psychologically from separate living arrangements more than do men while others have proposed otherwise (Lau et al., 2012, Landesman & Seward, 2013). The effects of allocation of household labor of the newly emerging living arrangement on wives and husbands' psychological health are crucial to these different arguments.

Some researchers have suggested that women in this form of couples suffer more from perceived role conflicts compared to men due to gender asymmetry in distribution of commuter lifestyles' costs and benefits (Fuller, 2010). Qualitative studies have reported that wives still do the lion's share of home tasks while husbands reside elsewhere (Ralph, 2015). Children in commuter couples are likely to be taken care of much more by mothers than fathers (Lämsä et al., 2017); thus, mothers in a commuter relationship have to be like single parents who handle various commitments alone. On the other hand, men, mostly living in the satellite household, are freed from the daily burdens of housekeeping, and they can enjoy themselves while concentrating on their personal goals or interests (Kim, 2001).

However, other researchers have pointed out that spousal absence at weekly or monthly intervals may escalate conflicts and depressions that husbands in weekend couples have to experience (Rhodes, 2002). In Korea, the patriarchal belief that family and home are primarily a woman's responsibility has been inscribed in many wives' minds (Lee & Park, 2001), and they do the bulk of traditionally female tasks for their husbands and children (Yoon, 2010). However, husbands living away do not have wives who unburden them from hassles of domestic chores and have no choice but to perform them. Due to home management and domestic tasks, commuting lifestyle can be very stressful for them.

These two arguments are based on two expectations. First, wives and husbands in weekend couples differ from those living together in contributions to household labor, which is the first research question discussed above and second, both females and males who spend more time on unpaid family labor feel lower levels of subjective well-being.

Overall, the literature appears to support the second assumption, suggesting that the more time wives and husbands spend on household tasks, the worse their subjective well-being is (Coltrane, 2000). Empirical studies often rely on the equity theory (Lively et al., 2010) or effort-reward imbalance model (Sperlich et al., 2012) to understand psychological implications of family work. The equity theory proposes that one experiences depression when perceiving that she or he does more than her or his fair share (Sprecher, 2018). The effort-reward imbalance model suggests that lack of reciprocity between efforts made and rewards received evokes negative emotions that exacerbate physical and mental health (Author). These two perspectives appear to suggest that wives and husbands who contribute more to family work are more likely to feel that they do more than what they are supposed to do and do not receive sufficient compensations. As a result, they experience anger, rage, depression, and self-reproach. But unfortunately, few studies examine this possible influences of time on housework to women and men living separately from spouses.

Study

It is often suggested that as a breakaway from a patriarchally institutionalized form of practices, relationships, and identities, commuting lifestyle can provide a chance for women to undermine the traditional regulations of marital life, patterns of economic support, and divisions of domestic labor (Richardson, 1996; Upton-Davis, 2015). While some empirical

efforts have been made to examine this theoretical proposition, they are limited in a couple of ways.

First, most studies on household labor and subjective well-being of romantic couples who live separately are qualitative, using convenience samples that limit the generalization of their conclusions. More importantly, they are based on in-depth interviews of small selective samples, such as high-end occupation holders like professors (e.g., Homes, 2014) or executives (e.g., Landesman and Seward, 2013). However, since this new living arrangement has recently been extended to laborers who are different from those with a great wealth of economic and temporal resources (Reuschke, 2010), balanced studies should examine information from more diverse social groups including blue-collar workers or homemakers (Author). Second, few studies have been done on this living arrangement in non-Western countries (Bassani, 2007). Obviously, social attitudes about gender roles vary across cultures, and studies on countries with various cultural backgrounds are necessary to obtain a more complete understanding of implications of this new work and family arrangements.

Using a recent Korea time diary study, which is considered as the golden standard for the analysis of daily activities (Godbey and Robinson, 2008), this paper adds to the literature by 1) comparing distributions of household labor by wives and husbands living separately and together and 2) examining the relation between time spent on housework and their life satisfaction. By examining division of household labor, this study can offer empirical evidence to support the view that commuting lifestyle erodes traditional composition of work and family.

