

Families who eat together stay together?: Examining time use of families in Singapore by family structure

Tay, X. A., Ortega, E., Chan, Y. X. B., Ho, H. S., Tang, S. O. S.

Singapore University of Social Sciences



Acknowledgements



For funding and support of this research project

The views expressed in this presentation are my own and does not reflect the opinions or positions of any affiliated organisations

Introduction



Benchmarking

Time-use, Quality of Life, and Family Resilience



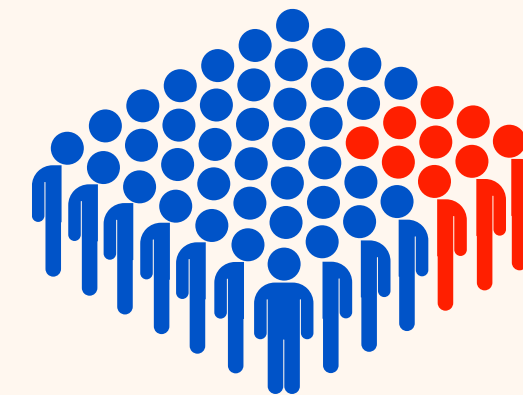
Longitudinal study spanning 3-waves

Data from 2nd wave



2171 Participants

847 households



Stratified Random Sampling

By ethnicity and housing type

Research Questions



Research Question

1. How is family structure associated with the time we spend on meals and engaging in social/leisure activities?
2. To what extent is family structure associated with family resilience?
3. How is spending time having meals and engaging in social/leisure activities with family associated with quality of life and family resilience?

Participants in this Study



Nuclear Family

N = 1477

Mean Age = 38.93



Single-Parent Family

N = 65

Mean Age = 46.05



Blended Family

N = 19

Mean Age = 41.45



Extended Family

N = 305

Mean Age = 40.11



Non-Familial Household

N = 47

Mean Age = 51.93



Elderly Independent Couples

N = 251

Mean Age = 61.75



Others

N = 7

Mean Age = 62.86

Modified American Time Use Diary



Modified American Time Use Diary

Similar to the original American Time Use Diary (ATUS) but with some key differences

- Collection of 1 weekday and 1 weekend diary
- Time use logged in 5-minute increments
- Changes in coding category to match the behavioural patterns of Singaporeans



50 Categories (Including subcategories)

- Personal Care
- Household Activities
- Caring for Household Members
- Caring for Non-Household Members
- Work
- Education
- Consumer Purchases
- Professional and Personal Care Services
- Household Services
- Government/Civic Obligations
- Eating/Drinking
- Socialising, Relaxing, Leisure
- Sports and Exercise
- Religious Activities
- Volunteer Activities
- Telephone
- Travelling

