Study in Contrast: Time Use among Enrolled Students in the ATUS

Lonnie Golden, Penn State Abington (Lmg5@psu.edu)

Co-author: John Baffoe-Bonnie, Penn State Delaware County

Student Assistants:
Jenny Limonnik and Eugene Shpolsky
Motivations for Research

- Document details of time use among students in contrast to non-students.
  - Integrate findings with various other one-time surveys re: students’ time spent studying at expense of other activities,
- Labor supply of college students has unique consequences:
  - long-term human capital development, future earnings capacity (Ruhm, 1997); assistance out of poverty (Lerman, 2000; Brown, 2001);
  - negative association between the (long) hours commitment of students toward paid work with their current and future academic performance (Steinberg, 1996; Bailey and Mallier, 1999; Lerman, 2000; Rau and Durand, 2000; Hannah and Baum, 2002; Curtis and Najah, 2002; Stinebrickner and Stinebrickner, 2003; US BLS, 2005), past some tipping point around 25 hours per week).
  - public policy implications both for regulating youth employment-hours and facilitating better higher education.
Previous Literature: Among Students who work

- Only about 11 percent of students spend more than 25 hours a week preparing for their classes.
- 20 percent of students spent no time exercising.
- 60 percent of seniors and 37 percent of freshmen did volunteer work.
- Students who rated their college experience relatively higher spent more time preparing for class, working on campus, and participating in curricular activities than did students with lower scores”.

(The Chronicle of Higher Education 26 Nov. 2004: A1,A31.)

- Students who are employed but work less than 10 hours per week did not experience reduced academic performance and had above average GPA.
- The perceived negative effect on performance grows linearly with work hours.
- Those working in the 31-40 hours range had the lowest GPA.
- Working suppresses GPA in the concurrent semester, not statistically significant effect in the following semester.


American Time Use Survey

Contains precise info re:

- time use of those enrolled and not enrolled, aged 15-49, over the course of a day,
- time devoted toward various education activities,
- Number of hours of paid employment,
- Full-time, part-time or not employed.
Enrolled Students vs. Non-Enrolled: Key Contrasts

- Education time use subcategories
- Paid Work time
- Men vs. Women
- Exercise/Recreation
- Household Activities
- Sleep
- Socializing
Most enrolled are traditionally aged students

![Work and Education Time by Age Bracket](image-url)

- Working and work-related activities
- Educational activities
Among the Enrolled, Homework replaces Housework

Enrolled vs. Non-Enrolled

- Work
- Sleep
- Commuting
- Socializing
- Waiting for class
- Education
- Exercise/Recreati
- Household
- Non Enrolled
- Work
- Sleep
- Traveling
- Socializing
- Exercise/Recreati
- Household

Categories

Hours Per D:

- Men
- Women
Enrolled students Work over 2 Hours per Day, on average (= 15 hours per week)
Among all the non-enrolled, employed or not employed
Non-Enrolled employed work more

Average Hours of Work, 15 years and over, all employed

- Full-time workers: 8.08
- Part-time workers: 5.58
Most Student Time is Spent Attending Class, almost all toward a degree.
Most time use within Education activity

- Taking class for degree
- Taking class for personal interest
- Waiting associated with taking classes
- Security procedures rel. to taking classes
- Taking class, n.e.c.

Research/homework

- Research/homework for class for degree
- Research/homework for class for personal interest
- Research/homework, n.e.c.
Enrolled Students' Time per day spent in Various Extracurricular Activities

- Extracurricular club activities
- Extracurricular music & performance activities
- Extracurricular student government activities
- Education related extracurricular activities, n.e.c.
Male enrolled sleep more than non-enrolled, but no difference among Women
Sleep Among Part-Time vs. Full-Time Employed

Part-Timers: More Time in Education, More Sleep
Summary of findings, ATUS

- Enrolled men spend slightly more time working than do women.
- Enrolled women make up this shorter work time with more study time.
- Time spent studying replaces housework time.
- Men enrolled actually sleep more than others.
- Enrolled students spend more leisure time at school, but have less leisure time than the not enrolled.
- Part-Timers spend more time in education than full-timers and get more sleep.
- The enrolled spend much of their free time at their part time jobs or waiting for their next class.
  - Non-enrolled spend non-work time mostly socializing with family members and friends, and participate in almost double the time in recreational activities than enrolled students.