Data and Measures

Data

This study used the data from the 2014 Korea Time Diary Study (hereafter 2014 KTUS). The 2014 KTUS selected a nationwide sample of about 12,000 households based on a multi-stage area sampling method. All ten-year-old or older household members in each household were asked to complete daily diaries at 10-min intervals for two consecutive days and to answer individual-level questionnaire assessing their social and demographic background as well as subjective well-being. Additionally, the main economic providers in each household provided information about household-level features and nine-year-old or younger household members.

The final sample comprised 422 married women and 194 married men younger than 65 years of age who reported that their spouses live elsewhere. This sample of wives and husbands in weekend couples was compared to 5,845 married couples living together. Hereafter, in this paper, “typical couples” indicates the couples living together.

Measures

In the activity classification of 2014 KTUS, housework includes food preparation and dish washing, laundry and clothes care, cleaning and vacuuming, financial and household management, home and car maintenance, and pet care, which are compatible with standard components of household labor in time diary studies in other nations. In this study, time on housework indicated total amount of minutes wives and husbands spend on these activities

per day. Subjective well-being was measured by life satisfaction on a 5-point scale ranging from “very unsatisfied” to “very satisfied.”

Previous research on household labor has identified some general factors that influence the amount of unpaid family work married women and men do (Coltrane, 2000), which are included in the models of time spent on housework. Individual income levels were measured on an 11-point scale, with zero indicating unemployment. Gender role ideology reflects how much wives and husbands agree or disagree with the statement, “work for men and family for women.” The respondents provided weekly hours for both main and additional (if they have) jobs, and sums of these hours were used as working hours. Again zero indicated unemployment. The information on the number of children in the household aged less than 10 and 10 or older was also collected.

Moreover, we controlled for several social and economic variables. Age was included as a linear and squared terms. Subjective assessment of health was measured on a 5-point response scale ranging from “very bad” to “very good.” Education was assessed on a 6-point scale ranging from elementary to graduate schools. For occupation, five dummy variables were created to indicate managerial or professional, clerical, service and sales, and labor and agricultural jobs, with unemployed being the reference group. Two dummy variables were used to indicate whether the respondents live in urban areas and whether they completed the time diary during weekends respectively.

Methods

Table 1 includes proportions and means of social and demographic measures for wives and husbands in weekend and typical couples. The average number of daily minutes that the two

types of households spend on household labor and selected tasks are provided in Table 2. Multivariate analysis results are shown to examine whether wives and husbands living separately and together differ in time spent on housework (Table 3). Because preliminary analyses revealed that considerable proportions of males in weekend and typical couples (24.7% and 52.5%, respectively) are never involved in household chores, tobit models were estimated for these multivariate analyses. Also it should be noted that respondents in the 2014 KTUS were asked whether anyone visited the household more than one hour during the survey day and the response scales include spouse living elsewhere, parent living elsewhere, child elsewhere, sibling elsewhere and others. Using this item, I found that 10% of the wife and 5% of the husband in weekend couples report that their spouses stay that day and that presence of spouses is not associated with own time on housework for both women and men in weekend couples. Hence, I decided to drop this variable from the tobit models. Finally, to investigate the implications of allocation of gender division to subjective well-being, ordered logistic regressions were estimated for wives and husbands in these living arrangements because general satisfaction was measured using a Likert-type response scale (Table 4). I conducted all analyses for the first and second day survey and obtained substantively the same results. In this paper, I report results for the first day.