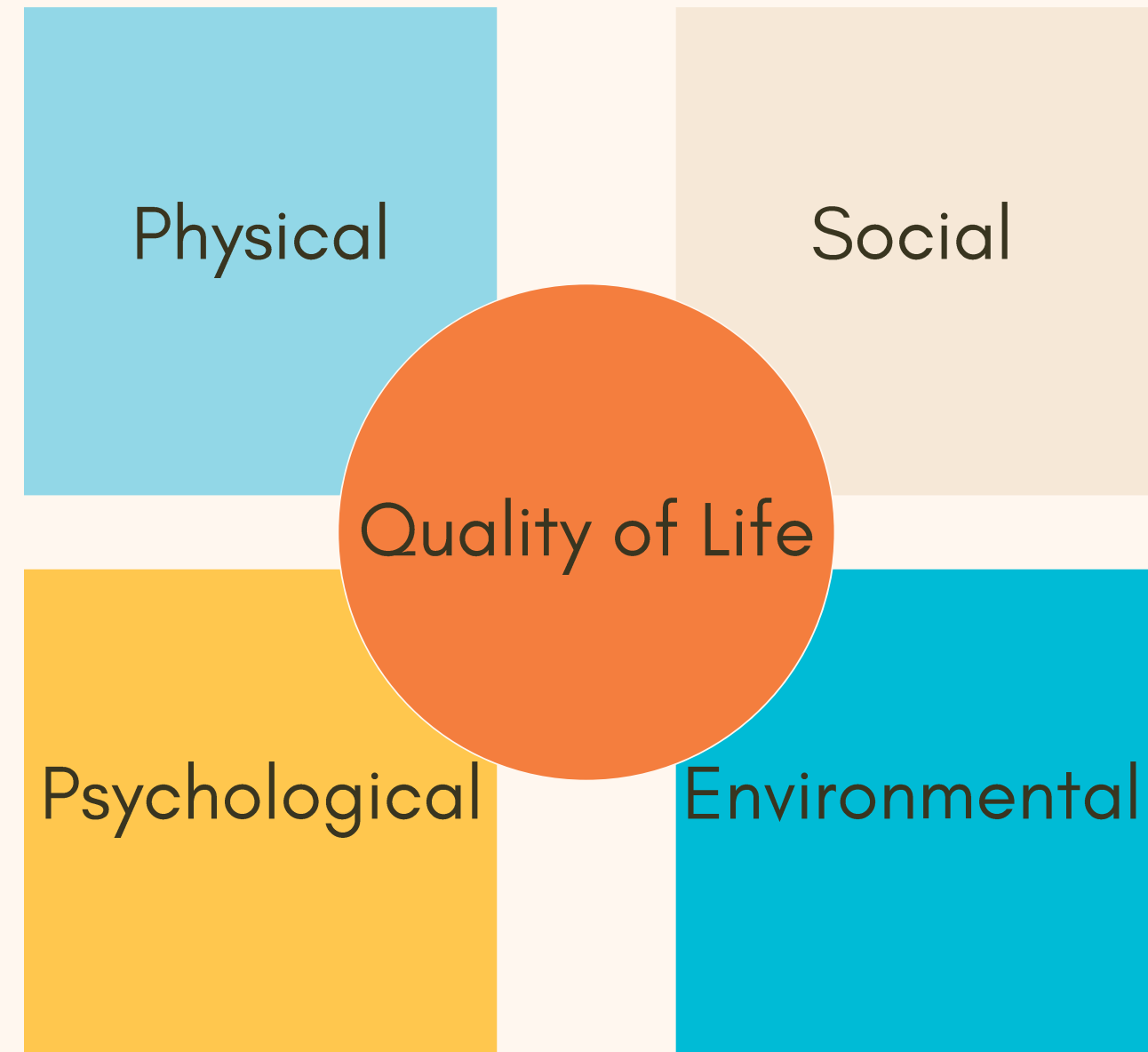
Measuring Quality of Life



WHO-QoL-BREF

WHO-QoL BREF is a 26-item scale that measures quality of life across 4 domains

- Likert Scale (1-5)
- 1 = Very Poor/Very Dissatisfied/Not at all/Never
- 5 = Very Good/Very Satisfied/An Extreme Amount/Extremely/Completely
- Scoring:
 - Domain Scores = Mean scores of items in each domain
 - Overall QoL = Mean scores for each domain
 - Transformation to 0-100 scale



