

Time Use and The Significance of Overlapping Activities

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I. Significance of the Study

- Important dimension of time use
- Relates to quality of life and well-being
- Relates to measurement issues of economic activities (market and non-market)
- Relates to policy impacts and analysis
 - Coping strategies

Study Focus

- Empirical study of 3966 individuals in couples households from the 1992 National Australian Time Use Survey.
- Time allocation in market and nonmarket activities with overlapped activities.
- Tobit tests are conducted to examine the various factors that are likely to affect the incidence of overlapped work activities by individuals.

II. Concept of Overlapping activities

- Refer to secondary and tertiary activities that are performed simultaneously with primary ones
- Also referred as '**simultaneous activities**' or '**multi-tasking**'.
- Can take on multiple combinations- from pleasant and enjoyable to heightened work intensity under time pressure.

Reference to Overlapping activities

- Studies on homebased workers in Germany, Spain, Caribbean, Latin America.
- Studies on rural women in developing countries.
- Studies on consumer research regarding time use patterns of men and women.
- Time Use studies on childcare in Australia

III. Determinants of the Incidence of Overlapping Activities

- Main Hypothesis:

A person's decision to do work—whether productive or reproductive (household)—involves not only the length of time but also the organization of time.

Determinants

- Lifecycle Stage (Age)
- Household Structure - life cycle, dependents
- Social/Cultural Norms
- Gender
- Education
- Individual Earnings (or)
 - Income effect
 - Intra-household relations effect
- Employment status

IV Analytical Framework

- Decision-making process of an individual i in household j on overlapped work activities:

$$OL_{ij} = \beta X_{ij} + \gamma Z_j^* + \varepsilon_{ij}$$

OL_{ij} - time spent by individual i on overlapped work activities*

X_{ij}, Z_j - vectors of observable characteristics at the individual and household levels respectively,

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*Overlapped work activities refer to secondary and tertiary activities performed in combination with a primary or main activity.

V. Empirical Investigation

- **A. Data Description and Limitations**

- **B. Time Allocation Patterns**

Re-estimation of time spent in economic activities by taking into account overlapping activities.

- **C. Econometric (Tobit) Analysis**

A. Data Description and Limitations

- Australian Time Use 1992 Survey Data
- Individual and Household Sample Characteristics
- Data Limitations

Evidence of Overlapping Activities: The Case of Australia

1. **Entire sample of the national survey**

- 33% of every activity episode recorded by the diary method involves at least one other simultaneous activity.
- Secondary work activities tend to contribute an additional 25% of total working time of individuals
 - Women (158 minutes per day on average)
 - men (67 minutes per day on average).

Evidence of Overlapping Activities

2. Subsample of 1983 couples households

- Overlapped work activities of household head and spouse contribute 31.6% of total working time of individuals.
 - Women's total work time increases by 44% (218 minutes) or nearly 44%
 - Men's time increases by 20% (100 minutes).

Empirical Results....

- See Table 6 – time allocation patterns
- See table 8a. – tobit tests results

Concluding Remarks

- Omission of overlapping activities leads to serious underestimation of economic contributions of individuals especially women in non-market production.
- Regression tests, which are found to be robust, show the significant influence of gender, household lifecycle and composition, education, cultural norms and individual income on the extent to which an individual performs overlapped work activities.

Conclusion....

- A more informed understanding of how individuals organize their daily life allow a better assessment of the impact of economic and social policies on labor market, consumption patterns and, most importantly, on individual well-being.