Results

Wives and Husbands in Korean Weekend and Typical Couples

Table 1 provides descriptive statistics for wives and husbands in weekend and typical couples in Korea.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics for Wives and Husbands in Korean Weekend and Typical Couples*

	Wife		t-test or chi-square results	Husband		t-test or chi-square results
	Weekend Couples	Typical Couples		Weekend Couples	Typical Couples	
Age						
30s or younger	20.4	33.1		10.3	24.4	
40s	42.7	34.9	**	31.4	33.2	**
50s	31.0	28.3		43.3	31.9	
60s	5.9	3.7		15.0	10.5	
Health	3.3(0.80)	3.3 (0.78)		3.5 (0.74)	3.4 (0.75)	
Education						
Elementary	6.2	5.2		3.6	3.8	
Junior high	7.4	9.1		7.2	7.1	
High	43.6	40.2		37.1	35.7	
Two-year college	16.1	20.3		18.0	17.6	
Four-year college	22.3	20.9		24.2	28.1	
Graduate school	4.5	4.4		9.8	7.6	
Occupation						
Non-employed	38.2	43.1		11.9	6.5	
Managerial/Professional	14.9	13.5		18.6	18.9	
Office	11.9	10.2	*	15.0	20.3	**
Service	20.1	17.6		10.8	16.0	
Labor	14.0	12.6		29.9	33.5	
Agricultural	1.0	3.0		13.9	4.8	
Working Hours ^a	44.1(14.10)	42.4(13.59)		47.8(14.95)	50.5(15.42)	*
Gender Role Liberalism	3.0 (0.83)	2.9 (0.82)		2.8 (0.77)	2.5 (0.80)	**
Children Ages 9 or Younger						
0	80.1	66.4		96.9	66.4	
1	13.3	18.4	**	2.1	18.4	**
2 or more	6.6	15.2		1.0	15.2	
Children Ages 10 or Older						
0	64.5	71.1		96.4	71.1	
1	22.5	17.0	*	3.1	17.0	**
2 or more	13.0	11.9		0.5	11.9	
Household Incomes	4.2 (1.93)	4.8 (1.80)	**	4.1 (2.01)	4.8 (1.80)	**
Rural	1.1	5.6	**	12.4	5.6	**
Weekend	37.2	40.2		39.2	40.2	
Life Satisfaction	3.2 (0.89)	3.3 (0.91)		3.0 (0.92)	3.2 (0.90)	*
n	422	5,845		194	5,845	

Note: Means and standard deviations in the parentheses for linear variables and proportions for categorical variables are presented

^a averages among those who are employed

* p < .05. ** p < .01.

In general, studies have reported that commuter couples are older compared to non-commuter couples (Landesman & Seward, 2013), and a particularly high proportion of those are in their 40s and 50s (Reuschke, 2010). Similarly, in this study, married women and men in weekend couples are older compared to those in typical couples, with noticeably more wives

in their 40s and husbands in their 50s in weekend couples compared to their counterparts. Weekend couples had less children, particularly little children aged less than ten compared to typical couples.

Husbands in weekend couples were a bit less likely to be employed compared to those in typical couples, possibly reflecting age distributions. They are more likely to reside in rural areas. Males in weekend couples spend less time at workplace. Importantly, these men are much more egalitarian in gender attitudes compared to men living together with wives. It seems that husbands who support females' career aspirations and males' family involvement are more likely to try to maintain additional households. On the other hand, wives in weekend couples are more likely to work compared to their counterparts in typical couples. Women living separately from husbands are more likely to reside in urban areas compared to those living with husbands.

Author found that commuter couples report lower levels of general satisfaction compared to married couples living together. Similarly, Table 1 shows that married women and men in weekend couples feel less satisfied with life compared to their counterparts in typical couples, although the difference in general satisfaction was not statistically significant for married women. Wives in weekend couples were more satisfied compared to husbands in weekend couples ($t=1.929$; $p=0.054$), who turned out to be least satisfied with life among four groups by gender and living arrangement.

Time on Housework for Wives and Husbands in Korean Weekend and Typical Couples

Table 2 shows the number of minutes that wives and husbands spend on housework in both forms of couples.