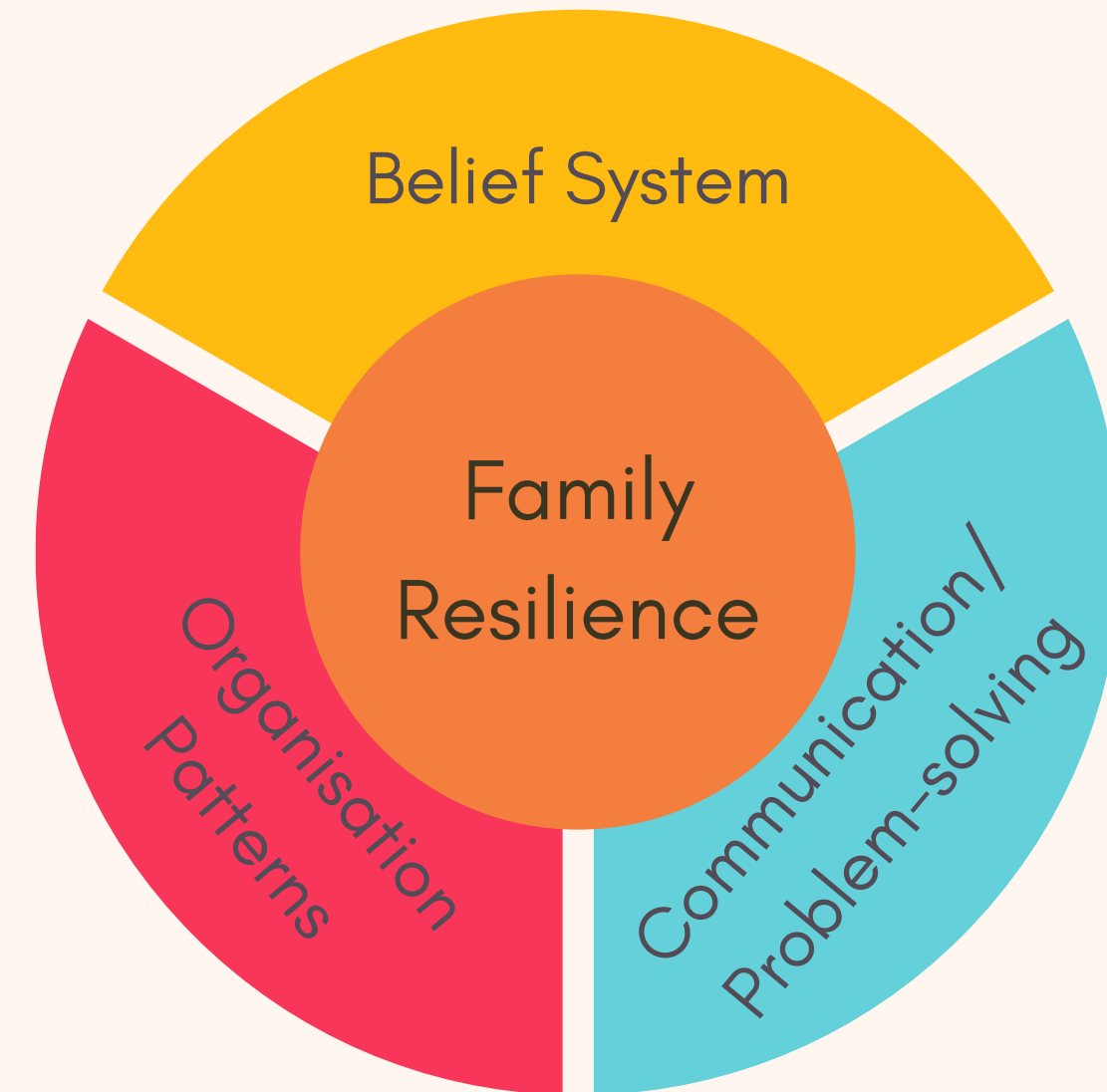
Measuring Family Resilience



Walsh Family Resilience Questionnaire

WFRQ is a 32-item questionnaire measuring family resilience across 3 domains

- Likert Scale (1-5)
- 1 = Rarely/Never
- 5 = Almost Always
- Scoring:
 - Domain Scores = Mean scores of items in each domain
 - Overall Score = Mean scores for each domain



Elderly Independent Couples households Spent the Most Time Engaging in Social and Leisure Activities

Socialising and Leisure (Weekdays)



Nuclear Family
4 Hours 46 Mins



Elderly Independent Couples
7 Hours and 37 Mins



Single-Parent Family
4 Hours 42 Mins



Extended Family
4 Hours 36 Mins



Non-Familial Household
4 Hours 59 Mins

Socialising and Leisure (Weekends)



Nuclear Family
7 Hours 20 Mins



Elderly Independent Couples
9 Hours 05 Mins



Single-Parent Family
7 Hours and 1 Min



Extended Family
6 Hours 30 Mins



Non-Familial Household
5 Hours 42 Mins

Controlled Variables

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Ethnicity

- For households without children, it appears there may be a preference to devote additional time to social/leisure activities

Nuclear Families Spent More Time Engaging in Social and Leisure Activities on Weekends When Compared to Non-familial households*

Controlled Variables

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Ethnicity

Socialising and Leisure (Weekends)



Nuclear Family
7 Hours 20 Mins



Non-Familial Household
5 Hours 42 Mins

- Both nuclear and non-familial households share similar social/leisure activities
 - Relaxing
 - Watching TV
 - Shopping
 - Social Media

*The other family types were not significantly different from each other, only significant pairwise comparisons are presented.

