

Variations in the Time Use Pattern of Employed Men and Women in the City of Vadodara

Abstract

Sociological interest has focused on the distribution of paid work, household work and therefore there are a variety of explanations of time use, complexity and scarcity of time, difference in the time use pattern and perception of time among men and women. The present study aims to investigate the difference of time use pattern between men and women for varied activities. Descriptive research design was used for the present study, on a total sample of 100 employed men and women. The findings reveal that despite gains towards gender equality in other domains, discrepancies persist in the experience of time.

Keywords : Sociological, Commodification, Commodified, Descriptive

Introduction

Sociological interest has focused on the distribution of paid work, household work and therefore there are a variety of explanations of time use, complexity and scarcity of time, difference time use pattern and perception of time among men and women. Marxist analysis of time emphasize the commodification of time as important as these are for understanding the temporal structures of modern society. Marx criticized that labor power as a commodity exchanged in the market and as labor is measured in terms of time, time is commodified. But Marxist analysis of time overlooks gender as a factor in the differential value of market labor, and market labor in the context of gendered rest of life (Sirianni&Negrey, 2000:60).

Many theorists have examined time scarcity in modern society. Becker (1981) argues that people maximize the allocation of scarce time by making rational choices between market work and consumption. Becker argues that "at most one member of an efficient household could invest in both market and household capital and would allocate time to both sectors (Becker, 1981:18-9). Becker has proposed a theory of comparative advantage to explain why men specialize in paid work and women in unpaid work. His rational choice model justifies the unequal allocation of gendered labor across household and market work (Becker, 1985). According to Becker, all things being equal, the economically rational household reduces the market time of the wife in response to increases in total household labor time, since her wages are usually less and promotional opportunities are usually fewer. These time allocation theories are governed by the rules and principles of exchange relations. These theories offer little analysis of time in the context of gendered social worlds and the various normative and institutional factors influence the lower value of women's time in the market.

Feminist scholars are aware of the variation in men's and women's household labor time and gender gap in household labor time, they have criticized the failure of neo-classical economic theories. One of the ways time is structured is through social relations of gender, and gender inequalities are reflected in the social organization of time (Sirianni&Negrey, 2000: 59).

The allocation of resources within the household partially reflects normative expectations of "who should do what (Berk, 1985)." For example, in a perceptive study of women's experience of time, Davies (1990) shows that the working times of women as wives and mothers, both in and out of employment, cannot be placed in a meaningful way within perspective from objective time. As mothers, many women feel themselves on call twenty-four hours a day. These are times that operate according to non-economic principles. They can be neither forced into timetables, schedules and deadlines nor allocated a monetary value. Therefore such times are constituted outside the commodified, rationalized time of employment relation (Adam, 1995: 95). Therefore women's increased hours of paid employment would simply be added to an undiminished quantity of time spent in unpaid work (Meissner et al. 1975).

Mona Mehta

Assistant Professor,
Dept. of Family and Community
Resource Management,
The Maharaja Sayajirao
University of Baroda,
Vadodara

The working times of women as wives and mothers cannot be captured by perspectives that “separate work from leisure, public from private time, subjective from objective time, and task from clock time(Adam, 1995: 95).” Because women have been more constrained, with regard to household obligations and family commitments as composed to men (Horna, 1989), women were disadvantaged with regard to time for leisure. Research on feminism and women’s leisure in the 1990s is now moving into a discourse. This shift represents the role of the new wave of thinking about feminism from totalizing and universalizing women’s experiences to seeing the need for many types of feminism (Henderson, Hodges &Kivel, 2002).

Another issue of time use is meaning of work and non-work. Recently, some researchers questioned the notion of ‘overwork’. Using time-use data, Robinson and Godbey (1997) argued that Americans had not increased the amount of time they devoted to work, but that the pace of their lives had quickened, with the result that many felt overworked. In consequence, there are different views over the growth of work versus leisure. But other scholars have focused on cultural shift in which home has become work and work has become home (Hochschild, 1997). More workers were putting in increasingly long hours in the workplace as a way to avoid family time.

According to Hochschild, too much time at work can undermine personal and family welfare, whereas too little time can endanger a family’s economic security and lower its standard of living (Jacobs &Gerson, 2001: 40). This issue is related with work and family balance. Recently, it has drawn increasing in public debate, policy analysis, and academic research (Parcel & Cornfield, 2000).