Table 2. *Daily Minutes on Household Labor and Selected Domestic Tasks*

	Wife			Husband		
	Weekend Couples	Typical Couples	t-test results	Weekend Couples	Typical Couples	t-test results
Total	173.7	205.4	**	65.0	33.2	**
Preparing meals	83.5	109.8	**	29.8	8.1	**
Cleaning house	41.3	46.8	**	16.4	9.8	**
Washing/ironing	17.6	19.3		5.4	0.9	**
Shopping	22.4	23.9		8.0	8.7	
n	422	5,845		194	5,845	

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

It appears that wives in weekend couples cut back on the time they devote to unpaid family work. While married women living together with husbands allocate about 3 and half hours to family labor per day, married women living separately devote less than 3 hours to household chores per day. At the same time, men’s contribution to domestic tasks increases when they reside in another household. Married men living together with and separately from their spouses spend about half an hour and one hour daily on domestic tasks, respectively. Still, in weekend couples, wives do the bulk of household labor compared to their husbands. While married women in typical couples do about six times as much unpaid family labor as married men, wives in weekend couples do 2.6 times the amount of household tasks as their husbands do.

Table 2 also shows the amount of time that wives and husbands devote to four tasks in both living arrangements and indicates that mainly time spent on meal preparation influences gender division of labor in weekend couples. While wives devote half an hour less to cooking when they live separately, husbands spend 20 minute more in preparing breakfasts and dinners when they stay away from spouses. Additionally, married men commuting to the main household on a regular basis must do some cleaning and laundry, most of which wives

take care of when they live together.

Table 2 supports the argument for a more equal distribution of unpaid family labor between wives and husbands in weekend couples compared to typical couples in Korea. However, married women and men in weekend and typical couples vary in social features, as Table 1 indicates; therefore, to control for these characteristics, two tobit models were estimated, one without and with the interaction term between whether respondents were females and weekend couples.

Table 3. *Tobit Models of Daily Minutes on Household Labor for wives and husbands in Korean Weekend and Typical Couples*

	Model 1		Model 2	
	coef.	S.E.	coef.	S.E.
Weekend Couples	-2.350	4.485	53.713**	8.051
Female	169.816**	2.546	173.889**	2.592
Weekend Couples*Females			-80.120**	9.616
Age	3.279**	1.106	3.206**	1.104
Age Squared	-0.308*	0.122	-0.296*	0.122
Health	3.087*	1.311	3.000*	1.308
Education	-0.475	1.083	-0.606	1.081
Occupation (vs. Unemployed)				
Managerial/Professional	-34.429**	4.734	-34.484**	4.724
Office	-28.603**	4.827	-28.413**	4.816
Service	-35.189**	4.939	-35.288**	4.928
Labor	-37.437**	4.705	-37.713**	4.695
Agriculture	-14.150	9.299	-16.516	9.279
Working Hours	-1.532**	0.080	-1.513**	0.080
Gender Role Liberalism	2.887*	1.256	2.556*	1.254
Children Ages 9 or Younger	0.624	1.774	1.410	1.773
Children Ages 10 or Older	10.050**	1.678	11.054**	1.678
Household Incomes	-0.664	0.624	-0.669	0.622
Rural	12.972	7.269	12.617	7.250
Weekend	38.901**	2.036	38.915**	2.032
R ²		0.0802		0.0796
n		12,298		12,298

* p < .05. ** p < .01

While the model without the interaction term (Model 1) appears to indicate that being versus not being weekend couple is not associated with time spent on housework, the model

with the interaction term (Model 2) shows that other things being equal, wives in weekend couples allocate about half hour less ($= 53.7 - 80.1$) to household chores daily compared to those in typical couples. However, husbands in weekend couples spend about one hour more ($= 53.7$) on housework per day compared to those in typical couples.