Respondents from Elderly Independent Couple households report higher scores on Psychological and Environmental Quality of Life

Controlled Variables

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Ethnicity

Psychological Quality of Life



Elderly Independent Couples **Non-Familial Household**

73.80/100

67.72/100

Environmental Quality of Life



Elderly Independent Couples **Non-Familial Household**

74.41/100

68.34/100

*The other family types were not significantly different from each other, only significant pairwise comparisons are presented.

Respondents from Nuclear and Elderly Independent Couple households report a greater capacity to make meaning out of life and remain optimistic (higher “Belief Systems” Scores)

*The other family types were not significantly different from each other, only significant pairwise comparisons are presented.

Controlled Variables

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Ethnicity

Family Resilience – Belief System



Nuclear Family
3.90/5.00



Extended Family
3.74/5.00



Non-Familial Household
3.58/5.00

Family Resilience – Belief System



**Elderly Independent
Couples**
3.87/5.00



Non-Familial Household
3.58/5.00

Respondents from Nuclear and Elderly Independent Couple households report greater capacity to express emotions and communicate with each other appropriately (higher “Communication/Problem-Solving” scores).

*The other family types were not significantly different from each other, only significant pairwise comparisons are presented.

Controlled Variables

- 1. Age
- 2. Gender
- 3. Ethnicity

Family Resilience – Communication/Problem-Solving



Nuclear Family
3.97/5.00



Extended Family
3.79/5.00



Non-Familial Household
3.64/5.00

Family Resilience – Communication/Problem-Solving



Elderly Independent Couples
3.94/5.00



Extended Family
3.79/5.00

Respondents from Nuclear and Elderly Independent Couple households report greater capacity to navigate through stressful times by being flexible, connected, and able to utilize resources (higher “Organisational Patterns” scores)

*The other family types were not significantly different from each other, only significant pairwise comparisons are presented.

