

Abstract for “The Time-use Survey of Rural Punjab: Measuring the Unmeasured”

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Time use survey is an important economic tool to measure the time use pattern of individuals, their time spent on paid and unpaid activities; it describes the time allocation in three different categories SNA (System of National Accounts), Non-SNA (that fall outside from the system of national accounts) and Extended SNA (which includes productive but unpaid activities). To provide visibility to Extended SNA unpaid work, which is outside the purview of conventional surveys, particularly important for women, who are predominantly engaged in unpaid SNA and non-SNA work because the bulk of unpaid care work across all economies and cultures are performed by women. In this sense, time use statistics engender the national data system. Time use statistics also provide information on intra-household division of work and thereby reveal the dynamics of intra-household distribution of work and their share in national accounting.

There is a large body of evidence that it is women who do most of the domestic work, all the evidence, from time-use studies in particular, points to persistent differences and inequalities between women and men with regard to the performance of paid and unpaid work. Women spend more time than men on work overall, have fewer hours in paid work, and in general have less discretionary time than men. Moreover, women spend more time on multiple and overlapping activities, such as caring for children, older persons and ill people, cooking and cleaning, and they are more likely than men to combine paid and unpaid work. When women participate in the formal paid economy, they suffer from several disadvantages, such as, carrying the extra burden of domestic responsibilities, poor human capital for the formal labour market, inferior status and poor prospects of getting good jobs in the core sector as well as poor upward mobility due to the burden of domestic responsibilities. It is important therefore to give visibility to unpaid work in formal statistics, to understand the linkages between paid and unpaid work, and to integrate paid and unpaid work in national policies in such a way that gender equity is not sacrificed. Time use surveys can perform the first two tasks and can help in the third task.

So we try to do a little effort to determine the time use pattern of women and men in rural areas by conducting a primary time use survey of Punjab state in India. This paper highlights the distribution of time in SNA, Extended SNA and Non-SNA activities by social groups, income groups, education status and employment status. Further, an attempt has also been made to calculate the money value of unpaid activities of men and women. It has been found that the economically as well as socially marginalized groups spend more time in extended SNA activities and ironically, the employment status as well as the education status of women hardly relieves them from the burden of domestic responsibilities. Thus, due to this double burden, the employed women find it hard to climb up the ladder of their professional responsibilities.