As minimal involvement in unpaid family work suggest, Korean males in typical couples literally leave all household chores to females and avoid sharing family responsibilities (Yoon, 2016). However, living without other adults, including spouses (77.8% of husbands in weekend couples lived in one-person households), males in weekend couples are forced to cook some foods, clean up the houses, and do grocery shopping for themselves. Moreover, husbands are more likely to live in small and medium-sized cities or rural areas than wives; therefore, they have limited choices of restaurants and trouble finding home helpers and coin laundries (Kim, 2001). On the other hand, many Korean females generally view cooked dinners or neat and tidy homes as sincere expression of family love (Kang, 2014); hence, they allocate some time, for example, to prepare meals and do the laundry for family. However, married women in weekend couples have one less household member to care for and as a result, decreases the time they devote to household labor.

However, the results presented in Tables 2 and 3 might have been influenced by self-selection in that couples higher in gender equality in terms of division of housework were more likely to be weekend couples. Women in weekend couples may not be afraid to disregard the established social customs and thus be involved passively in household tasks when living together with their spouses. Men in weekend couples may acknowledge women's career aspirations and actively participate in traditional "women's work." In fact, separate tobit models for wives and husbands in weekend couples revealed that husbands who disagree with traditional gender roles spend more time on domestic tasks (table available

at request). Coupled with the finding that husbands in weekend couples are more liberal in gender role ideology compared to their counterparts in typical couples (see Table 1), this result suggest that self-selection effect is also in play. Obviously, longitudinal research is warranted to replicate and confirm results in this study.

*Time on Housework and Life Satisfaction of Wives and Husbands
in Korean Weekend and Typical Couples*

As describe in the previous section, analyses revealed alterations in gender division of household labor by living arrangements. To investigate associations of redistribution of family labor with gender differences in subjective well-being, life satisfaction was regressed on time spent on housework and some controls for wives and husbands in weekend and typical couples separately.

Table 4. *Ordered Logit Models of Life Satisfaction for Wives and Husbands in Korean Weekend and Typical Couples*

	Wife				Husband			
	Weekend Couple		Typical Couple		Weekend Couple		Typical Couple	
	coef.	S.E.	coef.	S.E.	coef.	S.E.	coef.	S.E.
Housework	-0.002*	0.001	-0.001**	0.000	0.000	0.002	-0.001	0.000
Age	-0.006	0.015	0.000	0.004	-0.004	0.018	0.003	0.004
Health	0.744**	0.125	0.656**	0.034	0.334	0.205	0.779**	0.036
Education	0.163	0.104	0.222**	0.027	0.080	0.146	0.134**	0.026
Occupation (vs. Unemployed)								
Managerial/Professional	0.858	0.455	0.475**	0.112	-0.198	0.744	0.741**	0.154
Office	0.512	0.481	0.121	0.119	0.180	0.719	0.699**	0.151
Service	0.626	0.468	0.098	0.116	-0.052	0.801	0.588**	0.160
Labor	0.311	0.467	-0.049	0.116	-0.595	0.715	0.412**	0.146
Agriculture	3.296	1.972	-0.044	0.221	-0.454	1.134	0.635*	0.270
Working Hours	-0.022**	0.008	-0.013**	0.002	-0.015	0.011	-0.007**	0.002
Gender Role Liberalism	-0.239	0.122	-0.119**	0.032	-0.002	0.191	-0.078*	0.032
Children Ages 9 or Younger	0.152	0.208	-0.039	0.043	-0.369	0.529	0.138**	0.043
Children Ages 10 or Older	-0.141	0.145	-0.030	0.038	0.495	0.627	-0.058	0.038
Household Incomes	0.281**	0.057	0.147**	0.015	0.204*	0.083	0.137**	0.016
Rural	-2.785	1.599	0.429**	0.152	-0.232	0.957	0.130	0.222
R2	0.106		0.058		0.048		0.06	
n	422		5,843		194		5,839	