Controlled Variables

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Ethnicity

Family Resilience – Organisational Patterns



Nuclear Family
3.92/5.00



Single-Parent Family
3.64/5.00



Non-Familial Household
3.58/5.00

Family Resilience – Organisational Patterns



**Elderly Independent
Couples**
3.84/5.00

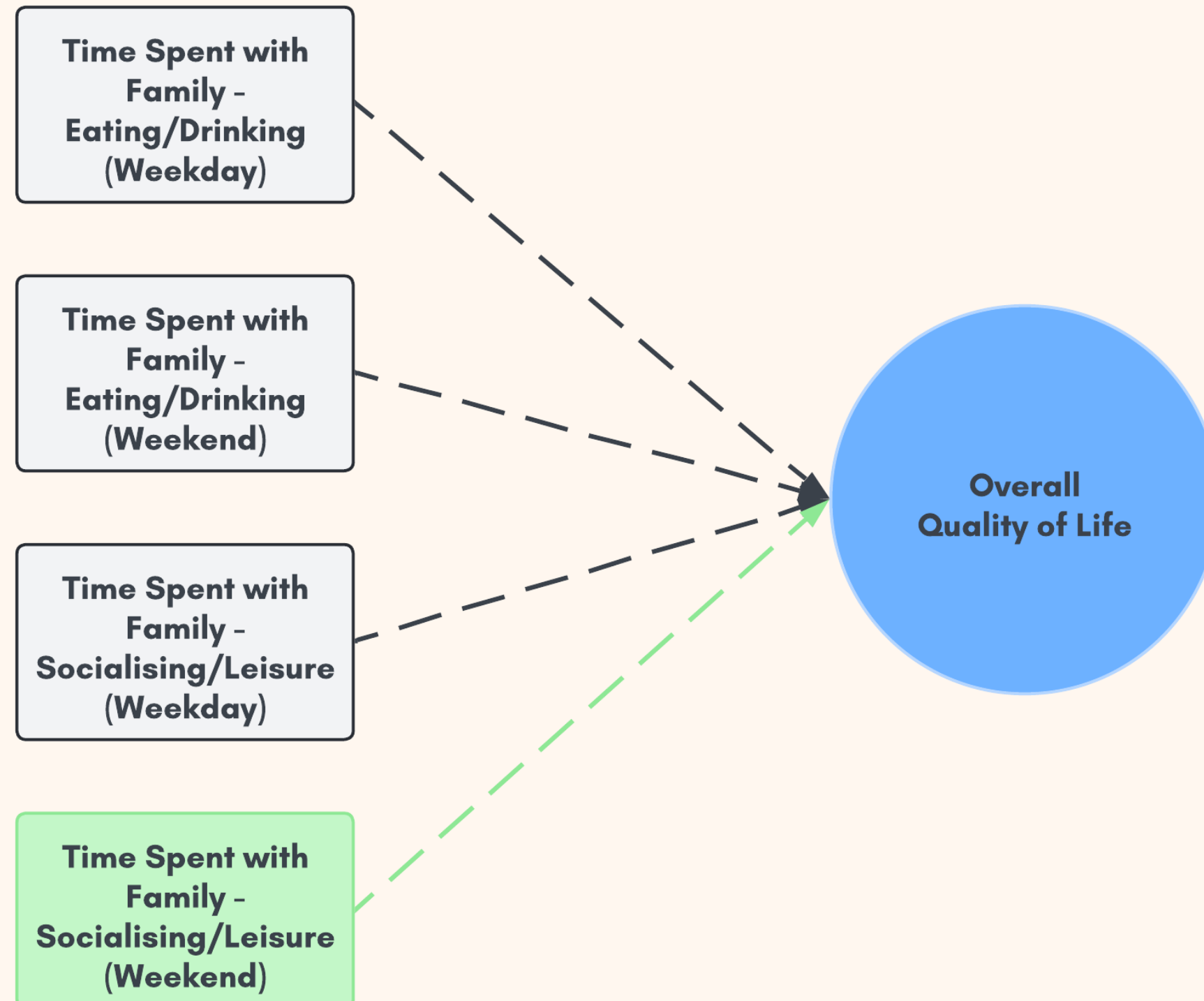


Non-Familial Household
3.58/5.00

Time Spent Engaging in Social or Leisure Activities As a Family is Associated with Higher Quality of Life for Nuclear Families

Controlled Variables

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Ethnicity



Nuclear Family

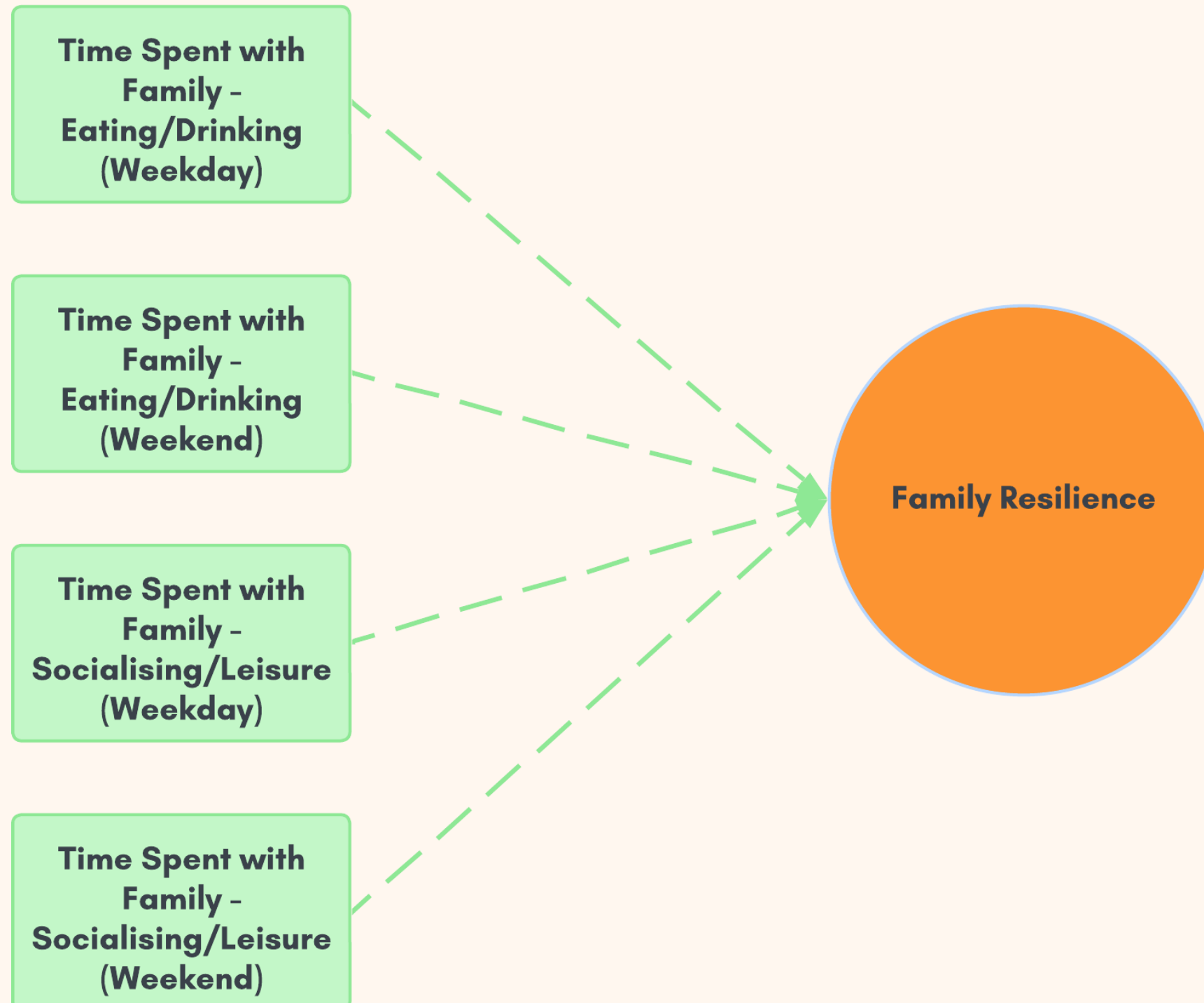
Most common activities done with families on weekends:

