Time Use Measures in the PSID: A Psychological Perspective

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Why no memo?
Why Psychologists Don’t Use Time
Use Measures
Feeling States vs. Time Use

• Emotional states
  – Enthusiastic
  – Happy
  – Engaged
  – Focused
  – Anxious
  – Depressed
  – Angry
Feeling States vs. Time Use

• Physical symptoms
  – Pain
  – Nausea
  – Headache
  – gastrointestinal problems
  – etc.

• Energy, Exhaustion
Events vs. Time Use

• Received a compliment
• Received a gift
• Accomplished a task
• Was insulted
• Was treated with disrespect
• Had an argument
Psychologists Often Decontextualize

- How happy are you feeling in general
- How are your physical symptoms in general
But, the Experience Sampling Method (ESM)

- Developed by Csikszentmihalyi & Larson
- Highly contextualized
- Randomly sample moments in a day
- Ask people to report their immediate context, e.g., where they are, who they are with, etc.
- Ask people to report their current feeling states
Drawbacks of ESM

• Only instants of time, not time use
• Impractical to obtain many observations within a day except for special populations
• So, can’t give an accurate picture of what happened over the course of a day
Day Reconstruction Method (DRM)

Developed by Kahneman et al. (2004)

A combination of time use assessment and feeling state assessment

A realization of Edgeworth’s (1881) “hedonimeter” for assessment of psychological utility
DRM

Retrospect over the previous day

Validation work shows that DRM data correspond to equivalent ESM data.

• Self-administered version takes from 45 to 75 mins to complete.

• Some compromise in order to shorten the burden, e.g., complete feeling state reports for portions of the day only, e.g., mornings, afternoons, evenings?
Questions
1. What are the unique scientific advantages of having time diaries in the PSID?”
2. What is the theoretical motivation for having time diary data in the PSID from the perspective of psychology?
3. What sorts of hypotheses will these data allow us to test? What empirical models will be estimated?
4. How would these data allow us to better understand aging-related issues in particular? (NIA is an important funder of PSID, so we want to consider this dimension explicitly.)
5. What are the relative gains, in terms of the questions uniquely addressed, to having an equally costly longitudinal set of time diaries versus having a cross section of diaries from PSID respondents?
6. What "relationships" would one most want to sample with time diaries (e.g. husband-wife pairs, parent-child pairs, adult child-elder parent pairs, etc.)?
7. What is the optimal periodicity of measurement given the scientific motivation for the data collection?
Morning Mood by Day

Positive Mood (AM)

Negative Mood (AM)