Time Diary Data and Research



Exercise Worksheet.

Time diaries collect rich information surrounding daily life and participation in different activities. National time-use diary surveys typically provide information on activity duration, timing (time of day/day of the week), sequence of activities, simultaneous activities, location/travelling, copresence (whether the diarist was alone/with others) and affect (level of enjoyment). The image below shows a completed extract from the 2014-2015 UK Time Use Survey diary instrument, which also collected information on mobile devices (i.e., smartphones).

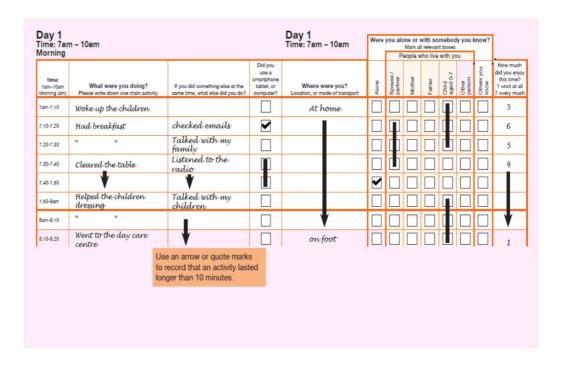


Figure 1. Completed Extract of the 2014- 2015 UK Time Use Survey

In order to further enhance your understanding of the time diary method, complete the tasks below:

 Focusing on the process of diary completion, try to think of issues that may affect data quality. You may want to consider the impact of the format and/or complexity of the instrument, nature of different activities, and the time needed for completion. Consider how these may affect different population groups taking part. Once you have compiled a list of potential data threats, research methodological literature on diary data quality for existing evidence.

- 2. Identify 2-3 areas of substantive interest. For example, this could be paid work, childcare, sleep or travelling. Write down the research questions that you could explore by using diary data. Make note of the unique information offered by the time-use diary instrument with regards to these substantive areas (i.e., information not possible to capture accurately with conventional social survey approaches).
- 3. Download a technical report of a national time-use survey, e.g., the 2014-2015 UK Time Use Survey. Locate the activity code scheme and consider potential issues with regards to categorization of daily activities.

Full resource: https://www.ncrm.ac.uk/resources/online/all/?id=20824

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