

Care for Elderly Parents, Siblings' Interactions and Gender*

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Abstract

Most developed countries implement aging in place policies to enable individuals to grow old in their home. Such policies rely on family support, mainly provided by children. We aim at understanding how children interact in their decisions to provide informal care to an elderly parent. We focus on the case of a single parent with two children and consider a noncooperative model of the children's care decisions. Each child decides how much time to devote to care, taking the sibling's time devoted to care as given. The productivity of care provision can vary among the children, particularly with their gender. We show that the best response functions lead to a simultaneous bivariate tobit model. The productivity difference between male and female children implies that the strategic interactions depend on the gender composition of the siblings. The results suggest that both sons and daughters free-ride only when their sibling is a sister. This can be theoretically explained by a higher productivity for women than men in care provision, and can explain why women are generally more involved in informal care than men.

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