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Topic (iv) Balancing work and family responsibilities

**TIME USES AS INDICATORS OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION**

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**Contributed Paper**

**INTRODUCTION**

The effectiveness of time use studies of both genders lies in their ability to examine everyday life routine. This reveals the consequences of a hegemonic use of power that members of society usually ignore or refuse to acknowledge.

In spite of the seriousness of the problems reported in this paper, there are some reasons to be optimistic. In our society it is possible to talk about these problems and there are people able to confront them.

The current social structure relies on a labour division based on specialisation, according to which men primarily are responsible for productive work and women assumes almost exclusive responsibility for activities related to reproductive work. Time use by men and women is dependent on such a division of labour.

Women are increasingly entering the labour market but this does not occur to the neglect of domestic responsibilities. Rather, it has forced women to take on a "double working day" at the expense of personal commitments to the home, cultural and leisure activities.

This paper will try to study the existing differences between males and females regarding time use. It starts off with the assumption that all persons must be equal, that they must have the same chances for distributing their time, by their own criterion, without being conditioned by an imposed division of labour dependent on biological sex.

In the field of social sciences it is proper to talk about *gender*. Gender could be understood as the psychosocial identity which has been set up from physiological sexual differences. This psychosocial identity corresponds with the assumption of some stereotypes transmitted in different environments and by

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different agents - family, school, mass media, etc., and becomes reflected, to a great extent, in how the 24 hours of the day are used.

The dependent variables of the study refer to all the activities that a person can perform throughout a natural day. These activities have been grouped into five blocks: personal needs, housework, education, paid work and spare time.

Throughout the paper, the objective is to find answers to the following questions:

- Are there any differences between genders in the use of time?
- What are these differences?
- In which activities are the differences bigger?
- Are there any personal and socio-demographic variables that modulate the gender differences and, in that case, is it necessary to control their effects?
- Which percentage of individuals is affected by these differences?
- Is there any trend toward equality in the role assignment?
- Which collective has advanced more towards the joint distribution of time?
- Can aspects such as social equality, quality of life and personal autonomy be measured through the use of time?
- To what extent is discrimination reflected in time use with regard to those mentioned aspects?

## **SEX**

The variable "sex" is treated like a type variable, seeking to find if there are differing social behaviours between both genders, originating from the traditional social division of labour that assigns to women the responsibility for the home tasks and to men paid work and spare time.

## **TIME USE**

In this paper the individuals have been asked for the activities of the day before, but the number of questionnaires has been the same for each day of the week.

Classification of activities

It has been set up for five groups of activities:

1. Personal needs
2. Housework
3. Education
4. Paid work
5. Spare time

In the methodology, the complete relationship of the activities that compose each of these five groups will be supplied.

## **INDICATORS**

One of the aims of this work is to check the functioning of a group of indicators proposed by the author with the purpose of evaluating the gender inequality in aspects such as housework, social equality, autonomy, quality of life, and productivity.

The indicators used in this study are proposed to inform about the situation, the relationship to gender equality at a certain point of time and also the evolution of the relationship in time to the aspects mentioned before. The data on these aspects are derived from the distribution of time use that both sexes make.

## **Used indicators**

### **A) Social Equality**

Social equality between genders must necessarily pass by through adoption of legislative measures, but this is not enough. Equality must include very important fields such as education, employment, family, policy, etc.

Here are some data on gender social equality, perhaps more like inequality from inspection of the statistics:

#### **a) Education**

The percentage of illiterate women is 4.4%, whereas for men, the percentage is 2.1% in 2001.

The gross rates of women and men in compulsory education are equal: between the ages of 6 and 15 years old, all the boys and girls were attending school in 1998/99.

More girls complete compulsory education (42.6%) than boys do (33.4%, data refer to 1998/99).

More girls participate in higher secondary education (275 731 or 55.8%) than boys do (255 301 or 49.1%) in 1998/99.

The number of women in university education is higher (845 347 or 34.5%) than the number of men (741 708 or 29%) in 1999/00.

Only 26.5% of the students entering technical schools were women in 1999/00.

#### **b) Employment**

Women represent approximately 39.2% of the active population in 2001.

The female unemployment rate is 15.2% whereas the male one is 7.5% in 2001.

80.9% of the employed women work in the service sector in 2001.