- Watching TV/Movie
- Shopping
- Family Time/Visiting relatives

Time Spent Eating/Drinking and Engaging in Social/leisure Activities with Family is Associated with Higher Family Resilience in Nuclear Families

Controlled Variables

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Ethnicity

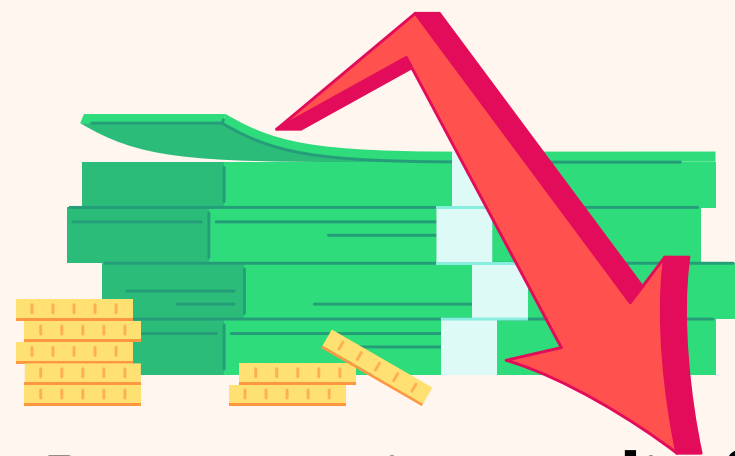


Nuclear Family

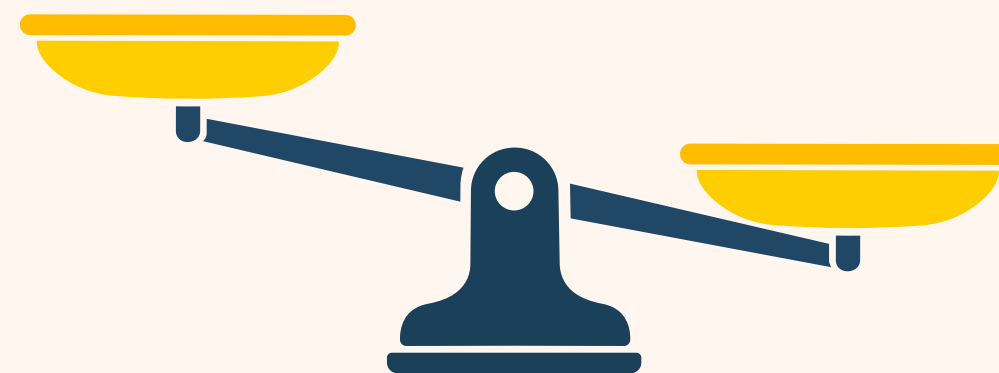
- Most common mealtimes with family
 1. Dinner
 2. Lunch
 3. Breakfast

Next Steps

- ✓ Extended families might require further deep dive into their time use patterns.