The subjective-normative influence of working is becoming more marginal in the individual’s life space, as reflected in the reduction of working hours and the growing importance of leisure (Offe, 1984). In fact, until 15 years ago, leisure was an invisible area of study relatively devoid of theory. Women tend to be the coordinators of family life, it is often difficult for them to have time for themselves independent of household responsibilities (Deem, 1982; Henderson &Rannells, 1988; Griffiths, 1988). Earlier research on women and leisure demonstrated that women shared a common world in their inequality regarding opportunities for leisure (Glyptis& Chambers, 1982), social relationships in leisure(Henderson &Rannells, 1988; Leaman& Carrington, 1985), fragmented leisure time(Deem, 1982; Shaw, 1985), unstructured activities (Bialeschki& Henderson, 1986), and lacked a sense of entitlement to leisure (Glyptis& Chambers, 1982). The most recent research about women’s leisure in the 1990s is now moving into discourse about the inability and inadequacy of determine that one leisure size fits all(Henderson, 1996).

The main objective of the research was to examine the differences in the use of time management practices by selected group of employed men and women in the city of Vadodara. Further, the study also investigated the impact of selected independent variables on the influence of time management practices of employed men and women.

Methodology

Descriptive research design was adopted for the present survey, on a sample of 67 employed men and 33 employed women using a time diary. The respondents had to report the time spent on nineteen specific tasks in this time diary, which contained reports of 24 hours on the work day and the weekend. To measure the overall quantity of time, the number of hours each respondent spent on workday and weekends was summed up. The time was categorized into four exhaustive and mutually exclusive categories namely: labor time, domestic labor time, free time and self care time.

Labor time or paid work time is time committed to income-producing activities in the marketplace, such as the time spent working for a wage or that spent by self-employed persons in their business activities. In its broadest sense it also includes the time involved in commuting to work, training during work, taking breaks at work. it is controversial that engaging in voluntary work such as formal study, private lessons, other study outside school is included in labor time or leisure time. Domestic labor time most often refers to unpaid work done to maintain family members and/or a home including family care, food preparation, house cleansing, doing laundry, household management, house maintenance and repairs, and shopping. Personal time is associated with the maintenance of bodily functions sleeping, eating, washing, grooming, dressing, and receiving medical treatment. Free time meant time spent on into active leisure time and passive leisure time. Active free time includes leisure activities done in the home (watching TV and video, reading newspaper, magazine), socializing activity including telephone conversation, and relaxing, outdoor sports activities. In fact, there is an apparent contradiction in terms when we refer to “leisure.” Usually, “leisure” means an activity relaxed, undemanding, and even restful. But that is one side of leisure. Leisure includes physically demanding sport, disciplined arts, and other activity that is anything but relaxing (Kelly &Freysinger, 2000: 78). In this study, the free time is separated into passive leisure time and active leisure time. Passive leisure time is relaxing without special activity.

The survey described and analyzed employed men and women's time use pattern amongst various activities. 'T-tests' were used to measure the gender differences amongst the time use pattern. The research was guided by a number of questions like, Do women have less free time than men? Do certain selected variables namely presence of children, marital status, income, level of education affect the time pattern of time use for household labor and leisure, and is the effect same or different for women and men?

Results and Discussions

Findings in Relation to Background information

The sample included 45.8% males and 51.3% females. The mean age of the sample was 31.99 years. The mean monthly household income was Rs. 49,500/- majority of the respondents were married. With regards to educational qualification, the data revealed that majority of the respondents were graduates.

Even though men are becoming more involved in childcare and housework, Table 1 indicates that there is a gap between women's and men's time spent in paid labor time, household labor time and free time. It is commonly known that employed women spend less time in paid labor than employed men. Results in Table 1 indicate that on average men work more 0.56 hours than women on the workday and more 0.89 hours on the weekend (Saturday). The imperatives of household labor may lead married women (but not men) to withdraw from the labor market completely or to reduce their attachment to it significantly, but wives' commitment to market labor does not alter the number of household tasks or a significant redistribution between men and women.

