

Lecture 14: Time Use Data

Friday 21 June 2024

[Charles Gottlieb](#)

[Presentation Slides](#)

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Q: Is this really people not taking lunch breaks? Or Indian men accounting for their lunch as part of their work day?

A: We can ask Charles this later, but I suspect that meals in France are much more likely to involve sitting down for a leisurely break. So I wonder if it relates to the *length* of the lunch break, rather than the fraction of people taking a break.

Q: Thank you for this interesting lecture. I hope it will remind us, especially women and female how to balance the indoor and outdoor work. Could I know why women spent large portion of time in domestic work in India? How can we utilize the TUS in cross sectional and level studies? Will it be also possible to get a data recorded or written in dairy in case study is conducted in the rural area?

A: Thanks for this. The time use data are particularly valuable for thinking about home work and domestic work, which is sometimes invisible to economists but which is very important in understanding the labor market choices that people make. In work that Charles and I (and two other co-authors) have been doing recently, we think that social norms in India make market work unattractive for many women. That is not a very satisfying answer -- it begs the question, "Why and how do social norms differ in this way?" We don't have an answer for that!

As for getting the data in recorded form or something other than writing, for people who struggle with literacy, the answer is that many time use surveys do not expect people to fill out the diaries themselves -- they use trained enumerators to ask respondents about their time use. There have also been recent efforts to collect these data using smartphone apps where they only have to press on images that describe different activities. (In these studies, people are given the phones and asked to record their activities for a period of four days). So there are a lot of ways actually to collect the data.

Q: Very interesting presentation. I am looking for data on time available for women for other activities including digital devices, and time available for them to upgrade digital skills for Asia Pacific countries. Does time use surveys have this data?

A: Thanks for the interesting question. I doubt that there is survey data that is this specific, but as you can see from the slides, there is a broad category for time spent on education... Upgrading skills might count as education, and so it's possible that we could observe in the data when people *are* doing some kind of skill upgrading -- for example, by looking for time spent on education by people who are older than school age. Measuring the time *available* for the activity is much harder... It's hard even to define this, if you think about it... How much time do we have available for skill upgrading? I guess you could focus on time that is not fully committed to other activities, but other than that, I think it would be difficult to pin this down.

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A: Categories that you can expect are School/university attendance, Self-study for distance education course work (video, audio, online) and also information on mass media use like: Watching/listening to television and video (ICATUS16). Asia Pacific Time use surveys that you could maybe look at are KHM 2019 LSMS and KHM 2004 CSES and maybe extended IND 2019 TUS, LKA 2017 TUS, CHN 2008 MTUS. Data availability might be difficult for some.

Q: How do you feel about a scale measurement of satisfaction with time use for leisure, domestic work, on-farm productive work e.g. 0 unsatisfied to 10 satisfied?

A: Great question. The paper by Ramey and Francis, which Charles mentioned, includes something similar to try to get at the difference between work and leisure. <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles/pdf/doi/10.1257/mac.1.2.189>. Their Table 1 is pretty interesting in this regard, in that it lists different activities that people enjoy with varying amounts. Have a look!