Resource inequality?



Unbalanced time spent with family?



Increased likelihood of more complex family relationships?

(Briole et al., 2020; Chen & Yang, 2016; Thomas et al., 2017)

Conclusion

- ✓ Family structure plays a role in the way we use our time
- ✓ Difference in time use could be key to building more resilient families
 - Encourage families to spend more time engaging in social/leisure/having meals together

Conclusion

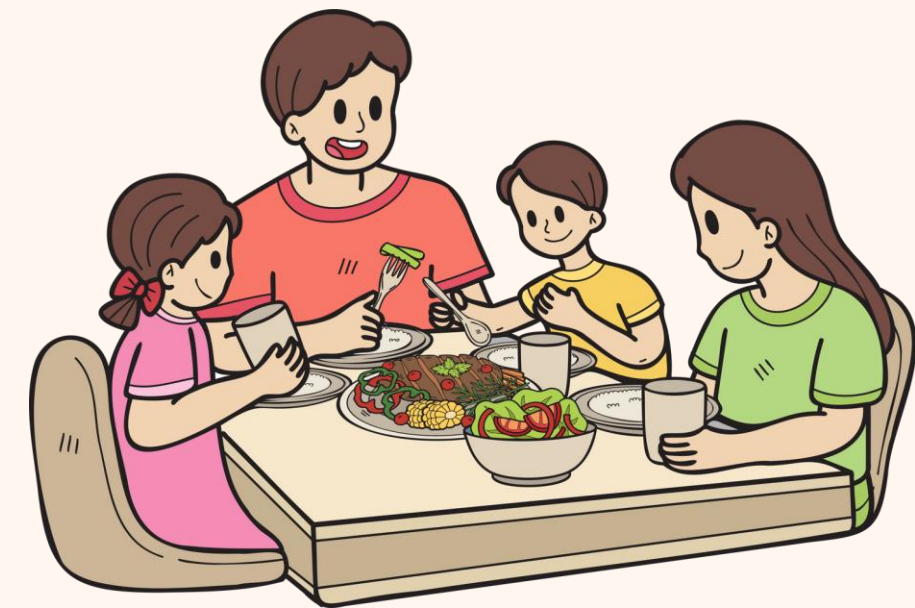
- ✓ Promote more family-friendly policies to encourage families to spend time engaging in meals and social/leisure together



Eat With Your Family Day



**Leave work an hour earlier
every Friday! (4.30pm?)**



**Encourage F&B
establishments to promote
more family combos!**

Conclusion



**Have a meal with your family
everyday!**



...But maybe don't invite your in-laws?

Annex A

Controlled Variables

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Ethnicity

Slide	Analysis	Statistic
10	ANCOVA – Socialising and Leisure (Weekdays)	$F[4,1965] = 16.139, p = <.001$
10 – 11	ANCOVA – Socialising and Leisure (Weekends)	$F[4,1965] = 14.403, p = <.001$
–	ANCOVA – Eating/Drinking (Weekdays)	$F[4,1965] = .809, p = .519$
–	ANCOVA – Eating/Drinking (Weekends)	$F[4,1965] = .808, p = .520$
13	ANCOVA – Belief System	$F[4,1555] = 7.159, p = <.001$
14	ANCOVA – Communication/Problem-Solving	$F[4,1555] = 7.430, p = <.001$
15	ANCOVA – Organisational Patterns	$F[4,1555] = 6.048, p = <.001$
–	ANCOVA – Overall Family Resilience	$F[4,1555] = 7.687, p = <.001$
–	ANCOVA – Physical QoL	$F[4,1775] = 1.269, p = .280$
12	ANCOVA – Psychological QoL	$F[4,1775] = 3.536, p = .007$
–	ANCOVA – Social/Relationships QoL	$F[4,1775] = 2.222, p = .064$
12	ANCOVA – Environmental QoL	$F[4,1775] = 3.858, p = .004$
–	ANCOVA – Overall QoL	$F[4,1775] = 2.915, p = .020$
–	Multiple Linear Regression [Enter] (Overall Model) – QoL	TSWF Social/Leisure Weekday B = $-.010, p = .770$
		TSWF Social/Leisure Weekend B = $.182, p = <.001$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekday B = $.036, p = .206$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekend B = $.011, p = .694$