Generally, women devote about twice as many hours as men devoted to household care in United States (Robinson & Godbey, 1997: 100). Especially women still do 80 percent of the child care (Robinson and Godbey, 1997:104). The difference in time use between men and women reflects women's double responsibility in the home as well as in the workplace. The women offered extremely detailed routines, starting early in the morning with breakfast for the family, packing school lunches, getting the children dressed and so on, and ending late at night as they did the ironing and other housework. Although employment was important to all the people, women took up a lot of their time in informal housework.

Table 1
Time Spent of Employed Men and Women

			Men	Women	Total	Men's Time as a % of Women's	Mean Difference (Men-Women) and Significance	T-test for difference
Paid Labor time (S. D)		Wednesday	10.84 (2.09)	10.29 (1.72)	10.55 (1.93)	105.30%	0.56***	5.056***
Paid Labor time (S. D)		Saturday	6.43 (4.38)	5.54 (3.99)	5.96 (4.20)	116.10%	0.89***	3.694***
Household Labor time (S. D)		Wednesday	0.29 (0.87)	0.98 (1.29)	0.65 (1.16)	29.60%	-0.69***	-10.692***
Household Labor time (S. D)		Saturday	0.89 (1.88)	1.79 (2.37)	1.36 (2.20)	49.70%	-0.91***	-7.244***
Personal time (S. D)		Wednesday	9.49 (1.74)	9.60 (1.69)	9.55 (1.71)	98.85%	-0.11	-2.218*
Personal time (S. D)		Saturday	10.31 (2.34)	10.52 (2.47)	10.42 (2.41)	98.00%	-0.21	-2.322*
Free time (S.D)	Active Leisure Time	Wednesday	2.34 (1.62)	2.11 (1.54)	2.22 (1.58)	114.90%	0.37***	2.463**
Free time (S.D)	Active Leisure Time	Saturday	4.25 (3.29)	3.86 (3.19)	4.04 (3.24)	113.20%	0.62***	2.092*
Free time (S.D)	Passive Leisure Time	Wednesday	0.66 (1.25)	0.49 (0.89)	0.57 (1.08)	134.70%	17***	2.756***
Free time (S.D)	Passive Leisure Time	Saturday	1.07 (1.58)	0.84 (1.40)	0.95 (1.49)	127.40%	0.28***	2.639***
Free time (S.D)	Total Free Time	Wednesday	3.00 (1.90)	2.61 (1.60)	2.79 (1.76)	114.90%	0.40***	3.912***
Free time (S.D)	Total Free Time	Saturday	5.32 (3.53)	4.70 (3.36)	5.00 (3.45)	113.20%	0.62***	3.111***
Paucity of time of time	More time for Myself		3.76 (0.87)	3.60 (0.92)	3.67 (0.91)		0.160***	3.06
Paucity of time of time	More time for Myself		3.92	3.96 (0.85)	3.94 (0.88)	-0.87	-0.045***	-0.899
	Number of Case		67	33	100			

The table 1 shows a significant gender gap in both active leisure time and passive leisure time. The responsibility for routines of household maintenance reduces women's free time. That is to say, the unequal distribution of household work and child care across the gender creates an unequal distribution of free time that favors men over women (Deem, 1982). Men also spend 0.4 more hours than women on workdays and more 0.62 hours on Saturday in active leisure activity. That is, approximately 114.9% of women's free time on the ordinary day and 113.2% of women's free time on Saturday.

Men also have more active leisure time than women do nearly 10.2 minutes on workdays and 53.4 more minutes on Saturday in paid labor than women. That is, approximately 114.9% of women's on ordinary day and 113.2% of women's on Saturday. Leisure time or free time is an important aspect of daily life. Leisure affords individuals a chance to relax and refresh after performing household and labor market responsibilities. Measured as time for self-care, men have less 0.11 hours on the workday and less 0.21 hours than women on Saturday.

The regression analysis of the determinants of household labor time identify the sources of variation in women's and men's household labor time as well as to better understand the sources of the gender gap in household labor time. The most commonly used indicators of time constraints are employment and/or hours worked, presence or number of children in the household, and work schedule.

It is commonly known that women spend more time in household labor than men. Table 2 indicates that gender does not have a direct effect on household labor time if we hold all other factors constant. Age may be associated with household labor time to the extent to which it is associated with the timing of major life course events (Shelton, 1992: 94). But Table 2 indicates that the household labor time is not affected by age. The impact of age on household labor time is not significant.