16.8% of the employed women work part time, whereas only 2.7% of the men do so in 2001.

Women's earnings are in general 30.7% less than men's earnings (data refer to October 1995).

#### **c) Political participation**

30.9% of the Members of the Parliament were women in 2001, and only 9.6% of the Members of Municipal Councils were women.

#### **d) Access to decision-making positions**

Only 22% of employers were women in 2001.

28.8% of the self-employed without employees and the independent workers were women in 2001.

In the Civil Service, only 4.7% of the senior level posts were held by women in 2001.

In this paper, it has also been supposed that social equality includes several domains. It considers that advancement to greater equality involves more dedication to paid work, education, personal needs and spare time, and less dedication of time to housework.

## **B) Quality of life**

An indicator measuring time use assuming that dedication to activities in relation to personal needs, education and spare time indicates quality of life is proposed. This is contrary to time use devoted to housework. It supports the hypothesis that the quality of life of women, objectively measured, is clearly inferior to that of men.

## **C) Autonomy**

The tasks that individuals can perform during a day involve different levels of autonomy. On one side we find personal needs (no autonomy at all) and on the other side, we find spare time (complete autonomy).

The autonomy that an individual has when he/she acts has two slopes. It can be related to the capacity of the person to carry out an activity or not, or, if he/she does it, to the extent that he/she has an option. In this paper the option factor has been used as an autonomy indicator. In the proposed and analysed indicator, the five mentioned groups of activities have been considered.

## **D) Housework**

Housework can be defined as a **non-paid** work that tries to cover **the needs of the members of the core family**. It is characterised by **interchangeability in the labour market** - it is possible to formally hire and pay a person to do the housework. Housework therefore has a market value.

## **E) Productivity**

Another proposed indicator is about productivity related to work. Productive work is work that produces goods and services that could have been supplied by another economic unit. The consideration of housework as productive work means a qualitative jump of great importance, because it implies that women's work comes to play a much more important social and economic role.

The indicator of productivity used in this paper operates as if there was one time unit and, because of that, all the performed domestic activities had the same value.

# **METHODOLOGY**

## **Objectives**

1. To study if there are significant differences between women and men in the use of time, in its distribution according to the five groups of activities that has been defined for this paper.

The obtained general results can be varied according to determined variables such as **age, educational attainment, income, marital status, number of persons living together, habitat, day of the week.**

2. To study if the mentioned variables also influence in the distribution of time and if there exists interaction among them and sex when we study time uses.
3. To study the effect of discrimination among sexes, on the time dedicated to all the activities that can be performed throughout the day, considering all simultaneously.
4. To contrast the worth and efficiency of a series of indicators to study gender discrimination, regarding the following **dimensions: social equality** (between genders), **quality of life, personal autonomy, housework, and economic productivity.**

### Indicators

The proposed and analysed indicators in this paper are the following:

#### 1. Social Equality Index

$$SEI = \frac{(\bar{P}_w + \bar{E}_w + \bar{N}_w + \bar{S}_w) / \bar{H}_w}{(\bar{P}_M + \bar{E}_M + \bar{N}_M + \bar{S}_M) / \bar{H}_M} \times 100$$

#### 2. Quality of Life Discrimination Index

$$QDI = \frac{(\bar{E}_w + \bar{N}_w + \bar{S}_w) / \bar{H}_w}{(\bar{E}_M + \bar{N}_M + \bar{S}_M) / \bar{H}_M} \times 100$$

#### 3. Autonomy Differential Index

To be able to set up this index, a scale has been constructed with the five groups of activities according to the degree of autonomy that an individual theoretically has to carry them out or not. The scale is ordered from the lowest degree of autonomy to the highest. The shaped autonomy scale is as follows:

Personal needs	-1
Housework	-1/2
Paid work	1
Education	1
Spare time	2

This punctuation has been considered in the proposed indicator for weighing the average time dedicated to each group of activities.

$$ADI = \frac{2\bar{S}_w + \bar{E}_w + \bar{P}_w + 1/2\bar{H}_w + \bar{N}_w}{2\bar{S}_M + \bar{E}_M + \bar{P}_M + 1/2\bar{H}_M + \bar{N}_M} \times 100$$