Annex B

Controlled Variables

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Ethnicity

Slide	Analysis	Statistic
16	Multiple Linear Regression [Enter] (Nuclear) – QoL	TSWF Social/Leisure Weekday B = -.029, $p = .445$
		TSWF Social/Leisure Weekend B = .203, $p = <.001$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekday B = .024, $p = .504$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekend B = .017, $p = .614$
–	Multiple Linear Regression [Enter] (Single-Parent) – QoL	TSWF Social/Leisure Weekday B = -.154, $p = .324$
		TSWF Social/Leisure Weekend B = .038, $p = .804$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekday B = -.073, $p = .634$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekend B = .194, $p = .213$
–	Multiple Linear Regression [Enter] (Extended Family) – QoL	TSWF Social/Leisure Weekday B = -.062, $p = .441$
		TSWF Social/Leisure Weekend B = .032, $p = .688$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekday B = -.003, $p = .970$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekend B = -.127, $p = .082$
–	Multiple Linear Regression [Enter] (Non-Familial Household) – QoL	TSWF Social/Leisure Weekday B = .106, $p = .743$
		TSWF Social/Leisure Weekend B = -.298, $p = .399$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekday B = -.007, $p = .981$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekend B = .085, $p = .788$

Annex C

Controlled Variables

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Ethnicity

Slide	Analysis	Statistic
–	Multiple Linear Regression [Enter] (Empty Nest/No Kids) – QoL	TSWF Social/Leisure Weekday B = .040, $p = .706$
		TSWF Social/Leisure Weekend B = .117, $p = .258$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekday B = .085, $p = .295$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekend B = .093, $p = .210$
–	Multiple Linear Regression [Enter] (Overall Model) – FR	TSWF Social/Leisure Weekday B = -.080, $p < .001$
		TSWF Social/Leisure Weekend B = .143, $p < .001$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekday B = .076, $p < .001$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekend B = .066, $p < .001$
17	Multiple Linear Regression [Enter] (Nuclear) – FR	TSWF Social/Leisure Weekday B = -.097, $p = .023$
		TSWF Social/Leisure Weekend B = .126, $p = .002$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekday B = .094, $p = .015$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekend B = .115, $p = .001$
–	Multiple Linear Regression [Enter] (Single-Parent) – FR	TSWF Social/Leisure Weekday B = -.223, $p = .191$
		TSWF Social/Leisure Weekend B = -.116, $p = .474$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekday B = -.070, $p = .666$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekend B = .019, $p = .909$

Annex D

Controlled Variables

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Ethnicity

Slide	Analysis	Statistic
–	Multiple Linear Regression [Enter] (Extended Family) – FR	TSWF Social/Leisure Weekday B = $-.077$, $p = .371$
		TSWF Social/Leisure Weekend B = $.158$, $p = .069$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekday B = $.115$, $p = .141$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekend B = $-.133$, $p = .089$
–	Multiple Linear Regression [Enter] (Non-Familial Household) – FR	TSWF Social/Leisure Weekday B = $.487$, $p = .156$
		TSWF Social/Leisure Weekend B = $-.503$, $p = .210$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekday B = $.320$, $p = .224$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekend B = $.170$, $p = .624$
–	Multiple Linear Regression [Enter] (Empty Nest/No Kids) – FR	TSWF Social/Leisure Weekday B = $-.057$, $p = .623$
		TSWF Social/Leisure Weekend B = $.048$, $p = .666$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekday B = $-.038$, $p = .667$
		TSWF Eating/Drinking Weekend B = $.013$, $p = .876$