The number of children is associated with both women's and men's household labor time. Respondents with more children spent more times in household labor time than those having less children. Preschool age children are more demanding of time than older children.

Each additional child younger than 6 in the household is associated with women spending over 162 hours in household labor on the weekday and .500 hours on the weekend (Saturday). For women, having a preschool age children in the household is associated with them spending more 30 minutes per day on household labor on the weekend (Saturday). These results show that women perform more of the housework when they are married and when they become parents, whereas men tend to perform less housework when they marry and assume a smaller share of the household work after their wives have children. Therefore, these data support the view that children's demands on men are primarily financial, while their demands on women are for time (Shelton, 1992: 52).

Results in Table 2 indicate that marital status is negatively associated with household labor time but the interaction term marital status and gender is

significantly associated with household labor time on workday. And both marital status and the interaction term marital status and gender are significantly associated with household labor time on workday.

The observed gender gap in men's and women's household labor time is a function of differences in other factors as number of children, presence of younger than age six, income and education.

Table 2

	Household Labor Time	
	Wednesday	Saturday
Gender ^a	-.677(-.291) ***	-.934(-.212) *
Age	.006(.050)	.004(.018)
Age*Gender	-.028(-.422) ***	-.036(-.289) **
Number of children	.298(.246) ***	.243(.106) **
Has children younger than 6 ^b	.162(.051)	.500(.083) **
Has children younger than 6*Gender	.393(.068) *	1.344(.122) ***
Income	-.001(-.041)	.000(-.015)
Education	.020(.044)	.036(.042)
Marital Status ^c	-.042(-.018)	-.772(-.175) ***
Marital Status*Gender	1.068(.388) ***	1.623(.311) ***
Paid Labor Time	-.104(-.173) ***	-.119(-.227) ***
Constant	1.691***	2.265***
R ²	45.10%	41.20%
Adjusted R ²	44.60%	40.70%

a. coded as men = 0, women = 1.

b. coded as absence of children younger under 6 = 0 presence of children younger under 6 = 1.

c. coded as never married = 0, married, separated, divorced, widowed = 1.

Sig. level: *** p ≤ .01, ** p ≤ .05, * ≤ 1.

Overall, this model explains 45.1% of the variation in household labor time on the workday and 41.2% on Saturday. This result reveals temporal asymmetries in the distribution of household labor time among men and women. Even though many husbands and wives believed that domestic responsibilities should be shared in a dual working household, women were still doing a disproportionate amount of the housework.

Conclusion

Time consumption differs between men and women. Although beliefs about the appropriate roles men and women in the workplace have undergone substantial shifts in the past several decades, assumptions about who should perform unpaid family work have changed more slowly.

Different expectations of women and men based upon their dissimilar positions in the family and the market create gender differences in the experience of time (Mattingly & Bianchi, 2003: 999). Although the

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vast majority of both men and women agree that family labor should be shared, few men assume equal responsibility for household tasks. This research also shows that women perform more of the housework when they are married and become parents, whereas men tend to perform less housework when they marry and have children. The gender gap in household labor time is greater on the workday than the weekend (Saturday). On average, women perform as much three times housework as men on workday, and as much two times more housework as men on the weekend (Saturday) in Korea.

As women shoulder a disproportionate share of responsibility for housework, their perception of time paucity increases. Free time is not equally spent among women and men. The time use pattern on the weekend (Saturday) are especially different from the daily routine. This means that free time activities may not be as refreshing for women as for men. The differences in leisure patterns among men and women are more contextual than biological.

Actually, many women spend much more time on household tasks. For example, women take responsibility for monitoring and supervising the work even when they pay for domestic services or delegate tasks to others. Moreover, men and women spent the same amount of time in performing specific tasks. Therefore, in order to analysis gendered time, both qualitative and quantitative studies are needed. Qualitative studies have explored time use patterns and their meaning for some of the tasks most embedded in family life (DeVault, 1991). To analyse the question of how much household and leisure activities men and women do, researchers have used measures that accumulate time, tasks, or both.

Third, additional longitudinal research is needed to understand and anticipate the change of time use pattern between men and women. By examining general trends, we can get some idea of how time use have been redistributed in response to shifts in women's and men's labor force participation rates and in the household division of labor.

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