#### Housework Differential Index

It is probable that actually the best gender discrimination indicator is the distribution of the home tasks. The indicator related with this point is:

$$\text{HDI} = \frac{\bar{H}_w}{\bar{H}_m} \times 100$$

### **Paid work Differential Index**

For this indicator, the time dedicated to both housework and paid work is considered productive, but not the time dedicated to education, personal needs and spare time.

$$\text{PDI} = \frac{(\bar{P}_w + \bar{H}_w) / (\bar{E}_w + \bar{N}_w + \bar{S}_w)}{(\bar{P}_m + \bar{H}_m) / (\bar{E}_m + \bar{N}_m + \bar{S}_m)} \times 100$$

$\bar{P}_w$  = Average time dedicated by the women to the **paid work**

$\bar{E}_w$  = Average time dedicated by the women to the **education**

$\bar{N}_w$  = Average time dedicated by the women to the **personal needs**

$\bar{S}_w$  = Average time dedicated by the women to the **spare time**

$\bar{H}_w$  = Average time dedicated by the women to the **housework**

$\bar{P}_m, \bar{E}_m, \bar{N}_m, \bar{S}_m, \bar{H}_m$  have the equivalent meanings for the men.

### **STATISTICAL PROCEDURES**

The covariance analysis has been used to study the differences between the averages of men and women in the use of the time, isolating the possible influence of the control variables.

The discriminant analysis has been used to find which variables, among all the dependent variables, are useful to characterize more clearly the group of women and the group of men. A **discriminant function** has been set up that summarizes the information to the utmost and allows us to distinguish each group as far as possible.

## TIME USE DIFFERENCES ACCORDING SEX

**Table 1 Time use differences according to sex (averages)**

Time use	Women	Men	Total
Personal needs	10.13	10.59	10.35
Housework	7.96	2.50	5.34
Education	0.61	0.86	0.73
Spare time	8.00	9.27	8.61
Paid work	1.02	3.37	2.15

**Table 2 Housework differences according to sex (averages)**

Time use	Women	Men	Total
Home tasks	4.77	0.47	2.70
Maintenance	0.48	0.72	0.59
Family care	1.70	0.71	1.23
Shopping	0.79	0.35	0.58
Services	0.29	0.26	0.24
<b>TOTAL</b>	7.96	2.50	5.34

**Table 3 Paid work differences according to sex (averages)**

Time use	Women	Men	Total
Move to the work place	0.18	0.28	0.23
Work travels	0.07	0.27	0.17
Main occupation	0.76	2.70	1.69
Other	0.01	0.12	0.07
<b>TOTAL</b>	1.02	3.37	2.15

**Table 4 Spare time differences according to sex (averages)**

Time use	Women	Men	Total
Sports	0.10	0.21	0.15
Entertainment	5.32	5.93	5.62
Social relations	1.86	2.28	2.06
Non-professional reading	0.58	0.75	0.66
Leisure travels	0.14	0.10	0.12
<b>TOTAL</b>	8.00	9.27	8.61

**Table 5 Personal needs differences according to sex (averages)**

Time use	Women	Men	Total
Rest	7.69	7.82	7.75
Personal cleanliness	0.81	0.74	0.77
Eat	1.45	1.63	1.54
Illness rest	0.19	0.39	0.29
<b>TOTAL</b>	10.13	10.59	10.35

**Table 6 Education differences according to sex (averages)**

<b>Time use</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Attendance to professional courses</b>	0.04	0.11	0.07
<b>Academic courses</b>	0.30	0.34	0.31
<b>Reading related with the profession</b>	0.04	0.10	0.07
<b>Reading or study related with academic education</b>	0.17	0.25	0.21
<b>Non-academic courses non-related with the profession</b>	0.07	0.06	0.06
<b>TOTAL</b>	0.61	0.86	0.73

**Table 7 Gender Equality Indexes**

<b>Index</b>	<b>Output</b>
<b>Social Equality Index</b>	25.73
<b>Quality of Life Discrimination Index</b>	28.35
<b>Autonomy Differential Index</b>	32.20
<b>Housework Differential Index</b>	318.4
<b>Paid work Differential Index</b>	171.43

The man status is considered the reference point so its value is 100. Looking at these figures we can conclude that the social position of the men is four times better than the women position, mostly due to the time dedicated by each group to the Housework.