* p < .05. ** p < .01

I found that for wives in both weekend and typical couples, levels of general satisfaction were lower with increased housework. However, this association was not true for husbands in the two forms of couples. Some studies have proposed that while men's psychological well-being seems to be much less affected by time spent on housework, women's well-being appears to increase with decreased housework hours (Boye, 2009). The literature explains this gender discrepancy as differences in perceptions of housework, suggesting that married women feel more responsible and anxious and so under the pressure of being "a good wife and mother" when looking for vegetables or meats at the grocery stores or cleaning the houses (Offer, 2016). However, when folding the laundry or using the vacuum cleaner, married men see themselves only as helpers who are involved in household chores only at spousal requests (Legerski & Cornwall, 2010). Due to these different attitudes towards family work, women and men can feel differently even when they spend the same time on housework.

In spite of almost unanimous consensus of husbands' better subjective well-being compared to wives in East Asian countries (Lim & Raymo, 2016; Liu et al., 2013), some studies have surprisingly reported women's superior status to men in mental health when spouses live separately from each other in these Confucian countries (Author). This study implies that an important key to this females' better position in psychological state may be a more equal distribution of family responsibilities, including household labor when wives and husbands maintain separate households. Decrease in the familial duties may be associated with reduced depressive symptoms and improved psychological well-being for women in weekend couples in Korea and possibly in other countries.

Discussions

This study examined the amount of time that wives and husbands in Korean weekend couples spend on household labor and the association of time spent on housework with their general satisfaction. Consistent with some recent qualitative studies on LAT in Western countries (Karlsson & Borell, 2005; Upton-Davis, 2015), this study proposed that gender division of labor between married women and men in weekend couples is more equal compared to that between married couples in conventional households, and that reduction in family work may boost subjective well-being of women in Korea.

Increasing numbers of adult women and men, mainly in industrial countries, choose to maintain separate households even when they are romantically involved or married (Duncan, 2015; Strohm et al., 2009). The literature suggests that personal autonomy and preference within the framework of intimate relationships are generally valued in this arrangement and as a result, the willingness to commit to independent residences can be viewed as transformation of the nature of singledom and coupledness (Lindemann, 2017). Recently, family and sociological research has addressed multi-locational households as the formation of a new management of working and family lives (Green et al., 1999). In particular, scholars have argued that women adopting this kind of lifestyle can avoid unequal gendered division of labor and escape males' controlling behaviors (Duncan, 2015; Upton-Davis, 2015), pointing out that this arrangement can provide the opportunity for the 'undoing of gender' in which so-called normal patterns and customs are questioned and transformed (Evertsson & Nyman, 2013). This study adds to this line of literature by revealing that the gap in contributions of women and men in weekend couples to unpaid family work in Korea is in fact narrowing.

The findings about redistribution of household labor between women and men provide some research suggestions because the amount of time spent on housework affects allocation of time to other everyday activities. For example, unpaid family tasks often restrict wives' and husbands' leisure activities (Wallace & Young, 2010) and home responsibilities constrain commitment to paid jobs, especially for women (Baxter & Hewitt, 2013). Hence, reallocation of gender division of labor can lead to adjustments of daily schedules of women and men in weekend couples. Wives who live separately from their husbands might be more likely to exercise, meet some friends, or enjoy certain hobbies, or they might simply sleep more, given that middle-aged women complain of lack of sleep due to family responsibilities (Cha & Eun, 2013). In fact, the literature has suggested that women and men living independently may differ from those in typical couples in how they allocate their time to several activities, including paid work, leisure, and sleeps (Whalen & Schmidt, 2016; Upton-Davis, 2015), and changing in time allocation to these activities have been found to be associated with several dimensions of mental health (Downward & Dawson, 2016; Rudolf, 2014). However, unfortunately, little is known about the association of this living arrangement with various aspects of daily lives and well-being (Reuschke, 2010). More research on time allocation is necessary to investigate implications of the newly emerging living arrangement for women and men living independently.

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